

Training for the EJ Terrain

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The Brownfields Job Training program is designed to:

- Recruit, train, and place unemployed and under-employed residents from communities impacted by brownfields.
- Further environmental justice (EJ) by ensuring that residents benefit from the revitalization and cleanup of brownfields.
- Help graduates develop wider skill sets that improve their ability to secure full-time, sustainable employment within the larger environmental field.



Earth Conservancy Trainees in Ashley, PA



Trainees discuss their qualifications with employees of BrightFields, Inc. at a job fair.



West End Neighborhood House trainees in HAZWOPER course at Delaware Tech.

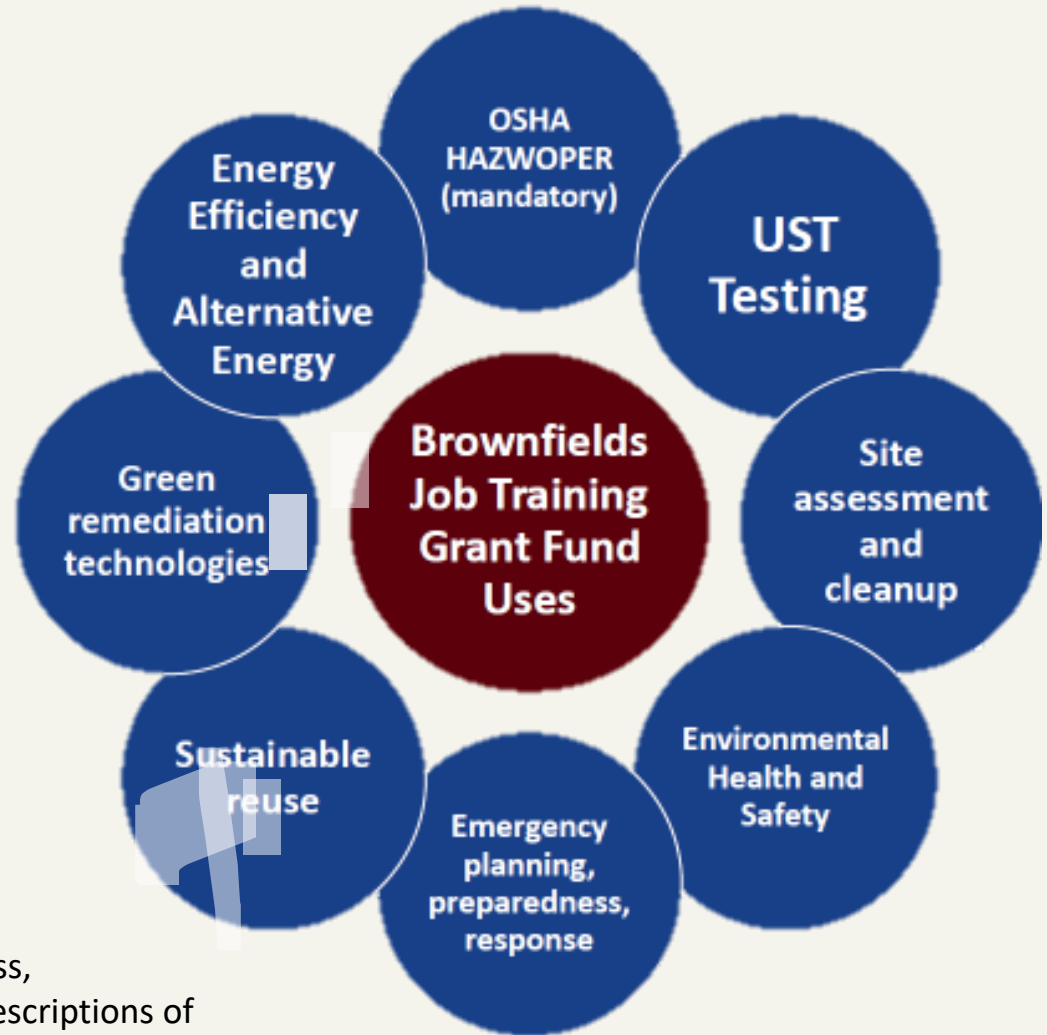
Overview: Use of Grant Funds

- Up to \$500,000
- 5-year project period



Coalfield Development Corporation Solar installation demonstration. Huntington, WV

Note: All training can be delivered at awareness, intermediate, or advanced levels. Expanded descriptions of these trainings are available in the [FY24RFA](#) and the [FAQ's](#) available on the [Brownfields Job Training page](#).



