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Green Jobs Training and Placement: A Case Study of the Oakland, California, Green Jobs Corps

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Abstract

Career pathways-based green collar jobs training programs for low-income citizens present American cities with an opportunity to pursue a “triple bottom line” of environmental sustainability, social and economic benefit. Retrofitting construction programs are particularly supported as “pathways out of poverty” that restore the opportunity for low-skilled, high unemployment communities to better access family-wage earning jobs that cannot be outsourced like manufacturing jobs. The Oakland Green Jobs Corps green construction pre-apprenticeship training program was modeled on the Pinderhughes Model of Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement, a career pathways model that was developed by an Oakland-area green workforce development expert.

This case study has employed semi-structured interviews and content analysis to take inventory of the types of workforce intermediaries that are partners in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps and their respective contributions in the partnership’s application of the Pinderhughes model. This study also presents a detailed analysis of the pattern of institutional development of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps in three phases.

The study concludes that the entities used to facilitate the Pinderhughes model in Oakland are common to most urban regions. However, the study finds that the Pinderhughes model was not as innovative as it was purported to be, and is for the most part like traditional low-income pathways training models.

The study finds that local green jobs training and placement programs are vulnerable to national economic employment trends and the influence of local politics. This study provides three lessons for maintaining a well facilitated construction-based green collar jobs training and placement program and partnership regardless of economic or political climate. They include 1) incorporating environmental awareness education, also known as “green consciousness,” into training as a valuable tool in attracting green business participants, 2) mitigating potential loss of on-the-job training opportunities due to economic downturn through the strategic inclusion of large firms, and 3) the necessity of
articulating plans for changes in leadership in order to maintain satisfactory levels of internal transparency as partnerships transition from planning or advocacy phase into formal establishment.
To my mother. I can fly because I have watched you soar.

Thanks to the many people across the states who helped me frame this emerging issue—
including Professor Edward Blakely in New Orleans, Professor Emeritus Roger Barry,
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Chapter I: Introduction

As the American nation pursues a transition from the carbon-based to renewable energy economy, more employment opportunities will be created for persons of all skill levels as the demand for sustainable products and services increases. The onset of the energy efficient economy holds significant potential for increasing the quality of life for low-income citizens and their communities.

Energy consumption by physical infrastructures accounts for the majority of American greenhouse gas production. Retrofitting existing structures with energy efficient materials and energy systems, and the incorporation of new sustainable technologies into new structures to achieve higher energy standards has become a popular solution. These energy retrofitting construction and sustainable construction technology careers present particularly significant employment possibilities for low-skilled workers because of their traditional low barriers to entry (social and educational) and current shortage of skilled laborers.

Green collar job activists assert that manual labor careers in energy-efficiency retrofitting are prime “pathways out of poverty” for which deliberate efforts should be made to extend these pathways to the urban poor as a social equalizer. The hope is that whole communities will benefit economically and socially from the employment if low-income persons are able to obtain living-wage jobs, with the chances for promotion and job benefits more often concentrated outside inner city areas.

Localized workforce development programs for green collar job improve low-income citizens’ accessibility to the green construction trades by helping citizens overcome academic deficits, teaching them job readiness skills and green sensibilities, and connecting them with willing employers. Without such training, social and educational barriers to employment such as a limited skill set or low educational attainment may continue to limit low-income individuals’ access to living wage jobs with opportunities for professional advancement.
Economic developers are often faced with the dilemma of reconciling the conflict between growing the economy, distributing growth fairly among citizens, and not degrading the earth’s ecosystems in the process (Fitzgerald and Leigh 2002). However, the investment in human capital improvement through green collar job training warrants investment because it reasonably attains this triple bottom line. The Federal Government has shown its support for green collar jobs under both Republican and Democratic administrations through President Obama’s continued support of former President George Bush’s $125 million investment in the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Program (EERWTP).

While various green collar job readiness training programs for people with economic and social barriers to employment exist in metropolitan areas throughout the country, a body of literature on green collar workforce development does not yet exist. In 2007 Raquel Pinderhughes created the Pinderhughes Model of Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement that is used at the Oakland, California, Green Jobs Corps. The prescriptive model calls for the creation of a partnership of local workforce intermediaries to make contributions directly related to training or placement service delivery as well as to the creation of a generally amenable environment for the creation of green collar jobs.

This thesis seeks to report on the organizational composition and the respective contributions of the entities partnering in the facilitation of the Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement in the case of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps green construction and retrofitting careers program for disadvantaged persons with barriers to employment of Oakland, California. While the Pinderhughes model is prescriptive, it is the intent of the researcher to 1) observe and document the application of the model through the Oakland Green Jobs Corps as a possible source of insight into other cities, and 2) reveal any program activities which are not accounted for in the model, but are important to the facilitation of the model.
The thesis document provides a review of workforce development, the economic theory and history behind it, including the beginning of application to individual wealth creation as a tool of President Johnson’s War on Poverty. The literature review discusses the workforce development pathways ideology, the imperative for minority and low-income citizens to participate in skilled labor fields and environmental stewardship, and connects both ideas with the green jobs advocates’ discussion of the three tiered benefits of equity, environmental justice, and economic prosperity focus that is made available through green construction jobs.

This document also provides a brief survey of the green jobs programs for economically disadvantaged and hard-to-hire workers and compares their operations to the Pinderhughes model. The document concludes with a discussion of the findings on the operation of the Pinderhughes model’s application at the Oakland Green Jobs Corps of Oakland, California, and several lessons and recommendations for the application of the model in other localities.

**A note defining “green” terminology in this report**

As sustainable business development and sustainable living continues to gain popularity, much ambiguity persists regarding which actions constitute the “greening” of the American job market. For the purposes of this report “green” should be understood to mean “environmentally-friendly,” which is achieved through improving or sustaining healthful terrestrial and atmospheric living conditions. The “green economy” should then be understood as the economy that relates to the labor market of occupations whose final products and services directly contribute to, or enable humans to improve or maintain the healthful terrestrial or atmospheric living conditions. The jobs within this green economy are then “green jobs,” which include an entire range of occupations from the entire spectrum of skill, education, and earnings level like the traditional labor market.

The terms “green job” and “green collar job” are often used interchangeably in the literature, but will be distinguished for clarity within this report. In *Green Collar Jobs: An Analysis of the Capacity of Green Businesses to Provide High Quality Jobs for Men*
and Women with Barriers to Employment (2007) from which the Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Job Placement and Training (which will be discussed in subsequent chapters) is taken, Pinderhughes defines a “green collar job” as any manual labor job within a firm that produces final products or services that may passively, as well as directly, contribute to sustainable living. For example, by definition, working in a bicycle repair shop is a green collar job according to this definition. However, this definition is inadequate -- including an existing and unmodified service in the statistics for the new green market, and allowing non-“green” related custodial positions to be counted as green collar workers.

For the purposes of this report, however, “green collar job” will be used to refer to the manual labor jobs of which the final products and service directly renders an improvement in environmental quality. As America begins its transition from highly consumptive to environmentally sustainable lifestyles, green collar jobs may also include previously existing occupations whose techniques and technical conventions have expanded to meet the green certification standards and demands for green practices, but are not yet standard throughout the trade. Such is the case with construction, which is the foundation of the curriculum of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps.
Chapter II: Literature Review

Whether “green” or conventional, job training programs such as the Oakland Green Jobs Corp, are the products of an evolving set of ideas for deriving economic prosperity through investment in human capital, known as human resource development. A father of human resources stated that keeping worker skills relevant through training is a necessity for competitive advantage. This chapter outlines the history of human resources development in the United States as it evolved from a competitive edge-seeking workforce development to programs and policies to aid impoverished and low-income citizens into the workforce to combat cycles of American poverty.

Providing job training to low-income populations has special challenges. One of these most meaningful lessons about low-income workforce development came out of the Clinton era. When the President signed legislation to encourage individuals to end welfare dependency by imposing a lifetime limit to benefits, the policy effectively promoted the ideology that “any job is good job.” The policy motivated millions of Americans to move from welfare to working at jobs regardless of earnings and benefits in order to safeguard the future use of their benefits. However, when it was observed that poverty continued to flourish among the now working poor, Americans recognized the need to create vehicles for individuals to gain employment that was sustainable and providing family-supporting wage.

The last part of the chapter discusses how social responsibility advocates came to endorse the green collar jobs as a comprehensive workforce development solution for the 21st Century that addresses not only poverty-reduction for urban communities, but also issues of social equity and environmental justice. The chapter concludes with a critical examination of the training components of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps’ Pinderhughes model for green jobs training and placement in comparison to a classic pathway job training model.
Section A: Human Resource Development

Human resource development, also called human capital development, is a focus area of economic development that is based upon the idea that people are the central resource for an economy (Hoch et al. 2000). Human resource development can be undertaken on any scale, local or national, as an attempt to stimulate endogenous economic development including improving a local firm’s ability to make better products, transfer knowledge to the least advantaged workers, and nurture the new firms and enterprises within the region. Investing in training on a national level can be viewed as part of a larger strategy to bolster national economic competitiveness (King 2004).

The quality of human resources is affected by the investment of training the labor force in order to improve their skills (Koven and Lyons 2003). In the foundational text for modern economics, The Wealth of Nations (2008), Adam Smith describes economic development as being dependent on a workforce that is “increasingly technologically literate, adaptable to rapid market changes, and capable of continuous relearning and retraining, and internationally oriented.”

Improved skills are assumed to create better wages for workers (Koven and Lyons 2003), and subsequently to also lead to increases in individual income and societal wealth. Areas that have populations of well-trained and educated workers often attract growing businesses because increased quality of human resources minimizes firms’ worker training expenditures (Koven and Lyons 2003). For example, customized training, the most commonly state-subsidized industrial incentive, aims to attract business through underwriting staff development costs by designing training to meet a particular firm’s human resource needs.

Retraining is also an important means of improving skill to create employment opportunity. Without retraining, unemployed workers may be unmarketable because their former skills sets are not transferable to other industries (e.g., switches from manufacturing to knowledge-based jobs) (Kovens and Lyons 2003, 50) or become
obsolete because of changes in technology. Demand for retraining is likely to increase continuously with the rate of technological development because workers in merit-based work environments will need contemporary skills to remain competitive.

Koven and Lyons (2003) say that areas without a population of skilled and educated workers are less likely to receive business investment. In particular, high secondary school drop out rates and adult illiteracy create a mismatch in basic skills required by technologically-sophisticated employers. The quality of life for citizens of cities with poor educational systems and other barriers to obtaining higher education, such as low-incomes or lack of transportation, are especially affected on a systemic level by the connection between training and the subsequent availability of employment opportunity. In America, the urban poor are a significant portion of persons who are rendered less employable because of systemic inadequacies. The well-being of local urban economies and the quality of life of the individuals within them can be enhanced by the application of human resource development strategies.

Types of worker training
There are many approaches to human resource development. According to King (2004), the overall objective of job training is to produce personal value within the market through the increasing education and knowledge among the workforce. Training is divided into various categories based on many factors including purpose, training toward specific employment, and variety of structures of temporary training experience.

Categorized by the objective of increasing value and market participation, there is qualifying training, preparatory training to qualify individuals for jobs, and skills maintenance or upgrading training which improves upon workers’ skills and makes them more productive. The latter is particularly useful for teaching new skills to aid the possibility of job retention or advancement within a current career.

There is also general training, which provides trainees with the basic skills which are applicable to many employers. Basic skills training consists of soft skills and hard skills.
Soft skills are the basic tools of arithmetic and language literacy of a standard high school level and basic social skills such as teamwork and “learning-to-learn” skills. Hard skills refer to the occupational skills that are basic technical skills required by the occupation for which an individual is being trained.

Institutional training prepares workers for a certain field or economic sector of work for example, construction, nursing, or biotechnology. Firm-specific training trains for skills valuable to a specific employer (King 2004). When employers become active in helping to design and offer publicly financed training, it is customized training.

Though participants may sometimes receive pay, experiential worker education is also workforce training. On the job training (OJT) is formal experience where the employer may receive public subsidy to offset the cost of training an employee (King 2004). Union apprenticeships are intensive formal training, in skilled labor positions. Internships and trial employment are other types of experiential training that serve as evaluative periods for employers. Successful completion of an internship is expected to lead to permanent employment with the internment agency, while trial employment offers similar experience to trainees with less certainty regarding permanent employment.

Human resource development as institutional development
According to Uphoff’s book on local institution development (1986), the establishment of human resource development may also require institutional development. Uphoff’s description of an institution is quite far-reaching, potentially bestowing “institutional status” on entities, normative actions, roles, practices, organizations, and organized systems / systems of relations that can be achieved through matters of degree of formalization. Because the essence of training requires recognizing a symbiotic relationship between two entities, worker and firm, and attempts to unite them, local institutional development in workforce development should be regarded as the building of formal organizational systems to facilitate worker-firm matches.
A universal feature of Uphoff’s description of institutions is the institution’s execution with “collectively valued purpose.” Institutions are publically validated by the public’s perceived need for the value of the good produced by the institution. Human resource development, which generates community-wide benefit and is executed on a scale that cannot be replicated by a single citizen or entity, is an institution that is likely to persist. This research will keep with the idea that successful institutions are perceived as indispensible in serving a public need.

**A history of human capital investment in American public policy**

The origins of human capital investment in the United States are rooted in the achievement of national competitiveness. Congress first committed the national government to the policy of pursuing and maintaining high employment and economic growth with the passage of the 1946 Employment Act (King 2004). In the 1950s, the nation began to reevaluate its public educational system as the space race against Russia generated a political interest in the training future scientists and other sorts of technicians. However, from the 1960s to early 1990s, national unemployment crises rather than competitiveness became the catalytic force behind workforce policies. Training options, on the other hand, seem to be expanded during periods of economic expansion.

