

SUCCESS STORIES:

Women in the Green Economy





Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe)
Executive Director, Honor the Earth

White Earth Reservation, Minnesota

<http://www.honorearth.org>

I have spent thirty years fighting dirty coal strip mines, uranium mines, mega dam projects, and, most recently the tar sands project in Canada. There are some terrible ideas about what the future is supposed to look like. In our Anishinaabe prophecies, this is viewed as a time to make this change, to take this opportunity. So our thinking is that we should restore the strength of the traditional economy and way of life of our people. We believe that the basis of the durable economy is local, and responsible.

Developing the green economy means training our youth, the next generation of leadership, in renewable technologies. Colonization, resource extraction and poverty on our reservations have left our youth with limited choices for the future. Green training and building a green economy is a way to create positive career options for our young people without requiring them to relinquishing our culture or values.

Photo by Tom Reed.



Tahlia Williams
Community Environmental Center

Long Island, NY

<http://www.cecenter.org>

Tahlia is a single mother from Brooklyn, New York, who is now employed in a good green job. After completing a green jobs training program, Tahlia is now working on residential weatherization projects as a Crew Mechanic with Community Environmental Center.

See video here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57jacaWEmrY>



Berenice Lopez-Dorsey
Clean Energy Works / Move-In Ready

Portland, OR

<http://www.cleanenergyworksportland.org>

<http://www.moveinready.com>

Move-In Ready founder, Berenice Lopez-Dorsey, moved to Portland from Mexico in 1992. She left behind career in real estate career to share her life with husband, a professional painter. When her husband became disabled, she took over the operations of their general contracting business. Bernice is a High Performance Weatherization Contractor. Mrs. Lopez-Dorsey is one of the collaborators of a new program in Portland to weatherize 500 homes and create green jobs. Clean Energy Works Portland is a home retrofit effort that will, create jobs, reduce pollution, lower energy bills, and expand business opportunities. Berenice says, "Our team members are our family and you will always be treated with courtesy, respect and gratitude. We are only as good as our last job and at the end of each day we go home knowing that we did our best."



Debby Tewa
Arizona Department of Commerce Energy

<http://www.azcommerce.com/Energy/Efficiency>

Debby Tewa is the Renewable and Tribal Energy Coordinator for Arizona Department of Commerce Energy Office. Ms. Tewa has 20 years of experience in renewable energy, primarily with off-grid photovoltaic (solar panel) deployment in Indian Country. She serves as the state's Tribal Energy Liaison and Renewable Energy Specialist. Prior to joining the Energy Office, Debby worked at Sandia National Laboratories Tribal Energy Program in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Ms. Tewa provided technical assistance to tribes with their renewable energy portfolio to promote employment and economic development in Indian Country. While at Sandia, she co-taught Women's Photovoltaic courses in conjunction with the American Solar Energy Society conferences. She also served as Project Manager for NativeSUN on the Hopi Reservation. NativeSUN deployed over 300 stand-alone photovoltaic systems on the Hopi, Zuni, and Navajo reservations and rural Flagstaff. M. Tewa holds a bachelor's

degree in Applied Indigenous Studies (2004) from Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona.



Sara Gregory
ceXpress LLC

Chicago, IL

<http://www.cexpressproducts.com>

“Carol’s Express, LLC, makers of ceXpress Products is a family owned and operated WMBE (Women’s Business Enterprise) dedicated to providing the black consumer with high-quality, nature-based hair and skin care products at an exceptional value. With an humble brand that traces its roots back to a kitchen table and a dream, ceXpress products is no stranger to modest living, understanding the need to have a product that’s going to fit into your budget while satisfying your need for quality. Carol’s Express is a proud supplier to Walmart supplier and other fine retailers and is committed to making the urban community we serve more green.”



Angela Greene
Solar Richmond Green-collar Training Program / Sungevity

Richmond, CA

<http://www.solorrichmond.org>

<http://www.sungevity.com>

“To think we could get solar into the Iron Triangle is very meaningful,” said Angela Greene, an early graduate of the program who is now Solar Richmond’s Project and Training Manager. “We talk about renewable energy and the positive energy of the sun,” she added. “Well, I’ve been renewed too.”

After losing her job in the printing industry, getting to the end of her unemployment benefits and almost losing her three-bedroom house and her car, Richmond resident and San Francisco native Angela Greene, 47, decided she needed a change. Looking on the city of Richmond’s website, she came across Richmond BUILD, a

program training Richmond residents in carpentry and solar panel installation. She jumped at the chance.

A natural leader, Angela was offered a position as a project manager at Solar Richmond upon graduation from the program, where she assisted with trainings and coordinated low-income home installations. Angela credits the green-collar jobs movement with helping her transition into an industry and career path that reflect her values. Angela is now the Bay Area Installation Coordinator for Sungevity, a solar company based in Berkeley, CA. "The skills I've acquired at Solar Richmond are skills that I can share with others to help our environment and set an example for my community," she said.