Grant funds may NOT be used for:

- Training in general construction skills and trades
- Training in natural resource extraction or related process
- Life skills or education activities, such as resume writing, remedial math and reading classes, interview skills, etc.
 - EPA encourages applicants to leverage this training through outside funding
- Administrative or indirect costs in excess of 5% of total EPA funding

Brownfields Job Training Program Accomplishments

Since 1998, EPA has awarded 414 grants totaling over \$100.5 million to Brownfields' Job Training Programs. With these grants, more than 21,500 individuals have completed training and over 16,370 individuals have been placed in careers related to land remediation and environmental health and safety. The average starting wage for these individuals is over \$15 an hour.



*Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia Brownfields
Job Training Graduation.*

Resources

- [EPA Brownfields Job Training Webpage](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-job-training-jt-grants)- Has recorded outreach webinars for applicants, FAQs, etc.
www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-job-training-jt-grants
- Kansas State University (KSU) Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB)
www.ksutab.org, (785)532-0780
- West Virginia University (WVU) Brownfields Assistance Center (Mid-Atlantic TAB)
wvutab@mail.wvu.edu, (304) 293-7071
- [EPA Region 3 Brownfields Newsletter](#) –
www.epa.gov/land-revitalization/forms/region-3s-land-revitalization-email-updates-signup-form

All-Grantee Meeting in Alexandria, VA



Pittsburgh Area Need for Job Training Programs

AUBERLE EMPLOYMENT INSTITUTE AND LANDFORCE



Pittsburgh: A Most Livable City for Whom?

A 2020 study, conducted by researchers from the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, and the Allegheny County Health Department and published in the journal *Environmental Health*, found that the region's most polluted census tracts are often in poor and minority neighborhoods, while the census tracts with the cleanest air tend to be in wealthier and whiter neighborhoods. This results in a higher rate of air pollution-related deaths and from coronary heart disease in poor and minority neighborhoods.

Pittsburgh: A Most Livable City for Whom?

City of Pittsburgh

- 301,048 People
- 3.5% Unemployment
- 19.7% Poverty Rate
- \$54,306 Median Household Income

34% Minority

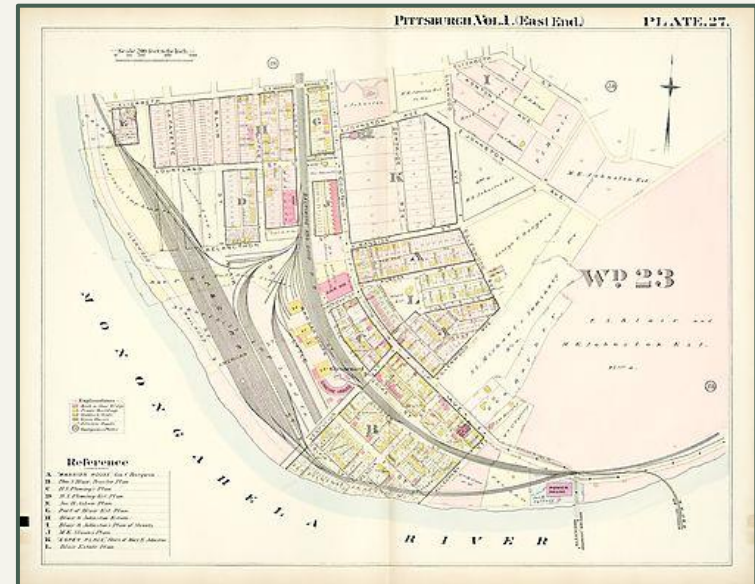
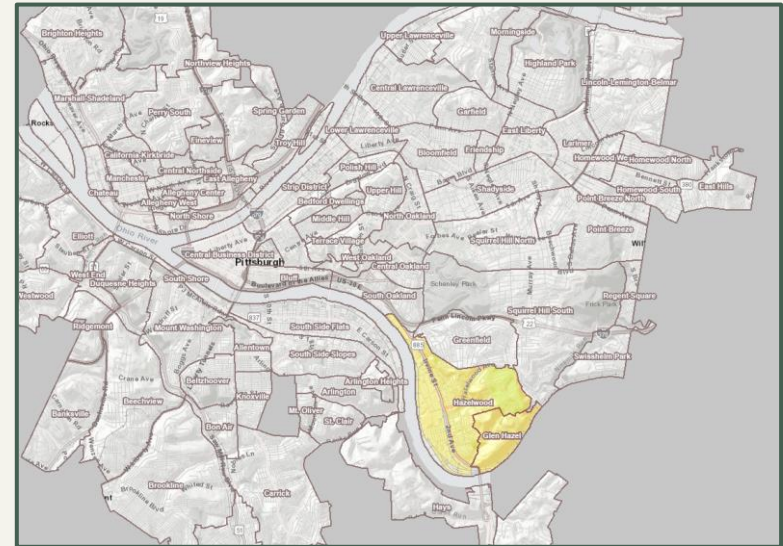
Greater Hazelwood: Sample Pittsburgh Neighborhood