Persistent high unemployment that began in the late 1950s led to the introduction of the first targeted legislation to the national workforce policy in the 1960s (King 2004). The Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962 established a national program of occupational training for unemployed and underemployed workers (King 2004). The premise of MDTA was that workers who were displaced by the lagging economy needed “retraining for the new technological age” (CED 1970). MDTA, which emphasized institutional training, incorporated some on-the-job training and combinations of both (CED 1970, King 2004), and was geared toward heads of families with at least three years of work experience. MDTA legislation also included a provision for a limited number of youth aged 19-21 years.
Congress passed the Vocational Education Act that “aimed at providing fresh guidelines and increased funding for vocational education as an adjunct of the regular education program” when the national economy began to pick up again in 1963 (King 2004). Thereafter, American workforce development program objectives turned away from matters of international competitiveness and dealing with the recently displaced workers toward focusing on poverty reduction. Chapter 2 takes an in-depth look at the evolution of America’s public application of low-income workforce development initiatives including the origin of the career pathways model that is currently being promoted by advocates as the preferred model for green job training.

Section B: A History of Low-Income Workforce Development in America

Achieving economic self-sufficiency through work is a fundamental goal of our society (Orr 2008). Human resource development is often combined with community development, strategies that are designed to enable the lowest income groups of society to find opportunity in the local economy (Hoch et al. 2000) and meet this fundamental goal. Orr concurs that training programs are among the policies that enable disadvantaged persons to become successful in the job market (2008).

Although the national training policy has been around for over 60 years in the United States, job training for the poor has a shorter 45 year tenure that began with President Johnson’s anti-poverty policy. National policy to create training programs for the disadvantaged began as a largely centralized effort in the mid-1960s under President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty. Decentralization and innovation were the developments under the Job Training and Placement Act. The last major amendment to the anti-poverty-focused workforce development occurred with President Clinton’s welfare-to-work welfare reformational approach.

As a part of his campaign to build social equity, Johnson signed the Opportunity Act of 1964, which employed the Office of Economic Opportunity and operated Community Action Programs that gave the poor, for whom the programs were designed,
representation in the “planning and execution of projects affecting them” (CED 1970). As a result of this effort, the national Jobs Corps program was established to send at-risk youth to vocational boarding school and away from “corrupt” social environments. Also, receiving disadvantaged constituent input into the workforce program planning process brought about “greater [Federal] understanding of the elements required to meet the many handicaps of disadvantaged people” among policymakers and exposed a “need for concentrated efforts and simplified administration.” The Federal government used this imperative for adaptability to launch the 1967 Concentrated Employment Program (CED 1970) and impose the replacement of the institutional and on-the-job-focused training under MDTA with the 1973 Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) (Orr et al. 1996).

However, decentralization would prove to be one of the landmark developments in public workforce development. Decentralization would enable greater adaptability of workforce policy for local settings.

**Job Training and Placement Act and the decentralization of work policy**

The Title II program of the 1982 Job Training and Placement Act (JTPA) was a seminal development in workforce development. As one of the first “New Federalist” programs, Title II was the first official attempt to decentralize workforce development planning administration, oversight, and to “tailor programs to local needs and opportunities, rather than to implement a standard intervention” (Orr et al. 1996).

Under JTPA, federal human resource development program administration and management of the national program became locally executed through 649 local Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) (Orr et al. 1996). Each SDA provided specific employment and training services through its own staff or by contracting local service providers (i.e., public schools, community colleges and community-based organizations). Later, the institution of local advisory councils was added to workforce development through the addition of JTPA’s Private Industry Councils. Private Industry Councils were comprised of representatives of local businesses, unions, social service agencies, and employment
and training organizations (King 2002) and were the predecessors of the present day Workforce Investment Boards (Giloth 2004).

Title II was intended to “prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry to the labor force and to afford job training to those economically disadvantaged individuals and other individuals facing serious barriers to employment, who are in need of such training, to obtain productive employment.” Specifically, the political objectives of the program were to increase the earnings and employment in order to reduce dependency on welfare for “disadvantaged adults aged 22 years of age” and to encourage the “attainment of educational credentials and occupational competencies” among youths 16 to 21 years old (Orr et al. 1996).

Title II’s year-round services included (annotated listed of Orr et al., 1996):

- Classroom training in occupational skills,
- On-the-job training,
- Job search assistance,
- Basic education (adult basic education or GED equivalence preparation),
- Work experience in temporary entry-level jobs (Some public jobs were eligible to be subsidized by JTPA),
- Miscellaneous services including skills assessment, job-readiness training, and
- Customized training, vocational exploration, job shadowing, and tryout employment.

Later, in the 1990s, policymakers recognized employers’ preference for workers who were ready to be trained, so-called “job ready,” over those workers who had been trained with trade-specific skills sets (King 2004). Accordingly, workforce development services were adapted again to focus upon basic skills training – e.g., reading, math, teamwork, learning-to-learn, as well as occupational skills” (King 2004). Subsequent American workforce development policies have been patterned after JTPA in this regard – offering the same type of services, with private industry advisory board input, and continuously
attempting to improve methods for localized service delivery and outcomes – which makes JTPA the model of development.

The effect of 1990s dependency reducing Welfare reform on workforce development policy

During a period of American economic expansion in the 1990s, welfare-to-work policies of welfare reform were created under President William Clinton’s 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWOA) (King 2004). PRWOA placed impetus on the poor and current welfare recipients to move into the labor force and end dependency on welfare by imposing a lifetime limit of public assistance to five years, fostered by Temporary Assistance to Needy Families grants (King 2004, Hoch et al. 2000).

Hoch et al. (2000) argue that the PRWOA/Clinton reform emphasized human development and the social value of work, but overvalued the economic value of work itself (Hoch et al. 2000). Welfare-to-work reform may reduce social services, but it may do so without improving the economic circumstances of the people moving from welfare to the workforce. Hoch et al. (2000) also state that unless reform ensures that former welfare recipients obtain adequate wages (to support their families, sometimes referred to as living-wage, family-supporting wage, or middle-income wages), low-income persons will likely remain economically disenfranchised. Through PRWOA America learned that it is not true that “any job is a good job.”

Complementary to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 reformed the workforce development system to be more “customer focused,” helping workers to gain necessary skills to gain, improve, and manage a long lasting career and employers to find skilled and job ready workers (King 2004). WIA emphasized a stronger state role in policymaking and produced the following innovations in workforce development:

- Creation of one-stop career and employment training centers.
• Voucher-based individual training accounts, essentially privatizing a service that had traditionally been administered by the local governments (King 2004).

• Universal access to core employment service. (However, reserving training for those who are most difficult to employ in what is called a “work-first” approach)

• Workforce Investment Boards, similar to Private Industry Council advisory boards (Giloth 2004).

**Challenges of low-income workforce development**

Employment and economic mobility are often limited by racial, ethnic, and economic segregation (Hoch et al. 2000). Improving low-income persons’ ability to compete for middle-income wages to close these gaps requires education and training programs to improve workers’ skills. However, working with low-income workers has both physical and social challenges.

Human resource development can be especially difficult for low-income persons because of the geographic concentration and social isolation handicap created by social and economic segregation (Hoch et al. 2000). Connecting low-income persons with family-supporting wage jobs has proven to be difficult because concentrations of poor people tend to exist in urban pockets of commercial disinvestment where low-incomes persist while higher wage jobs are in the suburbs. Poverty reduction with populations that are immobile because of their economic circumstance requires improving both the human capital and the gainful employment available (Hoch et al. 2000).

The challenges of providing low-income workforce development can be barriers that discourage service providers from engaging with the low-income community. Alssid et al. (2005) state that there is a “relatively high cost of serving [a low-income] population.” For example, where entrance exams are required for higher education, the cost of the providing remedial courses for students from low-income school districts (often underperforming school districts) often serves as a disincentive to community colleges. Issues of the greater cost of educating low-income students also exist in the significantly greater amount of financial aid they require.
In the face of limited resources to invest, such challenges have inspired extreme selectiveness in choosing workforce development program participants, a criticism of the JTPA programs (Lafer 2002). “Creaming,” as it is called, is the enrolling of the most qualified students from the targeted participants. Although investing in those who are most likely to succeed aids positive performance, it is a cheat in that it prevents the programs from serving the truly disadvantaged (Anonymous 2009).

Since poverty reduction through gainful employment requires measures beyond simply training, the long-term viability of education and training programs will require ongoing support from the local community (Hoch et al. 2000). According to Fitzgerald and Jenkins (in Hoch et al. 2000), characteristics of a successful training program include:

- Strong, active commitment from top political and community leadership,
- Well-designed support services to deal with family issues,
- Strong partnerships with social service providers,
- Programs designed for specific students seeking specific job skills for known employers, and
- Active employer involvement.

**Career pathways model**

The career pathway initiative is a recent workforce innovation for serving the low-skilled and low-income persons. Career pathway models were created as socially-beneficial tool to resolve the increased demand for human capital that is stimulated by technological revolution and the emergence of a new sector (Alssid et al. 2005). For example, a need to train a computer savvy workforce arose in the 1980s and 1990s with the computerization of basic infrastructure like cash registers. The structure of the model attempts to develop “large-scale, flexible, and open systems that can offer the education and training required for high-wage, high-demand jobs” intended to be applied to America’s poorly educated, low-skilled, and low-income individuals (Alssid et al. 2005).
According to Alssid et al. (2005), creating access to high-wage, high-demand employment for educationally disadvantaged workers requires partnerships. Although all sectors of higher education should be engaged in workforce development (Alssid 2005), career pathways are predominately community college efforts to “repackage” their occupational and vocational curriculums “into smaller sets of courses that can be taken for fewer terms to prepare students for discrete jobs” (GIloth 2004) to the benefit of employer and students whose face a labor market that is increasingly driven by skills and credentials rather than degrees (Alssid et al. 2005).

Community colleges present both a fiscally and physically accessible medium to provide broad-based workforce development system to low-income communities. Community colleges offer college credit at a comparably lower cost than four-year institutions, do not require students to relocate away from their residences and routines to attend, and offering a range of training subjects. The contribution of community based organizations (CBOs), adult basic education (ABE) providers, and basic workforce intermediaries such as social service agencies extend pathways by providing services that address the particular challenges of low-income workers such as the need for additional tutoring, transportation and child care needs (GIloth 2004). Community-based organizations may also serve as “branch campuses,” providing off-campus training sites for the local community college (Alssid et al. 2005).

According to the overlapping form recommendation of Giloth (2004) and formation steps by Alssid et al. (2005), features of well-developed form career pathways that will successfully engage and advance disadvantaged persons into high-wage/middle income careers include:

- Community outreach to economically and educationally disadvantaged adults,
- An introduction to career opportunities in a region’s high-wage, high-demand employment sectors,
- Basic skills coursework / postsecondary proficiency education,
- Entry-level training in a career or technical area,
- Internship placement,
- Entry-level employment in the field of preparation,
- Postemployment accessibility upgrade training,
- Transition to entry-level skills training, and
- Social supports throughout the course of training as necessary.

Career pathways have been used to strategically fill the demand created by the technological revolution such as the emergence of the biotechnology industry in the mid-1990s (Alssid et al. 2005). Career pathways have also been used to fill labor demand in response to shortages of labor in expanding sectors such as nursing. The establishment of the career pathways as a pipeline for workers into high-demand industrial sectors indicates that pathways and elements of pathways training may be used for the training and placement of low-skilled job seekers into emerging occupational fields like the green collar jobs, for which federal moneys have been authorized to train as many as 35,000 persons annually.

**Section C: The Environmental Sustainability Movement and Workforce Development**

Eras of mass public and political support for environmentalism, whether focusing on land preservation, conservationism, sustainability and otherwise, come and go in cycles. As we ponder the reckoning and severity of global warming in the face of powerful environmental disasters, America is currently on an up cycle of environmental consciousness. At beginning of the 21st Century the rallying cause for sustainability is commonly referred to as “being green,” simply “green,” or participating in the “green movement.”

The environment has been tied to the economy in terms of land and real estate value and the market value of natural resources and the jobs related to their extraction. However, the pursuit of environmental sustainability has recently led to the emergence of occupations that serve environmental sustainability interests – green collar jobs. Green-collar jobs are skilled labor jobs that are primarily rooted in the provision of energy-efficient services and constitute the green economy’s most basic entry-level positions.
Such entry-level jobs present particular opportunities to the poor and unskilled person for whom educational attainment or a limited skill set has been a barrier to achieving a family-sustaining wage job.

Energy consumption related to the inefficiency of traditional building construction is one topic that has come under scrutiny in the current era of American green consciousness. Advocates for a socially inclusive green movement, as well as the U.S. government through the goals of the Green Jobs Act of 2007, have overlapping labor force targets for energy efficiency and increasing the amount of retrofitting careers (DOL 2009). They pursue persons with educational and social barriers to employment because the field accepts persons with less than a four year degree and only requires some targeted vocational training as adequate job preparation.

**Sustainable housing construction creates an environmental imperative**

While the mitigation of emissions from transportation and smokestacks have been the focus of global warming mitigation campaigns, the energy consumption of the built environment has been found to be the single largest contributor to global warming in America (Architecture 2030 2009). Buildings are responsible for 48% of all energy consumption and green house gas emissions annually, 42% of carbon dioxide emissions (Yudelson 2008), while demanding 76% of all electricity supplied by power plants (Architecture 2030 2009). Architecture 2030, a nonprofit organization, refers to the environmental demands of the building industry as a “hidden culprit” whose reformation poses an environmental imperative.

