

July 2009

Pittsburgh's Coordinated Weatherization Campaign

The Coordinated Weatherization Campaign (CWC) is a multi-organizational collaboration consisting of local foundations, utilities, non-profits, energy-efficiency service providers, and public agencies oriented towards developing a large scale, geographically targeted energy efficiency / weatherization program with the goals of:

- 1.) Reducing energy costs for low income communities while decreasing excess energy usage
- 2.) Promote Increased minority contractor participation
- 3.) Employment of low income residents
- 4.) Maximizing state and federal resources
- 5.) Creating a workforce development initiative that connects community recruitment efforts to tangible education, training, and employment opportunities.

Context

Starting in April 2009, The CWC has been an organic process facilitated by The Pittsburgh Foundation, representing a PA Funders collaborative and supported through the Mayor's and County Executive's office in recognition that the city and county have an unprecedented opportunity to organize weatherization services more effectively. This is in part due to the large increase for weatherization services from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the implications of Act 129, which requires rapid improvements in energy efficiency and reduction in peak demand by electric utilities in Pennsylvania.

This effort has also been catalyzed through the support of a Living Cities planning grant, secured to evaluate the development a clean energy jobs sector program that successfully connects community-based initiatives to tangible educational, training, and employment opportunities in such a manner that significantly reduces the cities' carbon footprint. Primary outcomes include: a targeted labor market analysis of the projected areas of growth in the local green economy; increased connectivity amongst existing workforce systems such as industry partnerships; and alignment of efforts with public/private partners.

Purpose

The goal of the CWC is to map the neighborhoods with the highest energy usage in the City and County, encourage households with the highest usage to undergo audits/retrofits, and layer a coordinated effort to recruit and train minority contractors and low-income workers to conduct the work in connectivity to long-term, more sustainable educational, training and employment opportunities. This approach also compliments other community-based greening activities such as tree plantings, urban gardens, and large -scale green infrastructure development.

Structure

Concentrating on Training, Job Recruitment, data mapping, contractor identification/support, ongoing community outreach, and an intentional leveraging of other greening programs The Coordinated Weatherization Campaign stands to be a unique model of aligning funding, training, employment and community efforts to scale with the potential of enabling not just a substantial environmental and social impact but the possibility of "first source contracts project labor agreements, and a policy precedent that could magnify geographically targeted efforts throughout the state.