- 5,033 People
- 3.7% Unemployment (56% not in the workforce)
- 61.6% Poverty Rate
- \$21,850 Median Household Income

47% Minority

Historically, a vibrant working-class community, Greater Hazelwood lost roughly 65% of its population following the decline of the steel industry and the final closure of the mill located on its riverfront in 1998.

Today, it is rapidly gentrifying as it becomes a hub for technology research and testing without first meeting the employment and affordable housing needs of long-time residents.



Auberle Employment Institute: Brownfields Job Training Program



Auberle

- Mission “Build strong individuals, families, and communities.”
- 4,000+ individuals and families served annually
- Holistic, effective, innovative, and collaborative
- 5 service areas: Foster Care, Transition Age Youth Services, Housing, Behavioral Health, & Workforce Development



The Employment Institute

- Purpose: Help individuals 14 and older facing a barrier (or barriers) to employment obtain and maintain employment
- Works with over 200 employment partners and over 130 referring agencies to connect people with employment
- Our model creates pipelines to employment and wrap around services, resulting in real jobs or work experiences for participants
- 600+ participants annually
- Age
 - 70% 14-24
 - 30% 25 and older
- Geography: Southwestern Pennsylvania



Common Barriers to Employment

- All participants must meet Federal Poverty Guidelines
- Other barriers include:
 - Criminal backgrounds (juvenile/adult)
 - Housing Insecurity
 - Aging out of Foster Care
 - Drug & Alcohol Addiction
 - Mental Health
 - Dropping out of High School
 - Childcare
 - Residing in a high poverty neighborhood
 - Work ethic
 - Lack of work experience
 - Transportation



Employment Institute Employment Partnerships

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Initial introduction	Determine reasons for turnover in good paying, yet entry level positions	Develop a unique model of programming that meets the employers' need	Participant training and placement	Partnership maintenance and participant follow up

Supportive Services to Address All Barriers

Transportation	Work Experience Opportunities	Case Management	Education Support- GED Services and Tutoring	Post-Secondary Education Enrollment Support	Mentorship
Driver's Training	Financial Aid Application Assistance	College Tours	Career Assessments	Resume Preparation	Housing Application Assistance
Work Attire & Safety Equipment	Financial Management Classes	Food Pantry Access	Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Counseling	Legal Assistance	Document Recovery: Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, State ID

Auberle EPA Brownfields Job Training Program Success: 2016-Present

Number of EPA Grants: 4
(2016, 2019, 2022, 2023)

Participants: 163

Graduates: 139
(85% Graduation Rate)

**Number of Graduates
Placed in Employment: 119**
(85% Placement Rate)

**Average Hourly Wage:
\$17.37/hour**



Employment Institute Success

- In the last three years, the Employment Institute's number of participants doubled from 300 to 600 per year across all programs, including US EPA programs.
- We now offer 13 national certifications
- 95% of graduates obtain employment within six weeks of certification
- As a result of our commitment to supportive services and follow-up, 86% of our participants placed in employment maintain their employment for six months or more against a U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) standard of 60%.