Green buildings, those designed with sustainability in mind, can reduce emissions by about 40%, compared to conventional buildings (Yudelson 2007). As a result of green building, the United States Green Building Council anticipates improved public health and an eventual reversal of climate change. In fact, green buildings’ contribution to society is so great that it is anticipated that the value of conventional buildings will drop and conventional buildings will become considered obsolete as more green buildings are created.
Low-energy appliances like those that are certified Energy Star by a joint effort of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy are one means of reduce building-generated energy. But Yudelson (2008) anticipates that methods of building construction will be changed dramatically in the next five years in light of these findings. Yudelson further asserts that “through the influence of [Architecture 2030], the architecture profession was put on notice that energy-efficient, green buildings are no longer just one option among many for a new building or renovation, but a ‘front and center’ priority.”

New energy-efficient systems and technologies that require new training, either through an upgrade training or training of a new construction workforce, will become more standardized in housing construction in the 21st century. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), for example, points toward sustainability certification of structures.

**The triple bottom line of sustainability**

*Economic and social equity issues*

Green collar jobs supporters advocate that the creation of new manual labor jobs within the green economy are “pathways out of poverty.” They claim that the emerging green economy holds particularly significant personal and community development potential for economically disadvantaged citizens. Green collar jobs supporters advocate that green job training programs for the disadvantaged should receive primary funding consideration at all levels of government. (Green collar job discussions of the “disadvantaged” interchangeably refer to the low-income target group as “the working poor, the economically disadvantaged, persons facing barriers to entering to the workforce” and the “low-income and low-skilled.”)

Green collar jobs are advocated because they provide permanent employment with greater professional and economic benefits than the low-wage jobs that typically dominate economically depressed communities (White and Walsh, 2008). Among these
are health care, pension, and paid sick leave – benefits that aid workers in establishing economic security or the ability to respond to crises without fear of financial ruin or job loss. Safe working environments and less job turnover are other characteristics of skilled work environments advocated for green collar job creation. Founder of the Apollo Alliance and the first appointed environmental advisor to President Obama, Van Jones, promote the idea that “the [key] opportunity for disadvantaged communities is in the low-level hands-on jobs in retrofitting existing structures” (Friedman 2007).

Green collar jobs and place-based equity issues

Green collar jobs are a means of reinstating the job opportunity for low-skilled workers by creating new industrial practices. Unemployment among low-skilled workers has increased as the American economy continues to respond to the globalization of markets and technological change. The reduction of wealth-producing work hours available to the low-skilled worker can be attributed to the inaccessibility resulting from extreme spatial mismatch, tightened job markets, and

- The exportation of low-skilled jobs to less expensive international markets that began in the 1980s (Drucker 1991),
- The loss of manual labor employment opportunities to mechanical upgrades within firms, and
- An accelerated shift from labor-intensive to knowledge-jobs which have fewer employment opportunities for low-skilled workers. For example, Drucker (1991) states that even the most automated manufacturing job maintains 50% of jobs for manual laborers, compared to a high-skilled field where wage payments constitute only 15% of total costs.

Because manufacturing plants serve as major economic engines for entire cities and regions, the replacement of manufacturing jobs by knowledge-based jobs that require higher academic training than is present among the workers has produced communities of displaced workers, resulting in high unemployment and underemployment. Because minorities tend to concentrate in urban areas where manufacturing jobs were located to be employed in the factories, such as African Americans during the Great Migration of
the early 20th Century, the loss of urban industrial jobs disproportionately influences minority communities (Goldsmith and Blakely 1992). The possibility of restoring low-skilled job opportunity becomes an equity issue by virtue of human settlement patterns.

According to Goldsmith and Blakely (1992), the rise of service jobs has further confounded employment opportunities for blue collar workers. A global shift away from manufacturing in favor of service employment has introduced more lower wages jobs that have substantial educational difference between high and low wage jobs within the same firm – workers with basic education find themselves with fewer entry level opportunities to earn above minimum wage and systemically unable to advance themselves economically through promotion than ever before.

Continual growth in fields with high ranking positions which are dominated by workers with college degrees does not provide general employment relief to underemployed, unskilled, or poor people. Many policymakers correspondingly argue that is imperative that merit-based work opportunities with low barriers to entry, such as green-collar work, intentionally be established in low-income communities of the United States.

**The viability of green collar jobs**

There is skepticism regarding whether the green economy will indeed produce a significant number of new jobs. The appropriate measures for estimating economic impact associated with the revolutionization of energy technology and practice is also open to question. It can be confirmed that no one is certain how many jobs there are or will be (Greenhouse 2008). This ambiguity stems in part from disagreements between advocates about what constitutes a green job, as discussed above.

There are admonishments that pathways from poverty may not be realized because green jobs pay less than the manufacturing jobs that they will replace. However, such claims are poorly framed arguments that group the gamut of green jobs and possible incomes, which range from low-skilled individual to PhD level education jobs and incomes, into a single category. Furthermore, because “green jobs” does not necessarily mean the
extinction of manufacturing jobs, but often the adaptation or shift of manufacturing to new products or services by existing occupations such as construction — green collar workers will likely have access to middle to high-level wages and career mobility within the occupation.

Similarly, critics suggest that pathways out of poverty from the shift toward energy-efficiency will not be realized because a substantial percentage of green jobs will be created by the retraining of the existing workforce in green practice. However, the United States is actually facing a shortage of skilled laborers (Manpower Inc. 2008, 2007) which constitute the entry level positions of manual green-collar jobs. Also, career pathway models for workforce development are used to put low-skilled, low-income persons in entry level positions and of occupations facing job shortage (Alssip et al. 2005; Giloth 2004).

It is important to note that although retrofitting is situated at the bottom of the career chain in terms of skill level within the green workforce (which has occupational opportunities for even the highest levels of education), the position of retrofitting is more foundational in the field of green construction than inferior or stagnant. One of the most emphasized social aspects of green collar employment is the potential for job advancement from low- to middle-skilled employee, and the corresponding pay increase, based on the merit of experience and continuing education. The green-collar career ladder extends upward to possibilities of business ownership and becoming product/service innovators through retrofitting as an inroad. In this manner, green-collar jobs restore the kind of stepping stone opportunities of job advancement and internal labor markets that disappeared from many urban communities along with the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs. Green retrofitting careers also represent a source of employment that is sustainable and cannot be outsourced away from the local community in the same manner as manufacturing jobs because America’s built infrastructure is fixed, unlike the raw material of manufacturing.
It has also been alleged that the jobs in the energy efficient economy lack the staying power necessary to mend the American job market. However, the willingness of individual building owners to invest billions of private dollars into energy-efficiency improvements over the last decade without government subsidy serves as a strong indicator of likely positive public buy-in to energy-efficient services (White and Walsh 2008). A decline in the demand of energy-efficient retrofitting services due to saturation is unlikely as new technological advancements and upgrades enter the marketplace and old equipment needs replacement.

**Political support for green-collar job development**

Recent bipartisan and Executive Branch-level politics indicate a promising future for the development and funding of green collar jobs. In December 2007, President George W. Bush signed the Green Jobs Act, an amendment to the Workforce Investment Act. This act authorized $125 million in annual grants for the training of unemployed and low-income individuals through the recently-created Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Program (EERWTP). The program for the development of an energy efficient workforce will be administered by the Department of Labor and Department of Energy with the expectation of training 35,000 persons per annum.

Commitments to develop green technology were also present on both platforms for the 2008 presidential candidates. President Obama, who promised green jobs creation, continues to support the green jobs initiative, a strategy which University of Massachusetts-Amherst economist John Polin evaluates as “very efficient in terms of creating jobs for a given amount of spending [and] has the added benefit that the short-term effects are compatible with long-term needs in the economy” (Davis 2008). Retrofitting buildings to make them more energy-efficient was specifically mentioned as potential source of jobs, along with upgrading the electrical grid and improving mass transit.
Section D: Partnerships in Current Models for Green Jobs Development

Although the Federal government can be an effective financier of national workforce development initiatives, it fails to resolve the challenges of smaller scale needs of local economic development (Ross and Friedman 1991). The strategic needs of each community are too diverse and collectively too numerous for the national government to address. The Federal government arguably has greater responsibilities than to scout and caucus local businesses for networking sessions.

Instead, research has consistently shown sub-national government to be mentioned in the establishment of local workforce training partnerships. Research also shows that workforce development in the industrial and construction trades is commonly facilitated through the use of local partnerships. This chapter will explore the curricula and the use of community partnerships in some of the nation’s recent construction jobs training programs.

Partnerships as the base of skilled labor training programs

In 2008 in Pennsylvania, Governor Rendell positioned his state at the forefront of the push for creating jobs in America through skilled labor job creation. Rendell articulated that the global economy has created a need for America to develop a skilled workforce that has “strong academic, workplace, and technical skills” (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 2008). Pennsylvania’s strategy to address the skilled workforce job creation issue has been the Job Ready plan, a revised comprehensive strategy for the commonwealth’s workforce development that is built on a foundation of industrial public-private partnership development.

Roughly summarized, this strategy includes the identification of training needs, alignment of curriculum with industry needs, recruitment, job placement, identification of the population’s barriers to entry to employment, and establishment of networks among firms to provide better service delivery to trainees. Program strategists believe that a
successful facilitation and overall outcome of the program hinge upon the “regular interaction of partnership members, trade associations, and industry experts” (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry 2008) that are akin to the interactions of the private industry councils and workforce investment boards described in Chapter 2.

The Building Workers Entering Skilled Trades (B-WEST) was started in 1991 by Portland Community College in Oregon. It is a building construction trades training program for unemployed and underemployed men and women, which is an early example of a skilled labor program with equity goals similar to green construction. This program was also a public private-partnership. B-WEST provided training with an emphasis on masonry trades through the college with the direct involvement of external agents including certified masonry trainers, joint apprenticeship and training councils, area training agents, and the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry. B-WEST also trained institutions as well as the traditional program participants to advance its cause, providing workforce management training to employers and developing a regional demonstration center for the technical educational entities of Greater Portland. In recruitment and referral efforts, the B-WEST program cooperated with a range of workforce development intermediaries and human services organizations such as the Job Corps Program, Oregon Adult and Family Services Division, and the Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon (Portland Community College 1993).

**Partnerships for green jobs training**

Advocates of the green job movement also encourage the facilitation of green collar workforce training programs through the formation of joint community-to-professional partnerships. Such partnerships are one of many of the Third Wave approaches of economic development, an ideology in which government does not act as the sole supplier of the resources and initiatives for a society’s economic success (Ross and Friedman 1991). Suggested partners for green collar training programs include a wide variety of potential stakeholders that include educational institutions, the local business community, and social or economic justice-related nonprofit agencies, or business consortia such as chambers of commerce, local school systems, institutions of higher learning, and members of the general community.
Green-collar jobs training programs throughout the nation

Prominent green-collar workforce development programs directed at participants with various barriers to entering the workforce have been identified in major American metropolitan areas. While the occupations and curriculum may vary, all of the sustainability-focused programs for the hard-to-hire feature partnerships that link local government departments of housing and environment, local branches of federal government, private sustainability-related businesses, private foundations, individual donors, public relations consultant agencies, sector-specific industries, community members, nonprofit workforce agency, a university. Several examples from across the U.S. are profiled below:

Chicago: Greencorps Chicago “improve[s] the quality of life throughout Chicago by providing horticultural instruction, materials and employment” (City of Chicago 2008). People leaving the prison system and others with “strong barriers to employment” (Green for All 2008) are hired for nine months in a paid program and educated in one of five sustainable concentrations: landscaping, weatherization, environmental remediation, electronic recycling and household hazardous materials processing. Partners include the City of Chicago Department of Environment (DOE) and WRD Environmental, a sustainable landscape firm.

New York: The Sustainable South Bronx (SSBx) offers a ten-week Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training (BEST) Academy curriculum that orients participants toward environmental stewardship, offering a curriculum of environmental assessment and enhancement skills that are of particular value to the South Bronx community. These include courses in riparian ecology, green roof construction, and brownfield remediation (Sustainable South Bronx 2008). SSBx is governed by a board that includes representatives from an energy company, New York Life insurance, a private sustainable development group, the community, the local university community and economic development clinic, brand asset consulting group and a financial investment firm.
Philadelphia: Project Neighborhood Environmental Action Team, an environmental education demonstration project, houses a neighborhood clean-up and dumping prevention program that employs persons with criminal histories or histories of unemployment (Dana 2008), while also informing targeted Philadelphia neighborhoods about storm water management (American Cities Project 2008).

Portland: Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. is a branch of the national organization which works to “create fair and safe conditions for women working in nontraditional blue collar jobs” (Tradeswomen Inc. 2009). Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. offers a seven week women-only pre-apprenticeship class “to assist women to enter living-wage careers that benefit our whole community” (Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. 2008). Partners include the City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development, WorkSystem, Inc., Environmental Protection Agency, other government agencies, private foundations, the trade industry, and individual donors.

Richmond, California: Richmond BUILD is a green construction pre-apprenticeship program that heavily emphasizes the teaching of traditional construction methods and offers participants limited exposure to single energy-efficient green technology solar panels. Richmond BUILD provides foundational training for an occupation in trades, while leaving the exposure of participants to more green technologies to their prospective employers.

Research has shown that green-collar workforce development training initiatives are especially numerous throughout the San Francisco California Bay Area. Among these Bay Area green-collar jobs training programs are the construction-oriented Oakland Green Jobs Corps and the Richmond BUILD project in the City of Richmond. This geographic concentration of green-collar job training opportunities is probably a result of the cultural influence of the Ella Baker Center, a local social activism center. The center
was a major lobbying force in obtaining the federal set-asides for green jobs training that were provided in the 2007 Green Jobs Act.

**The Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement**

Although several large American cities feature some form of green collar jobs training for the economically disadvantaged or persons with other barriers to the workforce, research has found only one model of specifically focused green collar jobs workforce development, the Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement from the San Francisco Bay Area of California.

**Background of Oakland, California**

The City of Oakland is located in the San Francisco Bay Area in the environmentally progressive state of California. Regarding adult education, Oakland has eleven institutions of higher learning including the four community colleges of the Peralta School District (Laney, Merritt, Alameda, and Vista) and the Oakland Adult and Career Education program, a learning extension of the Oakland Unified (K-12) School System (City of Oakland 2009, Oakland Unified School District 2009). The Oakland Adult and Career Education program provides general equivalency diploma training, skills upgrade training, and also advertises participation as an opportunity to make social connections. The City of Oakland promotes energy-saving and pollution reduction initiatives such as the recycling programs, City Car Share and a bicycling program (City of Oakland 2009).

Demographic information about the city indicates some equity issues. Oakland is a majority minority community. Blacks, Asians, and Latinos compromise the city’s approximately 77% non-white population. Whites in Oakland have the lowest percentage of poverty by ethnicity, approximate 8%, while poverty levels for each other race is 20% or higher in a city where the cost of living index is 181.

**Description of the Pinderhughes model**

Across the San Francisco Bay from Oakland at San Francisco State University, Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes is professor of urban studies whose teaching, research and
community activism focus on improving quality of life for people living and working in cities (San Francisco State University 2011). Pinderhughes claims to have coined the “green collar jobs” term to describe the manual labor jobs related to improvements in environmental quality as in 2004. The complimentary fields of sustainable urban development, urban infrastructure, environmental justice, are also among Pinderhughes’ expertise.

In 2007 Pinderhughes published *Green Collar Jobs: An Analysis of the Capacity of Green Businesses to Provide High Quality Jobs for Men and Women with Barriers to Employment*, a survey of possible green collar opportunities of the San Francisco Bay Area, Raquel Rivera Pinderhughes, Ph.D, professor at the San Francisco State University, published a general model for “a green collar job training and placement program which would provide men and women with barriers to employment the opportunity to be trained for, and placed in, entry level green collar jobs.” Pinderhughes defines green collar jobs as “blue collar jobs in green businesses […] manual labor jobs in businesses whose products and services directly improve environmental quality” (3).

Pinderhughes further defines the target training population of persons with barriers as “youth and adults who do not have a high school degree, have been out of the labor market for a long time, were formerly incarcerated, have limited education and/or limited labor market skills” (2007, 7) Elsewhere in the report, the author makes it clear that the focus of the population is *low-income* persons with the aforementioned social and educational characteristics.

Because Pinderhughes’ characterization of the type of barriers is open-ended, it is unclear whether this narrowing of focus is intended to include low economic standing as a barrier to employment. However, discussions of poverty in academia commonly include the link between low-income persons, high crime rates, and low educational attainment. Low-income is also independently listed as a barrier to employment by the Department of Labor in its intended participants in the Green Jobs Act training programs (DOL 2008).
In her model, Pinderhughes defines the target population, the direct services that will be provided to the trainees, a base curriculum of skills that should be possessed by all green collar-jobs trainees, and a key series of actions to be undertaken by specific entities to facilitate the sustained provision of these direct services. The following is a list of the directives in the Pinderhughes model:

- Serve the population of 18-35 year old men with barriers to employment — persons who do not have a high school degree, have been out of the labor force for a long time, were formerly incarcerated, and/or have limited labor skills and experience — though a 3 to 6 month long training program:
  - Provide on-the-job training,
    - Provide relevant vocational skills,
  - Provide classroom training,
    - Conduct initial skills assessment,
    - Provide basic literacy skills training,
    - Provide life skills/soft skills training,
    - Provide personal financial management skills training,
    - Certify trainees in OSHA Safety Training, and
    -Expose trainees to environmental education.
  - Provide internships ("non-committal trial periods of employment for trainees to have workplace experience at a green-collar employer"),
    - Recruit employers and
    - Provide case management during internship.
- Convene a Green Business Council headed by the Chamber of Commerce where the chamber develops and nurtures relationships with local green businesses and firms that are within business sectors that provide green collar jobs.
- Maintain current curriculum:
  - Identify growing sectors of green economy,
  - Identify training standards for particular green collar sector,
  - Identify employment placement opportunities,
  - Create internship opportunities and
  - Hire job ready trainees.
• Grant access and assistance in seeking or applying for government resources or permits to the green businesses that “provide workers with green collar jobs”/(create perks and incentives for green employers to participate in workforce development through improved access to governmental services).

• Involve the low-income community in trainee recruitment and retention efforts. (Pinderhughes 2007, 74-75)

As seen in the list, the Pinderhughes model mixes the deliverables (the tasks which directly contribute to trainee enrichment in building skills) and supporting administrative functions. The Green Business Council and the specification of local government as a provider of business participation incentives are program support activities that serve to organize and perpetuate the program. Although considerations for workforce development models should include deliverables as well as operational support, the Pinderhughes model does not include funding and administrative/personnel components.

It is likely that the absence of a funding component in the Pinderhughes model was a major initial consideration for the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, which utilizes the model. The Oakland Green Jobs Corps received funded exhaust set-aside funds for the implementation of a green training program. At the time research performed for this case study, however, the Oakland Green Jobs Alliance has a public request for leads to new funding to support the OGJC posted on its homepage. This reality may indicate experiential findings of program management that the Pinderhughes model in itself does not fully represent the amount of organization needed to provide operational support.

**Comparing the Pinderhughes program model to other models of low-income construction training**

In 1991, the Portland Community College also conducted the Building Workers Entering Skilled Trades (B-WEST) project, an 18-month building constructions pre-employment training program for unemployed or underemployed men and women. Like the Pinderhughes model and the contemporary green construction programs of America’s major cities, the B-WEST program was conducted through the use of partnerships. The partners included of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau, the National
Tradeswomen Network, and the Oregon Tradeswomen Network, all in collaboration with the B-WEST staff of the community college.

Similar to the praise being received by the Pinderhughes model in 2008, the B-WEST model was also lauded as an innovation in workforce development for the training of unemployed and minority workers in the skilled trades industry. A comparison between the models reveals the difference in structure and treatment of partners that similarly aimed programs may have. For example, in the B-WEST program, employers were referenced as sources of potential hires, but did not serve as consultants on curriculum and market analysis as they do in the Pinderhughes model. Instead, employers were also trainees of their program in B-WEST. They received training on diversity management to enhance their capacity for accepting the trainees that B-WEST worked to prepare for the workforce.
Table 1 below shows the overlap of program components between the B-WEST and Pinderhughes models.

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<tr>
<th>Table 1. Comparable Operation and Trainee Service Components in B-WEST and Pinderhughes Training Models</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B-WEST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Outreach and Recruitment</td>
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<td>2. Orientation/Intake/Referral</td>
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<td>3. Skills Training</td>
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<td>a. Technical training</td>
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<td>b. Career training</td>
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<td>4. Competency Development/Measurement/Tutoring</td>
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<td>5. Job Development</td>
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<td>6. Information Dissemination (Public relations and presentations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. (Jobs &amp; Post-Training Accessability) Resource Materials/Trades Library</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Sources: B-WEST Model (1991); Pinderhughes Model (2007)*

Whereas the description of the Pinderhughes model is written with a focus on deliverables as they relate to facilitating trainee education (creation of employment opportunities and maintenance of the curriculum through partnership with firms and workforce intermediaries), the B-WEST model description is organized into a set of seven components pertaining to the operation of the overall program including administrative as well as training elements.
The models share core components of education for construction trainees such as the competency, safety certification, and soft and hard skills training. Although B-WEST and Pinderhughes models are not matched one-for-one regarding deliverables, B-WEST’s organization of deliverables (referred to “components”) are concise and illuminate that some of the services that may be found in a deeper investigation of Pinderhughes model through the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. B-WEST’s description reveals that there are supportive organizational components that are absent from the Pinderhughes model.

**Implications for applying the Pinderhughes model outside of Oakland**
To facilitate a green jobs construction trade program requires a full set of administrative and other tasks which are beyond the training component. The comparison of the Pinderhughes model to B-WEST model shows that key program supporting functions like public relations are not accounted for. While training new labor persons is the ultimate objective of these models, a municipality or set of institutions that endeavor to facilitate the Pinderhughes model will require more comprehensive information to facilitate the program as it has been instituted in California.
Chapter III: Methodology and Findings

Section A: Methodology

Research Objective
The objective of this study is to take an account of the types of workforce intermediaries that are partners in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps (OGJC) green construction pre-apprenticeship workforce development program in its application of the Pinderhughes Model of Green Jobs Training and Placement for low-income and low-skilled adults. The study will also investigate the respective contributions of each of these partners by conducting semi-structured interviews. The intent of this research is to contribute to the literature on green workforce job training program organization by providing insight into the organizational mix and full scope of activities being undertaken to facilitate the Oakland Green Jobs Corps.

The research specifically aims to provide a full inventory of the training and placement program partners of the OGJC as well as list the respective contributions of each organizational partner toward the facilitation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. The findings of this thesis research are intended to serve as a resource for other cities that are performing research to establish their own green construction training for disadvantaged workers.

In interview participants were asked to describe their organizations, its organizational structure (nonprofit, for-profit, etc.), the role of the participants’ organization in the Oakland Green Jobs Corp, how the organization became involved, and to describe their experience as at partner to date. Some of the specific interview questions included:

- How did your organization become involved in the OGJC partnership? Did someone or an institutional entity recruit you?
- Does your organization contribute additional resources or play additional roles in the OGJC beyond what you have described as your defined role?
Research Method

To obtain a full inventory of the training and placement program partners and their contributions to the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, this research employed semi-structured interview research methodology. The snowball technique of respondent recruitment was used, were in the researcher accepted references for addition research participants from an initial group of participants. This method of recruitment was useful to contact OGJC members who a) had limited or no contact information or b) were not expressly listed as participating in the OGJC. Approval was obtained from the University of Cincinnati Institutional Review Board (Approval #09-01-30-03).

Initial recruitment efforts were performed via email. Potential interviewees received an email informing them of the purpose of the research, potential application of the findings, the approximate duration (30 minutes) of the telephone interview, anticipated (minimal) professional risk, their right to remain anonymous, and their right to stop the interview at any time. The schedule of interview questions was also sent. A record of interviews will be retained in a secure location for seven years.

Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted using open-ended questions that inquired about the general work of the organization, how the organization became involved in the Oakland Green Jobs Corp partnership, and details of the services they contributed to the partnership. At the end of the interview, interviewees were asked for suggestions of other partners to talk to and if they could provide, or direct the researcher to someone who could provide a complete list of the program partners. In lieu of a telephone interview, some interviewees opted to submit email responses.

The first round of potential interviewees was recruited from those organizations that had been outlined as leading partners in the Pinderhughes model and mentioned as partners in local Bay Area press coverage of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps’ formation. This
included Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes and representatives of The Office of the Mayor of Oakland, Laney Community College, and the Ella Baker Center.

Use of the snowball recruiting method eventually led to obtaining the official list of program partners who were also then recruited to participate in the study via the same email process as the initial recruits.

**Method of Analysis**

Partners of the OGJC were classified into a workforce intermediary category based upon the description of organization given by interviewees. The roles and services provided by the organization were extracted from the accounts of the interviewees.

**Limitations and Deviation from the Methodology**

When a large number of potential interviewees failed to respond to requests for interviews, the research methodology was expanded to include content analysis—the examination of the publications to render data — on the identity of Oakland Green Jobs Corps participants and their roles in the partnership. The search for information on the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partners and their respective contributions was sought through the examination of official Oakland Green Jobs Corps program publicity materials which were provided to the researcher by the program’s “architect” agency, The Ella Baker Center.

Additionally, as interviews revealed that businesses and other organizations listed as partners on official Oakland Green Jobs Corps publicity material either 1) had never been engaged in involved in program service delivery or 2) had withdrawn from participation in the program, the official publicity materials provided by from the Ella Baker Center were no longer considered valid sources of current participants and contributions. At its end, this research project ultimately became directed toward verifying the involvement of the agencies that were advertised as partners in the formation and facilitation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps and evaluating the circumstances that led to the composition of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps as it operated in spring of 2009.
Ultimately, this study was limited by a lack of reliable information and willingness to participate in interviewee on behalf of identified organizational partners. In particular, difficulty was found among those partners who serve a regional audience or provide training to participants.

**Participants**

For professional protection of the participants, names and, in some cases, titles and affiliations interviewees were kept anonymous and intentionally vague.

Nine interviews were conducted for this study. Laney College, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, and an expert Oakland community development representative granted interviews in response to the initial round of outreach to the Oakland Green Jobs Corp partners who were identified through publicity items and local and regional media coverage.

The additional six interviews were provided by representatives of six green collar businesses that were listed as members of the Oakland Green Job Corp’s Green Employer Council according to the official materials provided to the researcher by the Ella Baker Center.

Seven of the interviews were conducted by phone. Two were conducted by email because of the business nature of the participants’ work.

**Section B: Findings**

The findings are a discussion of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps in light of the following data:

*Telephone Interviews*

- Representative of the Laney Community College
- Expert Oakland community development representative
• Green Employer Council Employer #1
• Green Employer Council Employer #2
• Green Employer Council Employer #3
• Green Employer Council Employer #4
• Green Employer Council Employer #5

**Email Interviews**

• Representative of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
• Green Business Council Employer #6

Electronic copies of official Oakland Green Jobs Corps materials were received from the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. All press materials distributed to the researcher from the Ella Baker Center were assumed to be current and accurate representations of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps program.