The Employment Institute was **twice named the number one workforce development program in the country** by the United States Department of Labor.

U.S. EPA's Impact: Marcus W



- Barriers to employment: involvement in the criminal justice system, previous involvement in foster care, housing insecurity, substance abuse, lack of childcare, and lack of transportation.
- He earned: HAZWOPER OSHA-40, 32-Hour Asbestos, Confined Space Entry, Lead Awareness, Blood Borne Pathogens, and First/Aid CPR certifications
- Marcus has maintained his employment at TMS International for two years, making \$30/hour with overtime and health benefits, creating a brighter future for himself and his son.



Funding & Partnerships

- The Employment Institute has over **250 employer partners** and **130 referral/community partners**
- Additional funding is leveraged from:
 - Partner4Work (Workforce Investment Board)
 - U.S. Department of Labor
 - PA Department of Labor and Industry
 - PA Department of Community & Economic Development (Neighborhood Assistance Program & Educational Improvement Tax Credits)
 - Foundations: United Way, EQT Foundation, PNC Charitable Trust, Alcoa Foundation, GC Murphy Company Foundation, Bank of America, Community Foundation of Westmoreland County
 - Corporations: Eaton Corporation, UPMC
 - Individual Donations



AUBERLE
WHERE LIVES CHANGE

Thank You!

For more information contact: Abby Wolensky, Director of the Employment Institute, 412-674-5856 ext 1317, abbyw@auberle.org







**Landforce:
Investing
in People
and
Restoring
Land**

What does it mean to “Invest in people while restoring land”?

Workforce Readiness

- Weekly One-on-One Meetings
- Soft Skills Development
- Hard Skills Development
- Job Search
- On the Job Experience

Land Stewardship

- Habitat Restoration and Reforestation
- Trail Construction
- Vacant Lot Management
- Green Infrastructure Maintenance
- Placemaking

Quick Facts:

- Landforce is the “doing business as” name of the Pittsburgh Conservation Corps, a 501c3 employment social enterprise non profit organization that specializes in assisting adults in removing barriers to family sustaining wage employment through a workforce development program that focuses on land stewardship work throughout the Pittsburgh region.
- Landforce Started in 2015 but was conceived out of the Emerald Trail Corps program which helped develop Emerald View Park, Pittsburgh’s newest regional park with over 10 miles of natural surface trails in 257 acres of wooded hillsides.
- Landforce’s mission is to nourish a culture of self-empowerment for people aspiring towards meaningful and stable employment as we protect and improve the environment.
- Landforce’s vision is a just world, where everyone belongs, lives in a healthy environment, and surpasses their greatest dreams.
- Landforce’s full time staff is 40% black/ brown and 60% women. Our board is $\frac{1}{3}$ black/ brown, 60% women.

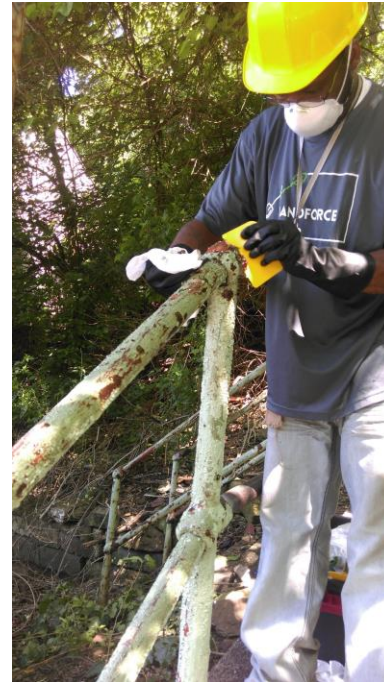


2016 to 2023

- **In the past 8 years, we have trained 147 people and brought 124 of them on as crew members.**
- **Provided 2,336 hours job coaching, and 23,428 hours of training.**
- **Our average completion rate for training is 83% and for transitional employment is 71%.**
- **Of our finishers, 93% applied for jobs, 68% had at least one job interview, and 83% were offered jobs or went into industry training within three weeks of the season's end.**
- **94% of our 2020, 2021, & 2022 respondents were still employed 12 months out, all with raises (average wages from 15.90-\$19.13/hour).**
-