Due to a lack of response to requests for interviews by several representatives of the listed partnering organizations of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, research failed to produce a conclusive list that 1) verified the involvement of all of the organizations listed in local media coverage of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps and official OGJC materials that were distributed by the Ella Baker Center and 2) established a complete inventory of services and activities rendered by these organizations for the OGJC partnership.

Attempts to identify all of the partners of the Oakland Green Job Corps led to a request for an interview with the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights green jobs initiative point person who offered the following OGJC publicity materials in lieu of an initial interview:

• Green Employer Council Contact Sheet,
• Oakland Green Jobs Corps RFP (published February 2008),
• Oakland Green Jobs Corps Partnership Summary (September 5, 2008 update),
• Concept Paper: The Oakland Green Jobs Corps. (June 20, 2008 update),
• Green Employer Council information sheet,
• Oakland Green Jobs Corps Career Pathways flowchart, and
• Oakland Green Jobs Corps FAQ

Research assumed that the information on the Ella Baker Center literature was an accurate representation of the operation of the OGJC partnership at the time that they were distributed. Analysis of the official OGJC literature revealed inconsistencies regarding the program participant base and the roles of the program partners. Also, interviews revealed that three of the six interviewed employers of the Green Employer Council had withdrawn their participation although they were still listed on official publicity material.

Therefore, the official OGJC publicity literature from the Ella Baker Center was not regarded as a completely accurate source of information regarding the roles of the partners. This conclusion was also supported by interview findings that organizations, such as the Office of the Mayor and the IBEW Local Union, that were listed as key players in the delivery of services on the OGJC informational literature, had not been members of the training partnership but had only acted as panelists on the grant selection committee.

As a result, the decision was made to incorporate The Green Employer Council Contact Sheet and Oakland Green Jobs Corps Career Pathways flowchart only as sources of partner contact information whose participation would be confirmed via interview.

**Findings Part I: An Account of the Confirmed OGJC Partners**

According to the official Green Employer Council Contact Sheet and Oakland Green Jobs Corps Career Pathways Model, there are 21 institutions that participate in the convening, administration, training delivery, or employment/placement of the OGJC participants. These 21 listed partners consist of:
• A Green Employer Council of 12 private general construction, solar installation, and energy efficiency businesses,
• Two nonprofit training energy efficiency technology training centers,
• One community college with a pre-existing construction science curriculum,
• One private workforce development consulting agency,
• One nonprofit urban activism “strategy and action” center,
• Two labor unions,
• The local government as represented by the Office of the Mayor of Oakland and
• An expert advisor on the topic of workforce development.

From the 21 listed partners, only nine interviews (seven telephone and two voluntary email responses) were obtained confirming entities’ current or past involvement with the Oakland Green Jobs Corps program and partner contributions. These interviews were from a representative of the community college, six of the listed employers, and the Ella Baker Center nonprofit urban activism strategy and action agency. Three of the six indicated that they had pulled out of the partnership at various times after the initial convening of the Green Employer Council due to feelings that the program was languishing.

A description of the partner organizations and their contributions to the OGJC program is listed below. Confirmed partners and their contributions are listed in the Appendix A.

**The Primary Partners**

An interview of a representative of the Laney Community College confirmed that the initial and one-time financial capital of $250,000 for the Oakland Green Jobs Corps was issued from the City of Oakland to the partnership of Laney Community College, Work Sector, and Cypress Mandela Training Center. The award was predicated on demonstrated ability to leverage the allocated funds into additional funding, which the request for proposal for the OGJC stated would be “an important factor in the [applicant] selection process”(Oakland Green Jobs Corps RFP, February 2008).
The Ella Baker Center literature refers to the three co-grantee institutions as the “primary partners,” though this title is not wholly indicative of each institution’s contribution.

**Laney Community College:** Laney Community College is an Oakland community college that has vocational technology programs that include construction management and apprenticeship preparation, carpentry, electrics, and welding (Laney College 2009). Laney Community College and the Peralta Community College District, to which Laney belongs, acts as the fiscal agent of the Oakland Green Jobs corps grant. Laney is the fiscal agent of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps contract. They are accountable for execution of the contract, and they set and approve the budgets. “We simply hold the account,” said the Laney representative.

Laney also contributes to soft skills training of the OGJC participants. It has contributed portions of its sustainability and vocational technology training to the OGJC training program curriculum. Participants receiving advanced soft skills training and earn college credits from Laney. Although basic GED level education is a goal of the overall program (Career Pathways Model 2009), receiving a degree through the community college is one of the alternative career pathways for OGJC participants.

One of the college’s dissatisfactions with their OGJC partnership in is the political interference that the Laney College representative perceives has overemphasized certain of the contributors while complicating the process for them as the service providers. For example, the representative seemed somewhat resentful of agencies and individuals like IBEW Local 595, Dr. Pinderhughes, and the Ella Baker Center receiving media attention as “partners” when the first two had only been present to select the grantee and none of them were involved in program service delivery.

The community college representative also shared the insight that the basic pathway training models that community colleges have been using for the last 20 years consist of hard and soft training components with an experiential component that can be an internship, trial employment, or (and usually is) on-the-job. The representative expressed
that the despite the attention it was receiving, the Pinderhughes model was “fairly typical” of any workforce model (having a business advisory group, training, and placement component) and “not unique” compared to other combined training and work-based learning and job training models that a community college typically uses.

The representative was also upset that midway through the project the partnership had been found to be underfunded after the college endured negotiations that resulted in a “convoluted proposal” with “lots of restrictions” in order to meet the local government’s desire to have the program serve the “highly at risk.” The representative expressed finding the highly at risk was difficult given that fact the truly highly at risk were people with social barriers that probably would not allow them to finish the program. The representative acknowledged that despite written changes, participants of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps training program are not significantly different from the average community college participant. There are “a lot of politics. Too much. I am just trying to get to people,” the representative commented.

**Cypress Mandela, Inc.:** The involvement of Cypress Mandela was confirmed by both the Laney Community College and its Cypress Mandela representatives. The majority of information about Cypress Mandela, however, comes from the representative of its co-grantee, Laney College.

Cypress Mandela, Inc., Training Center is a community training center which provides classroom and hands-on training in the construction trades, as well as soft skills training. Cypress-Mandela has been an independent non-profit corporation since 2004, but was established in 1993 and has evolved its Cypress Mandela apprentice and construction training program after it merged with the Women in Skilled Trades Program, which started at Laney College (Cypress Mandela Homepage May 2009). Cypress Mandela advertises its strong ties to labor unions as a factor in its success.

Cypress Mandela conducts on-site training as a partner to the OGJC. However, the institution also serves as the training site for other regional Bay Area training programs.
like Richmond Build of Richmond, California. According to the Laney representative, Cypress Mandela was sought as a partner to provide recruiting and participant case-management.

**Growth Sector, Inc.,** : The involvement of Growth Sector was confirmed by its co-grantee Laney Community College. Growth Sector, Inc., is a tax exempt workforce development consultant, which works to connect colleges and community agencies (Laney representative). The Laney Community College and Growth Sector, Inc., have an ongoing relationship. Growth Sector suggested that Laney Community College, Cypress Mandela, and Growth Sector apply for the green jobs training program proposal. Despite being named as a primary partner, there is no further indication of Growth Sector’s involvement in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps.

**The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights:** The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights is a nonprofit urban advocacy agency with the motto “working for justice in the system, opportunity in our cities, and peace on our streets.” Their green collar jobs campaign (called “Green-Collar Jobs Campaign”) is “An Ella Baker Center Initiative” with its own staff like a department. The Ella Baker Center joined the green collar jobs policy movement by joining the national Apollo Alliance. With the IBEW Union Local 595, the center formed and convened the Apollo Alliance collaborative coalition that lobbied the city to allocate its settlement money (received by the State of California after energy companies for their roles in creating the California energy crisis of 2000/2001) as seed funding for a green jobs training program that would simultaneously help end traditional energy dependency and create economic opportunity for the city’s working poor. Green-Collar Jobs Campaign initiative is one of four campaigns that the center manages to accomplish its mission to create alternatives to violence and incarceration (Ella Baker Center 2009).

An organizer for the Green-Collar Jobs Campaign describes the center’s role in the partnership by saying, “Our integral role in the partnership is in the promotion of the programs and hooking people up with the opportunities” (May 2009). Indeed, the center
creates and distributes the publicity materials for the partnership to interested parties. However, it is unclear who the “people” are to whom the organizer refers. There is no evidence from the website or the representative’s email response that the center works with potential participants.

The Ella Baker Center convened the Green Employer Council twice in 2008, prior to the start of the program. Although employers of the council are also supposed to be involved in the hiring of the program participants, the Baker Center organizer seemed unsure of when and if the council would be convened again. To this effect, some of the interviewed employers indicated that the management of the council had not been solid. One respondent hesitantly referred to the council as “a work in progress,” while another questioned if it still truly existed.

It is interesting to note that the Ella Baker Center, instead of the Chamber of Commerce, convenes the employer council when the Chamber is the entity that is designated to do so in the Pinderhughes model. Also, although there are three organizations which are convening members, the Ella Baker Center is the only convening partner to have convened and facilitated the meetings.

**Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes:** Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes is the professor of urban studies at San Diego State University who created the Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Jobs and Placement on which the Oakland Green Jobs Corps presumably runs. It is unclear from research how the Ella Baker Center and Pinderhughes collaborated on the design of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. There is conflicting information – in 2007, Pinderhughes developed the model on which the training program is espoused to operate, yet the Ella Baker Center refers to itself as the “original architect” of the OGJC training program. In the September 5, 2008, minutes of the Green Employer Council, the facilitator notes to acknowledge Pinderhughes, “Brief props [i.e. acknowledgement of appreciation] to Raquel: concept, research, and energy.”
According to the Laney college representative, Pinderhughes also advised the city on how to structure the RFP for the green collar jobs training program that would become the OGJC. Although she is listed as a convening partner on the Green Employer Council roster and claimed as an advisor to the campaign by the Ella Baker Center, there is no further evidence of Pinderhughes’ contribution to the project since the campaign.

The Employers and the Green Employer Council

Employer Contributions
All employers report becoming involved with the Oakland Green Jobs Corps after being recruited by the Ella Baker Center from an existing green collar jobs employer network or becoming involved with a green jobs collar jobs network after hearing Green for All spokesman, Van Jones speak about the green jobs movement. Employers described these networks as groups of skilled laborer employing firms who had been energized to form strategies on increasing their firms’ capacity to create opportunity for disadvantaged citizens through green collar jobs training.

According to the Pinderhughes model, employers are convened into a Green Employer Council. All six interviewed employer representatives confirmed that their organizations had contributed to the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership in an advisory capacity through the Green Employer where they were consulted to help shape the curriculum by sharing their knowledge of industry standards and the qualities that their firms sought in new hires.

Two of the employers indicated that the convening of the Green Employer Council may not have been an important step in forming the Oakland Green Jobs Corps because they sensed that the partnership already knew what to do based on the Laney Community College and Cypress Mandela Inc.’s involvement.

According to employers and the Green Employer Council has been convened twice. It has not been convened since participant training has started. The Ella Baker Center did
not have a statement for when they planned to meet again, saying only that the council
used to meet semi-annually and now meets less often.

**Employer Participation Curtailed Due to the Economy**
Research found that three of the six interviewed employers listed on the OGJC council
contact list no longer considered themselves to be partners. Each of these removed
organizations cited the challenges of the economic downtown and the subsequent
reduction in available revenue-generating projects as factors in their withdrawal. Two of
the three withdrawn businesses also cited dissatisfaction or lack of communication from
the Green Employer Council’s convening partner as a factor in their withdrawal.

In the face of the economic downturn, these organizations found that they needed to
focus all of their attention on internal affairs, referring to it as matter of “survival,” and
allowed their relationship with the OGJC to languish. However, both of the
organizations continue to support the OGJC goals and look forward to the possibility of
becoming involved again when the economic circumstances become more favorable.

Three interviewed employers mentioned that their companies were currently on hiring
freezes in light of the economy. This included one of the three participating employers
who said “with the way the economy is there aren’t a lot of jobs out there so a lot of
people won’t be getting hired.” However, the same representative stated that they looked
forward to hiring from the OGJC participants when the economy turned favorable. The
employer stated that they particularly looked forward to hiring participants from Oakland
because of the city’s efforts to build a sustainable city. Only one of the three employers
that considers themselves active in the OGJC partnership retains the ability to be willing
hire.
Findings Part II: The Institutional Development of Green Jobs Training for Economically Disadvantaged Persons of Oakland, California

Findings reveal that the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership has been less a case of uniting many disparate community organizations than it has been the union of a few existing smaller pre-existing business networks. The OGJC partnership can characterized as the joining together of informal networks of low-income-serving educational institutions with informal networks of social justice and sustainability-minded employers and nonprofits under a political campaign begun by a social justice advocacy agency.

The establishment of the small organizational networks that comprise the green collar jobs training institution for economically disadvantaged jobs seekers in the City of Oakland can be discussed in terms of three distinct phases in the Oakland green jobs movement: 1) prior to the green collar jobs movement, 2) during the green collar jobs movement, and 3) since the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps (awarding of the grant for the proposed Laney Community College/ Cypress Mandela Inc./ Growth Sector partnership). Graphic representations of Oakland Green Job Corps’ institutional developments can be found in Figures 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3.

Exploration the interactions of workforce intermediaries in the formation of the OGJC

Research identified that five categories of groups that came together to form the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. These groups are listed below along with the entities of that type, based upon the application of the Pinderhughes model in Oakland, California:
1. Educational institutions
   - Laney Community College
   - Cypress Mandela Inc. Training Center
2. Workforce specialists
   - Growth Sector, a private workforce consulting firm
   - Professor Pinderhughes, professor of urban studies
3. Green jobs advocates
   - Ella Baker Center and Mr. Van Jones, policy advocacy center
   - City of Oakland, the local government
4. Employers (Post-training opportunities)
   - Green contractors and construction businesses
   - Traditional contractors and construction businesses
   - Labor unions
5. Non-profits
   - Various

Oakland, California, Phase 1: Prior to the green collar jobs

Prior to the green collar jobs movement relationships, a lingering relationship existed between the two educational institutions, Laney Community College and Cypress Mandela, Inc., from 1993 when Laney helped Cypress Mandela formulate its curriculum. Independently, each educational institution had relationships with organizations from other categories of workforce intermediaries. Figure 1.1 depicts the relationships between the entities that would become the Oakland Green Jobs Corps prior to the partnership’s formal organization.

Laney Community College was actively partnering with the Growth Sector private workforce consultant while Cypress Mandela maintained an ongoing relationship with labor unions to place their graduates. Meanwhile, among all entities that would become involved in the network of Oakland Green Jobs Corps training, only the educational institutions and the local city government were actively engaged in activities and
initiatives that affected the economically disadvantaged that the Oakland Green Jobs Corps would eventually seek to train.

Green construction employers, traditional construction firms, and nonprofits were engaged in pursuing their own missions. They were wholly independent from one another in terms of their sustainability efforts, though as a group, for-profit businesses were always passively affected by the incentives and regulations of the local government.

**Figure 1.1 - Existing Oakland, California, Workforce Intermediaries’ Relationships for Green Collar Training and Employment -- Prior to Green Collar Jobs Movement**

**Oakland, California Phase 2: During green jobs movement**

During the Oakland, California’s green jobs movement, which can be defined as the time at which the Ella Baker Center began to advocate green jobs as pathways out of poverty and lobby for the establishment of green construction training programs, there was a burst of relationship-building among the educational, workforce specialist, employer and
advocate categories on workforce intermediaries that would eventually become part of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps.

Previous interactions among partnership entities remained intact, while advocacy initiatives from the Ella Baker Center encouraged more cooperative interactions. The Ella Baker Center and local professor Dr. Pinderhughes became aligned as the center championed the professor’s green jobs training model. The Ella Baker Center began to lobby the local government for financial set-asides for green jobs training.

Figure 1.2 shows that employers underwent significant changes when political momentum was building for the green jobs movement. Some traditional construction agencies became “green” by aligning themselves with causes of the movement as promoted by the Ella Baker Center. Groups of newly minted and previously established

Note: * “Employer” changes to “Green Employer” compared to Figure 1.1 when firms’ leadership decides to pursue sustainability as the product of their services. Employers of the green employer council decide to make sustainability their driving factor after first hand encounters of hearing spokesperson for the Oakland jobs green collar jobs movement, Van Jones, speak about the promise of green jobs or through friends and business associates who were involved with the movement.
green construction trades business began to establish networks, by deciding to pursue sustainability as the product of their services, bringing other similar businesses into the movement, or seeking more ways to become involved in providing employment to economically disadvantaged individuals. Additionally, where for-profit employers had once been recipients of local government influence, by joining the green jobs movement they began to exert political influence back upon the local government as supporters of the Ella Baker Center-led efforts.

**Oakland, California, Phase 3: Upon the formation of green jobs movement**

Phase 3 describes the arrangement of interactions and networks of the workforce intermediaries involved in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps at the point in time when the Pinderhughes model was proposed and applied, shaping the partnerships to meet funder (local government) requirements. At this point, the structure of workforce intermediaries is characterized by the expansion of the organically formed workforce networks to include more similarly-aimed organizations and the streamlining of partnerships.

The networks which existed before and during the green jobs movement were expanded by the application of the Pinderhughes model. The informal network of employers was expanded to include the labor union and the nonprofit GRID Alternatives’ community center. At the point of formation of Oakland Green Jobs Corps, all were considered capable of providing post-OGJC training or employment opportunity to graduates. The newly-formed network is the Green Employer Council.

The existing partnership between Laney Community College and Cypress Mandela was renewed to create a larger network that became the Oakland Green Job Corps’ primary partners, which included the community college’s previous partner, Growth Sector. The expansion of this network was predicated on the local government’s request to demonstrate that any funds allocated toward the Oakland Green Jobs Corps training program would go to a team with a track record of training success. Growth Sector, itself, suggested that the college pair together with Cypress Mandela to pursue the city funding for the program.
The streamlined characterization of the structure of workforce intermediaries upon the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps can be attributed to the return of the focus of interactions, influence, and activities upon the target group: Oakland’s disadvantaged job seekers. During this phase, city government invested its financial resources into serving the target group, while the primary partners started to execute training as a unit, and the Green Employer Council awaited the opportunity to provide training to matriculating students.

When research was conducted for this study in the Spring of 2009, the first cohort of Oakland Green Jobs Corps participants which begun training in the Fall of 2008 had not
yet completed their skills training. During this span of time, the U.S. Bureau of Labor reported a 3% increase in unemployment from 6.1% in October 2008 to 9.1% in May 2009 (2010). An extended chronological examination of the health of the OGJC beyond formation would depict a sharp drop in the number of participants in the Green Employer Council, reflecting the economic pressures that forced some of the employers to discontinue involvement with the partnership as was discussed in the Findings I section.

Discussion of the evolution of the phases of Oakland Green Jobs Corps

Pre-existing networks

The individual networks that would ultimately become components of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership emerged separately during each of those phases leading up to the formation of the greater Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership. For example, although they were not collaborating on a consistent basis, primary partners and regional educational institutions, Laney Community College and Cypress Mandela Inc. enjoyed a pre-existing relationship that dated back to 1993, when the college advised the training center on establishing its vocational curriculum.

According to interviews, the networks among green employers depicted in Phase 2 were fledgling job creation strategy networks that green collar construction trade businesses had begun to organize after being energized by Van Jones’ speaking tour that encouraged businesses and citizens to lobby for green jobs creation as well. The jobs creation strategy networks consisted of building trades institutions that sought to educate themselves on how to create or become a part of an opportunity to provide training to the aspiring green construction workers from low-income backgrounds. Research did not provide an insight into how many of these networks had begun, but several of the businesses that had become part of the Green Employer Council reported being brought into the sustainability movement by other businesses that were part of the movement. Employers who reported being part of such independent networks reported that they joined the Oakland Green Jobs Corps because it appeared to present an opportunity they were seeking.
Strengthening of existing networks, expansion of business contacts outside
industry
The relationship dynamics of the organizations within the small networks showed a
tendency to change over the course of the green collar jobs campaign. In all cases,
connections among organizations were strengthened and networks expanded. Laney and
Cypress Mandela, Inc., consciously strengthened their ties (if not only publicly) to obtain
the training program grant from the city, becoming two of the three organizations in what
would become the OGJC “primary partners.” In doing so, Cypress Mandela, Inc.,
network was expanded through association to contain Growth Sector, which was a
private consultant for the college. In deciding to pursue sustainability, newly minted
green businesses also came to connect with businesses that had been green from the
outset.

The nature of interactions changes through formation phases
Patterns of interaction among organizations also changed as the greater Oakland Green
Jobs Corps partnership progressed. One-way and two-way patterns of communication
between organizations underwent transformation as politics shifted, partnerships were
solidified, and OGJC partner roles were defined. For example, during the green collar
jobs campaign the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights initially exerted one-way
communication with the local government during Phase 2, the advocacy stage, as it
primarily sent out messages on the social and economic benefits of green collar jobs
training programs to influence action. Upon succeeding in influencing the local
government to fund the Oakland Green Jobs Corp for the training of Oakland’s low-
income residents, the institutional development moved into Phase 3, with where local
government and center became partners. The nature of interaction between the two
entities changed accordingly the two-way communication of negotiation and
collaboration (represented by the two-way arrow in Figure 1.3) replacing the previous
one-way messaging of advocacy from the Ella Baker Center to local government.
Similarly, prior to the green collar jobs movement in Phase 1, the business community was on the receiving end of the local government’s one-way business assistance services. However, during the green collar jobs campaign in Phase 2, involved green employers began to reverse the dominant influence as one-way communication back at the local government through lobbying the government in favor of the Apollo Alliance proposal.

**Patterns of interaction among organizations within the greater OGJC partnership**

The expansion and linking together of small pre-existing networks under the greater Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership umbrella has not resulted in connections being formed between each organization to one another. The figures depicting the evolution of the partnership of workforce intermediaries that formed the Oakland Green Jobs Corps show that there are some organizations within the greater partnership that never interact despite their unification under the cause of green jobs for Oakland’s disadvantaged job seekers.

For example, the employers never interacted with the educational institutions. Workforce specialists never interact with the non-profits. And, although the Ella Baker Center has been the sole convener of the Green Employer Council to date, and manages the creation and distribution of the official Oakland Green Jobs Corps publicity material information, including the career pathways model of partners and services, the representative from the center was not knowledgeable about the role of its labor union partners.

Conversely, the small networks of partners in the same categories (i.e., educational institutions and employers) remained intact and, according to research, represent the highest level of organizational transparency and consistent communication. For example, the representative of Laney Community College was able to speak at length about the services of its small network partners Cypress Mandela, Inc., and Growth Sector, but was unaware of who the employers of the Green Employer Council were or the role of the Ella Baker Center since the grant had been awarded. Similarly, the interviewees from the Green Employer Council for-profit employers that formed the initial networks in
Phase 2 spoke of themselves as a solid group, despite ambiguity about the Ella Baker Center’s next steps for the overall council.

**Summary of Findings**
This case study investigated the variety of workforce intermediaries and their respective roles in the facilitation of Pinderhughes Model of Green Jobs Training and Placement at the Oakland Green Jobs Corps (OGJC) local green construction pre-apprenticeship workforce development program of Oakland, California. Through nine semi-structured interviews with and content analysis of OGJC publicity materials, the case study revealed findings on the institution composition on the OGJC and insights on the roles relationships among these entities had on the formation of the OGJC.

Representatives of Laney Community College, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, six business and nonprofits organizations listed on the Green Employers Council, and one expert on workforce development in Oakland, California, confirmed that the following types of entities had an active role in the formation and facilitation of the OGJC training programs:

- An independent workforce development agency,
- A regional vocational training center,
- A regional community college,
- A nonprofit advocacy agency and its agents,
- A workforce advisory board comprised of for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and
- An advising workforce program specialist.

Interviews revealed that, at the time of this case study, the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership had fewer active participants in all three levels of its Green Employer Council – Participating Employers, Oakland Green Jobs Corps Partners, and Convening Partner – than was represented by its publicity materials. Several of the larger institutions were present in the Oakland Green Jobs Corp partnership in name only since OGJC inception,
while employers had begun to consider themselves withdrawn from the project since the partnership’s formation.

For example, interview participants reported that the Office of the Mayor/local government has had no role outside in the OGJC since authorizing funding that allowed the OGJC to go forward. There is no known level of involvement from IBEW Local 595. Growth Sector is listed as Oakland Green Jobs Corps Partner and its effective role is inactive, yet the organization contributes its name and reputation for applicable workforce specialization to the contract as the only co-grantee.

Contrary to having ten businesses and nonprofits listed as current members of the Green Employer Council, the study found that 50% of the interviewed employers considered themselves to be withdrawn from OGJC partnership. Withdrewn employers cited a combination of lack of clear leadership from the OGJC partnership, subsequent unmet expectations for ongoing communication and convening of the Green Employer Council, and an inability to hire OGJC program graduates due a downturn in the economy as reasons for their withdrawal, although they emphasized that they remain supportive of the OGJC cause.

When institutional development is considered, the Oakland, California, entities that would work together to found, fund, and facilitate the Oakland Green Jobs Corps were recognized as belonging to five mission-defined categories – employers, educational institutions, green jobs advocates, nonprofits, and workforce specialists. The second set of findings reveals that the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership was not formed from disparate entities. Instead, the OGJC partnership was formed through the union of several pre-existing common interest networks and professional partnerships among the entities that would become its future partners. Many of the entities that joined the OGJC partnership joined because of the influence of an entity within the same network, which is particularly true of employer category.
The nature of the pre-existing relationships among the partnership’s formative entities can be observed over the course of three distinct chronological phases in the OGJC formation: Prior to the Green Collar Jobs Movement, During the Green Collar Jobs Movement, and Upon the Establishment of the OGJC. Prior to the green collar jobs movement, the only reported pre-existing partnerships were those that helped each of the entities carry out their business and serve their respective constituencies.

During the green jobs movement in Oakland, the environment of heavy political advocacy for a city-funded green jobs training program for Oakland’s economically disadvantaged job seekers inspired a burst of network-building between entities based on their common interests or in the ability to pair their services to contribute to the advocated initiative. For example, the businesses that would become some of the OGJC employers reported first hearing of the green jobs movement message from the advocates like the Ella Baker Center, then joining or recruiting other sustainability-minded employers into OGJC-supportive green business networking groups. In the case of Oakland, there was a single central advocate in the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, which advocated the cause, the method (the Pinderhughes Model), and recruits other advocates.