2016 - 2023 (continued)

We have contributed over 69,500 hours of environmental stewardship to our region with more than one million dollars in earned contract revenue coming from over 35 distinct partnerships.



We Work to Push Past Barriers and Get our Crew Members Jobs



Barriers to Employment Include

- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- Justice Involvement
- Addiction History

Ways to Eliminate These Barriers Include

- Restorative Practices - Conflict Resolution Training and Mental Health and the Impact of Trauma Training
- Working with Allegheny Link and the Financial Empowerment Center
- Working closely with Probation/Parole officers of Allegheny County
- Supporting and encouraging meetings; allowing time and space for assistance with following through with Sobriety plans and creating a drug free environment.

Hiring Process

3 Step Interview that consists of a Panel Interview with the Directors of Workforce Development and Land Stewardship; a Working Interview that consists of an hour of on-site experience. The candidate will be commuted to a greenspace in Allegheny County to do some hands on work to get a feel for a day to day position at Landforce, and a Workforce Development task of bringing in a Library book focused on either a skill they wish to learn more about or a job they wish to learn more about. This leaves room for conversation during the season with the crew member about goal planning.

Recruitment Partners

- Garfield Jubilee
- Operation Better Block
- Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc.
- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Mon Valley Initiative
- Auberle
- APRI
- Renewal, Inc.
- Allegheny County Probation and Parole

Training Partners

- Restorative Practices (Brandi Taylor)
- Mental Health Conversations (Dr. Channing Moreland)
- Financial Empowerment (Pgh FEC counselors)
- Healthy eating on a budget (Pitt Dept. of Nutrition)
- Mock interview day (various partners)
- Employer Site Visits & talks (various partners)
- TABE Testing (Allegheny Intermediate Unit)

Certifications Obtained

Restorative Practices
A-Game Work Ethic

Funding

- Landforce has been the recipient of PA Department of Labor & Industry support as Transitional Employment through Partner 4 Work in 2020, 2021, and 2022.
- We have also received support from the PA Department of Human Services through SNAP 50/50 (through the US Department of Agriculture) since 2019.
- Additionally, Landforce has received two U.S. Environmental Protection Agency brownfield job training and workforce development multi-year grants (2021-2023, 2023-2028).
- Foundation based funding for projects, training, and operating expenses.

Workforce Development Trainings

- Bring Your “A” Game Certification
 - Attitude; Attendance; Appearance; Ambition; Acceptance; Appreciation; Accountability
- Pre-Work Day Preparation
- Understanding The Human Resources Manual And Your Rights & Responsibilities As An Employee
- How To Complete Timesheets
- Effective & Professional Phone, Email And In-person Communication
- Anti-harassment
- Chain Of Command
- Financial Literacy
- Healthy Eating On A Budget
- Drivers License Training



Goal Setting, Resource Referrals, Employment, and Continued Support

During the season, our crew members meet weekly with our Work Readiness Manager who will give each one an hour to an hour and a half of one on one career coaching. She sets short term and long term goals with them and assists them with accomplishing goals that allow them to eliminate their barriers and move on to family sustaining wage employment.

After our season is over, our Work Readiness Manager will keep in contact with the former crew member by completing check-ins on month 1, 2, 3, 6, 12 and 18. These check-ins address any concerns, issues and assistance the former crew member may need while also leaving space to celebrate the wins that the former crew member is accomplishing!

Hiring Partners

- Community Kitchen of Pittsburgh
- Harvie Pittsburgh
- Flagger Force
- Smokeybros Smokeshop
- Amazon
- Skybar Pittsburgh
- DoorDash and/or UberEats
- Ann's Market
- Alliance Adult Care Services
- J&S Handyman Services



Crew Member Success 2023 Season

- 12 people completed their tenure with us.
 - 8 finishers interviewed for jobs
 - 5 finishers left early for jobs (Flaggers Force, Smokeybros Smokeshop, Ann's Market, Alliance Adult Care Services, and J&S Handyman Services).
 - 4 finishers were offered jobs within three weeks of the season ending.
 - 1 finisher is pursuing self-employment.
 - 1 finisher left Landforce to continue work at a job they were employed at before Landforce.
 - Landforce staff continues to work with one finisher who is still in job search.
 - Average wage of the CMs who completed their tenure with us is \$19.42 – with the highest wage being \$28.84 and the lowest wage being \$15.00 an hour.



**Project
Partners:**

**Allegheny Land Trust
Allegheny Goatscape
Audubon Society of WPA
Borough of Carnegie
City of Pittsburgh
Friends of Southside Park
Grow Pittsburgh
Grounded Strategies
Hilltop Urban Farm
JLL Pittsburgh
Operation Better Block
Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Pittsburgh Botanic Garden
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority
Scenic Pittsburgh
Trying Together
Tree Pittsburgh
Triumph Baptist Church
Western PA Conservancy**

Green Infrastructure

62 filter drains

72 rain gardens/ swales/ bump outs maintained

150 plants and 35 trees maintained

32 plants planted and .25 acres seeded



Trail Building and Maintenance

1.65 miles of trail constructed, 13 miles of trail maintained

19 box steps, 10 ft boardwalk, 25 ft rock inlay, and

175 ft turnpike installed



Invasive Plant Management and Reforestation

11 acres managed
225 trees planted
1 acre seeded



Vacant Lots and Placemaking

5 sets of City steps maintained

3 acres managed

2 deer fence installations



A person wearing a hard hat and safety vest is using a long-handled tool to clear brush in a wooded area. The background is a dense thicket of trees and brush.

Stewarding The Hazelwood Greenway:

- **2,900 ft of existing trail maintained**
- **1,585 ft of new trail constructed**
 - **150 trees planted**
 - **58,470 sq ft invasives removed**
- **6 tires, 1 TV, 1 fridge, and 35 bags of trash removed**
 - **10,855 hours of stewardship**



Stewarding The Seldom Seen Greenway:

- 6,500ft of existing trail maintained
- 7,000+ ft of new trail constructed
- 100 trees to be planted
- 21,078 sq ft invasives removed

Trainings and Certifications

- **Game Of Logging Chainsaw Safety Level 1 Certification**
 - **OSHA/ HAZWOPER 40 Certification**
 - **Tree Tenders Certification**
 - **Green Infrastructure/ NGICP Overview**
- **Spotted Lanternfly Identification and Reporting**
 - **Plant/Tree ID & Ecology**
 - **First Aid/ CPR Certification**
 - **Trail Building & Maintenance**
- **Landscaping Machinery Safety & Maintenance**
 - **Basic Carpentry & Construction**
 - **Invasive Plant Management**
- **Tool Identification, Safety, & Maintenance**
 - **Body Mechanics**
 - **Worksite Safety Tailgate Talks**
 - **Covid Safety on the Worksite**

What Our Crew Members Say:

"The birds are always singing."

"If you can build a trail, you can do anything."

"I look at woods differently now."

"I think I'm 10 steps ahead of anyone who didn't experience this on the next job."

"It's the hardest working job I've had. I never enjoyed working at other jobs the way that I do here."

"I didn't want to miss a day because the team needed me."

"I'm 32, but I feel 18. I learned so much on this job."

"All the training and skills we learned work outside the job, at home, or at another job. Conflict can happen anywhere, the training helps me know how to deal with them better."

"It was therapeutic to be out in the woods, zone out... Anything that was bothering me, I would get out in the woods and nothing else exists. By the time the day ended, I didn't care about whatever else was bothering me."

Get involved!





Investing in People. Restoring the Environment.

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