When city funding was authorized for the OGJC, the leadership of the newly authorized initiative began to officially organize the Oakland Green Jobs Corps for program facilitation in the final phase (Upon Establishment of the OGJC). Recruitment of supporters stopped and those institutional supports that became prominent in the advocacy phase (During the Green Collar Jobs Movement) were tapped to fulfill the roles of the corresponding roles within the Pinderhughes Model. Upon the establishment of the OGJC, the pre-existing networks were also formally expanded to achieve the purposes of the model. For example, where the organically-formed green employer network had initially consisted of for-profit businesses that were interested in hiring future OGJC graduates, the network was expanded to include nonprofit organizations that could also provide jobs under the auspices of establishing the OGJC Green Employer Council.
According to the Pinderhughes model, the leadership and coordination of the different functions of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps is supposed to be exercised through the convening of the Green Employer Council by the convening partners. The entities under the Oakland Green Jobs Corps ultimately perform three functions: leadership, convening, and training. Although entities of the OGJC are assembled together under same partnership umbrella, they do not engage with one another outside of their respective functioning groups. In light of the fact that the Green Employer Council had convened only once at the time of this research, feelings of disorganization, unawareness of present action, and uncertainty over the direction of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnerships were reported by all interviewees from all sectors.
Chapter IV: Conclusions

At its root, the ideal of achieving social progress that draws supporters to the green collar jobs workforce development movement of the 21st Century is not a great departure from the 1960’s attempt to alleviate inner-city social ills through workforce development policy. Career pathways-based green collar jobs training programs, like the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, that prepare low-income persons for careers in the skilled labor industry present American cities with an opportunity to pursue a triple bottom line of environmental sustainability, social and economic benefit. This pursuit would enable them to counteract the effects of social and environmental misconduct that had been part of national culture and practice for decades.

When targeted at historically disadvantaged urban populations, these types of jobs training programs are a means of reintroducing family supporting-wage job opportunities into the communities whose prospects for economic development have been limited over sustained periods of time by compounding factors of national industrial shifts and intentional methods of disinvestment. Training for construction-related skilled labor jobs, in particular, also reintroduces skill-based promotional systems to these communities. This enables individuals without higher education to gain access to middle and high income earning brackets.

Green collar jobs training and placement programs for the economically disadvantaged or persons with other barriers to the workforce are flourishing in several major cities across the United States. Although programs are focused on training hard-to-hire populations for careers, customizing the skill training to also address environmental issues or train particularly afflicted subsets that are location-specific is a common trend among these locally organized programs. Yet, green retrofitting construction, the industry of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, has been one of the most promoted green collar careers because of the universal presence of built infrastructure in all American locations.
The Oakland Green Jobs Corps of Oakland, California, was selected as the focus for this study because it was distinguished by its claim to be patterned after an innovative pathways model that was developed specifically for green jobs workforce development – The Pinderhughes Model for Green Collar Jobs Training and Placement. This concluding chapter seeks to provide insight from the findings of the OGJC case study to inform other localities on the processes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in the establishment of future green collar training and placement program partnerships.

The chapter begins with a comprehensive analysis of the events leading to the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps based on the accounts of the OGJC partner interviews and content analysis of the OGJC publicity material (including the inventory of the types of workforce intermediaries in the partnership). It also offers an analysis of the Pinderhughes model as a workforce development model, including recommendations regarding its use based on the input of workforce development experts and general organizational development principles. The chapter also includes three lessons on attracting partnership participants and maintaining a well-run construction-based green collar jobs training and placement program and partnership. Finally, the chapter ends with general insights gained on the nature and vulnerabilities of construction-based green collar jobs training and placement program.

**A critical analysis of how the Oakland Green Jobs Corps was formed**

The formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps began when local government funding to create a green collar jobs training and placement partnership program with the potential to enhance the quality of life for low-income citizens and improve the state of the environment in the area. The victory resulted from the successful lobbying efforts of a wide range of community stakeholders that were led by a central advocacy agency with a program execution plan created by a regional green jobs expert.

When the one-time funding amount was authorized by the local government for the creation of the OGJC, the city issued an RFP for a partnership of agencies to provide the training and act as fiscal administrators of the grant. The grant making efforts were
executed by the local government and a team of workforce development advisors that would become the Convening Partners of the Pinderhughes model, including the model’s author, Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes, the Ella Baker Center, and construction union IBEW Local 565. The grant was awarded to the pre-existing partnership network of a regional college, Laney Community College, a professional partner of the college, a workforce development firm, Growth Sector Inc., and a regional vocation center and former collaborator with the college, Cypress Mandela Training Center. They were selected based on their combined expertise, confidence in their ability to successfully collaborate, and demonstrated ability to execute low-income workforce development, including accessing the target population. These three agencies became the Pinderhughes model’s Primary Partners/Oakland Green Jobs Corps Partners.

The Green Employer Council was the last piece of the Pinderhughes model partnership to be established. The Green Employer Council, a group of green businesses that were assembled to act similarly to a workforce investment board, to provide insight on the types of skills needed in by the local businesses, and to provide on-the-job training and job placement opportunities to the OGJC program trainees. A nonprofit that had the capacity to provide on-the-job training was admitted onto the council. It is unclear how the businesses that became listed as members of the Green Employer Council were selected. However, it is definite that several of the green employers firms were already acquainted with each other from being members of the same green business networks that formed in support the OGJC under the influence of the Ella Baker Center.

This is the point in the chronology of the case study that the complete institutional development of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership can be observed. There were five types of categories of entities will ultimately act in the interest of economically disadvantaged job seekers. They are Advocates, Educational Institutions, Workforce Specialists, Employers, and Nonprofits. The institutional development took place in three phases (refer to Figures 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3).
Phase 1, “Prior to the Green Collar Jobs Movement,” is like the control, where businesses and other organizations had not been engaged in advocacy and were presumed unaware of the impending movement. During this time the interaction between the future partners were those that were the pre-existing ones used to accomplish day-to-day business. In Phase 2, “During the Green Collar Jobs Movement,” was characterized by the establishment of new relationships among previously disparate entities into networks, and these networks working in tandem with the central advocate to lobby the local government. During Phase 3, “Upon the Establishment of the OGJC,” the pre-existing partnership and networks of Phases 1 and 2 became the basis of the formal groupings of the Pinderhughes’ model (the Convening Partners, Primary Partners, and Green Employer Council). The pre-existing partnership and networks are expanded to include entities that compliment their function in the Pinderhughes Model.

One of the things that were not depicted in the institutional development, or effectively communicated among the members of the OGJC partnership was the Ella Baker Center’s reduced role in the leadership. Whereas the Ella Baker Center had been a figurehead among media and even supporters, once the OGJC partnership was formalized, the center’s representatives adopted an ideology of shared leadership responsibility as one the Pinderhughes model’s of multiple Convening Members. However, despite receiving continued media praise and attention, the reality was that other Convening Members’ active involvement ceased with the granting of OGJC funds.

The Center’s last act of leadership at the time of the case study was convening the only meeting of the Green Employer Council members and Primary Partner. After that initial meeting the Ella Baker Center returned to tending to its other initiatives. However, because the center had been the only active OGJC leadership since the formation of the OGJC and the only leadership to which Green Business Council members had been exposed, expectations persisted among all the case study participants that the Ella Baker Center was solely responsible for coordinating the communications for the OGJC partnership. When the partners experienced frustration over a lack of communication regarding the progress, next steps, and, in the case of 50% of the interviewed employers,
the need to withdraw from the partnership because of economic recessions, frustration and disappointment was somewhat erroneously directed at the Ella Baker Center because of this misconception.

At the conclusion of the case study, in March 2009, the health of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps was in jeopardy due to several issues. When several Green Employer Council withdrew from the partnership after economic downturn diminished their ability to take on new hires, it was uncertain that the inaugural class of trainees that had begun their training in October 2008 would be able to fulfill the on-the-job training component of their career pathway. To compound the issue of possible on-the-job prospects, because of the OGJC’s limited convening; it is uncertain whether the Convening Partners were aware of this potential challenge to graduating their first class. Although all dissenting entities were hopeful for a rebound in strong leadership and communication because of their commitment to OGJC, the overarching sentiments from the majority of participants (and observing workforce experts) were that of dissatisfaction with the partnership’s perceived disorganization.

**Evaluation of the innovation of the Pinderhughes Model**

As for the Pinderhughes Model, this case study has found the model to be repackaged version of a basic workforce development that utilizes a traditional curriculum that mixes soft skill, hard skill, and on-the-job training components with a pathway component into a contemporary field of work. As an anonymous interviewee who has worked with workforce development for over 15 years pointed out, “It is not unique” (2009). Research finds nothing inherit to the model makes it particularly suited for green careers — OSHA safety training is basic element of construction training, and classes on the new technology is basic soft skill training for any pathways model. The interviews revealed that, in comparison to the basic low-income training model, the most outstanding innovations of the Pinderhughes model include 1) the demands it places on the local government to provide business support for existing and future green business, and 2) reliance on the entities external to the model (i.e. “members of the Berkeley’s low income communities” (Pinderhughes 2007) to execute recruitment efforts.
The section of the model defining the government involvement specifies that the government incentivize the establishment of all green business in the city, not just those involved in the partnership, by creating a more amenable business environment. The model could do without this accessory recommendation as business establishment has little direct relation to and no explicit value in the *skills* training of low-income persons. It can be argued that making the business environment more amenable to green business establishment may be a long-range strategy to grow an investment in future placement opportunities that may eventually lead to the temporary or permanent hire of an Oakland Green Jobs Corps. However, this is a feeble proposition as there is no guarantee that general business development strategies would result in green businesses taking on OGJC trainees if they reach the stage of maturity where they can hire temporary workers.

Pinderhughes’ second innovation of leaving recruitment efforts for the OGJC to community members, which are external to the model by not being connected to any other partner nor being governed by the model’s leadership, is not a strategy that will insure the longevity of the program either. It is in fact a probable liability to the partnership. First of all, the effectiveness of this approach is wholly contingent upon the willingness of the community and is beholden to their perceptions of the program which could be negative as well as positive due to any number of influences. Secondly, there is no quality control on the communications. Without an internal communications function, there is no way to insure the necessary depth or accuracy of the information that is being passed along about the OGJC services or achievements. And last, by relying on word-of-mouth campaigns of the community members, the OGJC partnership does not have a mechanism to effectively disseminate time-sensitive information such as the change of time or date of an interest session.

This discussion is not to say that Pinderhughes model was explicitly written to aid Oakland’s community marketing mission. Rather, the point is to draw notice to the fact that the Pinderhughes model in regards to its prescriptions for skill-building is rather typical. However, the description of the model is written in a way that incorporates
subject matter that is neither pertinent nor relevant to communicating the requirements of the training model. This may cause readers who have not yet developed a critical eye for green-collar or workforce development policies to assess the model as more innovative than it is because of amount of content incorporated into the model.

For example, though the model was created to focus on preparing workers for emerging occupational opportunities of the green movement, 9 of the 17 sectors and jobs that Pinderhughes touts that her model is aimed to assist, including bicycle repair, recycling, tree cutting and pruning, are industries that have existed for decades, are not directly related to reducing energy use, and require no new skill training because they are established occupations. Other sectors the Pinderhughes model identifies as part of its innovation include “food production, using organic and/or sustainably grown agricultural products,” “green furniture (using environmentally certified and recycled wood and other materials),” and “green printing (using non-toxic inks and dyes, recycled, paper, etc).” None of these fields are emergent either – they are also long established trades, with known training methodologies that do not necessitate the use of the Pinderhughes model, and require a change of sourcing or the integration of uncomplicated resource, such as a different variety of grain, ink, paper, or bamboo to differentiate them as “green” among traditional businesses in their sector.

**Indications of environmental-related notoriety sought in Oakland**

Evidence from research on the implementation of the Pinderhughes Model in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps indicates that its use may have been a means for advancing regional political motives, more than an earnest or carefully considered strategy toward the empowerment of Oakland’s low-income job seekers. The merit of using the Pinderhughes Model for Green Jobs Training and Placement in the City of Oakland’s green workforce development may be evaluated based upon an evaluation of the city’s other sustainability efforts and an assessment of viability of the greatly advertised Pinderhughes Model.
Despite workforce specialists pointing out to be obvious issues of efficacy regarding innovation, significant political excitement was generated in the Green Collar Jobs Movement by rallying behind the Pinderhughes model as an innovation in workforce development that complimented the also burgeoning field of green collar jobs to which it was to be applied. From the course of the movement to inception, the plan to use the Pinderhughes model for the OGJC has passed the desk of many workforce specialists from agencies internal and external to the current partnership without any known challenges to its claimed unique applicability.

Community marketing is a one of many methods for growing a local economy for both tourism and as well as the attraction of businesses. The moniker of “sustainability” is valued in contemporary American culture. Recognition as a sustainable business or city connotes the presence of an innovative environment that may prove to be economically advantageous in this era catering to an innovative “creative class” of individuals has been promoted as economic development policy for almost a decade by social scientist Richard Florida (2002). Under these influences, it is reasonable to believe any city would strive to be thought of as sustainability-minded.

Interviews of employers from the Oakland Green Jobs Corps Green Employer Council inform that in recent years Oakland, California, has been working to build a reputation as a sustainability-minded an environmentally-innovative city. At the time this research was conducted, the City of Oakland web homepage advertised several city-run sustainability and other environmental programs. However, the links to explore more information about the projects do not work, and no additional information could be found about the programs in independent web searches. Also, the research revealed that that the city went through a lengthy process to ensure that the request for proposal for the Oakland Green Jobs Corps program indicated that the most economically destitute of citizens would be served by the training program. However, interviewees reveal that it was common knowledge that the initial class of participants was not unlike the average community college student.
Lesson 1: Imparting a sense of “green-consciousness” may be good for attracting employer involvement

Two employers in this case study shared the sentiments that echoed the mid-20th Century workforce development discovery. They were more interested in the prospect a being able to hire from a pool of job-ready candidates rather than those who solely trained to perform hard skills. The finding that was unique to the green aspect of their concerns was that one employer reported that he considered the teaching of “green consciousness” as a basic skill he wanted to find in the graduated participants. The employer continued by saying that, in his opinion, work experience can be dramatically influenced by whether the work team is a sustainability-minded team or simply a team of workers who are just doing green jobs.

All of the confirmed employers of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps Green Employer Council provided sustainability services or had independently joined green business councils to initiate the green collar jobs revolution because they believed in the cause prior to the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. It is possible that they share these opinions, and the importance of “green consciousness” should be further investigated as to whether its inclusion or omission from green collar jobs training is a major factor in the recruitment of sustainability-minded green employers.

Lesson 2: Planning for leadership through transition is crucial

Interviewees of this study were able to talk extensively about the general political happenings and the actions they had committed in lobbying for the establishment of a green jobs training program prior to the formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. Businesses reported aligning themselves with other firms that were interested in green practices and hiring while others had joined the Apollo Alliance’s efforts. However, since becoming organized in the greater partnership of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, the partners’ sense that the direction of the movement in Oakland has become muddled. Many of the interviewed partners fault the confusion on the OGJC organizers.
The real problem appears to be that OGJC partners erroneously look to the same leadership structure from the advocacy, Phase 2, when the leadership structure was reformatted upon the official formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps – The Oakland Green Jobs Corps is stalled because all of the partners, including those which were recently currently endowed with the power to convene the Green Employer Council, are waiting on waiting on the action by someone else.

Leadership between phases for institutional development will and should change if the primary actors do not possess or are not interested the organization’s management. During the campaign for green collar jobs in Oakland (Phase 2 of the institutional development of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps), the Ella Baker Center affiliate of the Oakland, California, Apollo Alliance and Apollo Alliance spokesperson, Van Jones, were the figureheads leading the advocacy movement for green jobs training program creation in Oakland. Together, they were orators and advocates who skillfully spoke to rallying people into political action. But political action and advocacy are no longer needed when the battle is won, so their leadership faded, and Van Jones moved on to other pursuits.

Upon the official formation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, the four convening partner organizations (the Ella Baker Center, Dr. Pinderhughes, the Oakland Mayor’s Office, and the IBEW 565 Union) were given the power to convene and conduct strategic meetings. However, as affiliate to the former figurehead of the movement, disseminator of OGJC publicity material, and the only agency that has convened the Green Employer Council, the Ella Baker Center came to be erroneously perceived among the OGJC partners as the preeminent leader of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps program.

Future green jobs training programs need a clear leadership succession plan if the leadership capacity of initial leaders changes between Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the program’s institutional development. Mismatched expectations of performance lead to poor partnership participation experience and undue disappointment that can wrongly affect a convening partner’s reputation. For example, in Oakland, where the majority of the interviewed partners politely alluded to feeling dissatisfaction over weak leadership
by the Ella Baker Center since OGJC formations, the interview with the Ella Baker Center representative revealed that the Center did not view itself as more than the creator of the OGJC, having no greater leadership responsibilities than any other convening member. This position was affirmed in that the Ella Baker Center representatives openly shared their lack of knowledge about the operations of some of the partners, contrary to what a leader would.

Slow dismantling of a partnership such as the Oakland Green Jobs Corps can occur from the lack of definitive leadership in the formation and execution stages of its institutional development. In Oakland, the community college reported the OGJC partnership to be “chaotic” as it worked to prepare for the arrival of the OGJC program participants to learn their pre-construction skills. Several of the green businesses, whose skill-building contribution does not occur until later in the program curriculum, reported being stalled or being uncertain whether or not OGJC was active any longer because they had not been convened since September 2008. The need for organizational leadership is a basic tenet of all initiatives and organizations, but in Oakland it could easily be attributed to:

- “The left hand does not know what the right hand is doing” phenomenon wherein the OGJC partners were unaware of the actions and sometimes the purpose of the rest of the partners. This is a publicity risk that paints the picture of dysfunction.
- Attrition of employers from the Green Employer Council due to a lack of a programmatic mechanism to generate collective ideas to endure economic troubles or help them realize other contributions they could make toward the green jobs training partnership.

**Lesson 3: Plan to incorporate all sizes of businesses in the hiring pool**

One of the logistical issues that the Oakland Green Jobs Corps encountered during its first round of training in October 2008 was that many of the for-profit business members of the Green Employer Council withdrew from participation in the partnership because of the economic downturn. Because the businesses of the Green Employer Council were intended to provide paid on-the-job training experiences to matriculated OGJC program
participants, the final step in their green collar jobs training, this occurrence revealed that the success of a training and placement program is sensitive to economic conditions as well as the quality of training.

The firms on the Green Employer Council varied in size from small and medium-sized construction companies to large alternative energy providers. Of the interviewed employers, 50% (all of which were small firms) withdrew from OGJC participation because of their inability to afford salaries for additional employees. Some smaller construction companies even reported that they had to lay off current employees to survive, while others cited their hiring freezes as a chance to “focus on internal operations at the time.” The firms that were still hiring were the large companies.

Where paid on-the-job training experience is a key component of a pathways training model, it is essential that a pool of employers with the capacity to place each program participant be maintained. As larger companies have shown they are more economically resilient, partnerships that feature rely on a defined hiring pool of companies would be well advised to create a council that is well-diversified in terms of the size of businesses.

Training partnerships should approach the selection of Green Employer Council businesses with a mindset similar to financial portfolio management and seek to diversify the size of businesses in the hiring pool to include larger firms, which have been shown to maintain the capacity to take on new hires regardless of the national economic situation. It would be useful to have an employer partnership management tool developed that could aid training partnership organizers compose an economy-durable hiring pool/Green Employer Council by assessing local businesses’ employment risk and developing a formula for the size of companies the program should seek to include.

Without employing a sophisticated model, an alternative strategy to recession-proof the availability of placement opportunities for trainees by minimizing reliance on smaller firms that have lower resistance to economic downturns would be obtaining all the necessary placement commitments from large companies first. Smaller firms could then
be pursued (providing a surplus of job placement opportunities) for the purpose of providing participants a greater variety of on-the-job experiences.

Final Thoughts

This study concludes that the City of Oakland’s green collar construction program would be equally effective at the training of disadvantaged worker regardless of whether a traditional low-income pathways training model or the Pinderhughes model for Green Collar Job Training and Placement had been used. In the case of Oakland, significant political excitement was generated in the Green Collar Jobs Movement by rallying behind the Pinderhughes model as an innovation in workforce development that complimented the also burgeoning field of green collar jobs to which it was to be applied. However, the true measure of a “green” jobs training program is in the curriculum, not in the professional expertise or associations of the training model’s creator. Although the combination of institutions that populated the Oakland Green Jobs Corps partnership are common in most metropolitan areas in the United States, this study does not recommend the implementation of the Pinderhughes Model of Green Jobs Training and Placement for the establishment of new green jobs training programs for disadvantaged workers.

The training delivery portion of the model has been confirmed by workforce development experts to be no different from traditional low-income workforce development. The accessory recommendations (regarding government and community member-based recruitment efforts) that differentiate it from the traditional pathway model offer no significant enhancement to the program and, instead, introduce possible risk. The recommendations to have government incentivize all green business bears no evidence of direct benefit to the training initiative, while the recommendation to leave responsibility of recruitment efforts for the program poses risk to the proliferation of the program.

The establishment of a green collar jobs training may occur over phases, including one of political awareness and lobbying movement to secure funding, as it did Oakland. It is critical that once the partners are confirmed, the leadership reaffirm itself or address any
structural changes, then remain communicative to ensure the viability of the partnership. At the time of this study, the weak leadership and communication in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps had lead to withdrawal of employers, who were also withdrawing because economic downturns hindered their organization’s ability to hire trainees. The degree to which the presence of strong and transparent leadership could have mitigated the withdrawals that were caused by economic pressures is unknown, but all participants (withdrawn and active) indicated a desire for stronger leadership.

The withdrawal of partners due to the economic recession shows that career pathways green collar jobs training and placement programs are economically vulnerable. Trainees’ program completion is reliant the capacity of firms to take on new hires. In a 2010 economic report, the council of advisors to the president rated the job losses in the national construction industry as “moderately substantial” (Council of Economic Advisors 2010). Unfortunately, over the course the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, beginning in October 2008 the State of California’s unemployment rate rose steadily from 8.2% to 11.3% in May 2009, during the time of this study, and continuing to its peak at 12.6% in March 2010, eight months after the first class of OGJC was scheduled to graduate (US Bureau Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics 2011).

Arguments for green jobs viability advocated that green retrofitting jobs are sustainable in the sense the jobs cannot be outsourced because the built infrastructure on which skilled laborers work cannot be exported. However, though “going green” remains popular, this argument did not consider that because retrofitting is a considered a luxury (as opposed to a necessity), it is likely that with the rising unemployment and more conservative spending that characterize a recession, the demand for retrofitting program graduates will decrease significantly. Though training for new skills is usually an effort to boost the economy, under these circumstances we find that the economy needs improve in order to boost the training programs. In a direct response to the economic crisis, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in February 2009 to create new jobs, spur economic activity, and invest in long-term growth by making $275 billion available for federal contract, including infrastructure projects (Recovery.gov 2011). Most of the infrastructure projects centered on transportation, a
field to which it is uncertain how significantly trainees’ general construction skills would apply.

Through the case study of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps we also see the ways in which allowing politics to be present in the foundational stages of a partnership’s formation can be detrimental to the internal works of a green jobs training and placement program partnership. The political tactic of pursing credibility through name association bequeaths titles to totally inactive members that receive credit for partnership’s outcome, similar to the practice of ghost pay-rolling. Their absence contributes to a resentment for a lack of adequate leadership to support communications and troubleshoot emerging programs among the membership.

Meanwhile, although workforce specialists readily recognized the Pinderhughes model as non-innovative, the new idea was used regardless of its merit for the advancement of the movement. The presence of a new innovation model to support an innovative economy is complimentary, if not serendipitous. And in being so, the combination can bolster the vigor of a political movement. However, while the workforce community is cognizant that the merit of a training model extends from its curriculum rather than the title or the professional association of its creator, ill will can be created over the perception of an “innovator’s” undue acclaim. Research indicates that this is an accurate depiction of what happened in Oakland.

It is comprehensible that partners that actually invest time and resources into producing training have grievances when wholly inactive partners received credit for their work. The perception of undue acclaim for an “innovation” that consists of the same method of workforce development that has been done for decades by other workforce development and training agencies without recognition is also a justifiable complaint.

Although these intricacies are not public knowledge, they are legitimate grievances from partners. Combined with external stresses, such as a persisting recession economy, they have the potential to create impediments to the partnership by affecting the will to
participate on behalf of what are essentially agencies that are volunteering to participate in the partnership. If political greivances are allowed to persist over the long-term, this may even affect the legally-bound grant administrator’s (and training coordinators) will to continue with the organization.

The mission to socially and economically empower disadvantaged citizens by providing career pathways training and placement programs for career environmental sustainability is a nationally supported mission that receives support from a wide spectrum of constituents. Ultimately, however, when such a partnership-supported program is underpinned with political tactics that create inequities, undermines, or disenfranchises the partnership entities or relevant professional community (workforce development professionals - academic and professional); the reputation of the program is delicately hinged up entities’ willingness to not to publicize these realities in the name of the social cause or professional practicality.
Appendices
Appendix A: Confirmed Partners of the Oakland, California, Green Jobs Corps and their Roles in the Partnership

Table 2 - Confirmed Partners of the Oakland, California, Green Jobs Corps and their Roles in the OGJC Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Name</th>
<th>Intermediary Classification</th>
<th>Roles Confirmed by Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cypress Mandela, Inc., Training</td>
<td>Regional vocational training center</td>
<td>Co-grantee/ &quot;Primary partner&quot; Outreach Recruitment Participant educational assessment Hard skills training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella Baker Center for Human Rights</td>
<td>Nonprofit advocacy agency</td>
<td>Self-proclaimed &quot;originial architect&quot; of the OGJC Major political champion via Apollo Alliance &quot;Convening partner&quot; Convened the single official Green Employer Council meeting Distributes official OGJC publicity materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Employer Council (Comprised of various employers)</td>
<td>Workforce advisory board/ Employers</td>
<td>Informed curriculum by sharing employer expectation Designated employement sources for participants Some employers lend staff to training participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Sector, Inc.</td>
<td>Independent workforce agency</td>
<td>Co-grantee/ &quot;Primary partner&quot; Encouraged Laney to pursue OGJC grant opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Name</td>
<td>Intermediary Classification</td>
<td>Roles Confirmed by Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Laney Community College | Regional community college                      | Wrote proposal for grant; Grantee  
Fiscal agent of grant  
Provides college pathway by offering college credit  
Soft skills training  
Hard skills training |
| Dr. Raquel Pinderhughes | Urban studies expert, College professor            | Developed Pinderhughes Model, advertised as used by the OGJC  
Advisor to the OGJC |

Table 2 (continued)- Confirmed Partners of the Oakland, California, Green Jobs Corps and their Roles in the OGJC Partnership
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule for OGJC Partners

Interview Questions for OGJC Partners

- Do you grant permission for your name to be used in this research report? If so, please say yes and state your name and title at this time.

- Please describe the [OGJC partner organization name]. This includes its goals, objectives, and organizational structure.

- Please describe your current position title and, if different, the capacity through which you are active with the OGJC through your organization.

- Does your organization serve a defined role in the OGJC partnership? If so, what is that defined role?

- How did your organization become involved in the OGJC partnership? Did someone or institutional entity recruit you?

- Does your organization contribute additional resources or play additional roles in the OGJC beyond what you have described as your defined role?

- Do these duties exceed what your organization expected to contribute?

- How does participation as an OGJC partner impact your organization (including internal operations or external perception within the community)?

- Is there any other information that you would like to share with the investigator about the organization of the OGJC and its relationship with the partnership organizations?
References

American Cities Project. Environmental Education.  


http://www.paworkforce.state.pa.us/paworkforce/site/default.asp (accessed November 25, 2008.)