Nellis Kennedy

Honor the Earth

Minnesota

<http://www.honortheearth.org>

Growing up, my mother taught me to make the next generation better than the last and to pass this on to any daughters that I may have. The protection and stewardship of our lands is critical for the survival and balance of the seventh generation. Today, as a Navajo woman, I am heeding my mother's advice and working to create a cleaner and safer world for my future children. Since I've been hired on with Honor the Earth, I have been able to help make tribal reservations a better place through organization, education and outreach. My family's reservation, much like others, suffers from astronomically high rates of asthma, birth defects and cancer due to the abandoned uranium mines and regional coal plants surrounding our land. Through my work, I am able to prepare and organize tribal communities for a just transition from the fossil fuel economy to a fair and clean-energy economy.

Working on my own reservation, I am organizing a solar photovoltaic project with Dine' College to help combat yet another coal mine proposed on the Navajo reservation. This project presents incredible opportunities for incorporating solar training into the college's curriculum. Whether I am organizing a solar photovoltaic project on my reservation or installing a wind turbine on the White Earth reservation, I am working to protect Native lands from the threats of contamination and exploitation. This has given me a reason to hold my head up high.



Dawn Moody
Energy Coordinating Agency

Philadelphia, Pa

<http://www.ecasavesenergy.org>

Dawn Moody will go to extremes to help people, especially when she's helping them heat their homes and conserve energy. That is why Moody, at the age of 42, left a comfortable, salaried position to train for a green collar job as an energy auditor earning \$11 an hour.

While she was on the Board of Directors of the Friends Neighborhood Guild, Ms. Moody realized "that a lot of low income clients we served were pretty uneducated on energy conservation." The Guild's NEC helped folks access government grants for lighting and heating; however, once the grants ended homeowners still struggled with ways to conserve energy.

That is when, undaunted by her lack of tool knowledge or hands-on experience, she decided to help people weatherize their homes. The single mother of two applied for a position as an Energy Auditor with the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA), a non-profit organization that helps people conserve energy.

ECA sent Ms. Moody for paid training to Weatherization Training Center (WTC) at Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport where she spent many weeks learning the tools of the trade. By the time she was certified, Dawn had learned to use sophisticated tools like a blower door assembly, a manometer, a gas leak detector and a combustion analyzer, along with the more ordinary hammer, saw, and screwdriver. "I ruined a lot of manicures," she laughs.

She emphasizes that auditing homes is a great job for women. "We're caretakers anyway so I think it's an easy fit for us. Women shouldn't be intimidated by the uniform, the tools, or by the equipment at all."

Right now, stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) are creating high demand for weatherization skills. But even after the funding expires, Ms. Moody believes these kinds of green jobs are here to stay. "The cost of energy is just going to increase, so energy conservation is going to become vital to us all."

by: Susan Boni

from: <http://greeneconomytaskforce.wordpress.com/media/green-jobs-speakers-bureau/>



Marylue Matmungal *Rebuilders Resource*

South Bronx, NY

<http://www.rebuilderssource.coop>

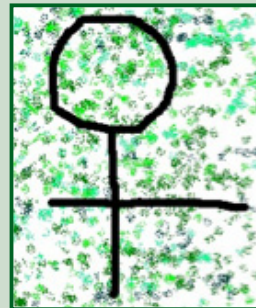
My name is Marylue Matmungal, and I reside in the one of the best cities in the world, New York City. I have been working at my green job since December of last year and so far I love it. My company is called Rebuilders Source, and we are a reuse store for building materials that would have otherwise ended up in landfills. It's been a wonderful experience, and I have learned a lot by being a part of the greening of the five boroughs of NYC. My job consists of marketing our company's name to anyone who is looking for high quality building materials that are easy on the wallet and safe for the environment. Along the way I form relationships with companies that want to be a part of the green movement. I can honestly say that standing for something as strong as reuse in today's growing environmental challenges concerning sustainable waste stream

Green for Women

Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Foundation encourages women to pursue any career, any field, any position. And we are especially proud of the women that enter into non-traditional jobs (as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor as a field where 25 percent or less of the workforce are women).

Women continue to make inroads into non-traditional occupations. As more women enter jobs that were once dominated by men, many jobs that were defined as non-traditional for women in 1988 were no longer non-traditional in 2008, including but not limited to purchasing managers; chemists; physicians; lawyers; athletes; bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers; and butchers and other meat-related workers. Despite these strides, highly-skilled women lack access in non-traditional industries.

BPW Foundation's goal is to explore the demand for green jobs for women and determine what programs and services can successfully prepare and link women with the jobs and the companies that will best suit their needs. The result will be moving women from unemployment, or under-employment, to providing them with access to sustainable job options and the skills and support they need to succeed.



management it really makes me feel great to be a part of the ongoing change. It's extremely empowering to know that not only will my child see me affecting a change but will someday know that I stood up for something that helps us all as opposed to an individual company. I think that when we set out to do our green jobs we expect to have great outcomes. Taking care of the planet is serious business and should be thought out with care and never rushed. Because anytime you create something new you have to break something else to do it.

Always remember REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE for a healthier planet.



Shalonda

*Business and Professional Women's Foundation /
Vermont Works for Women*

<http://www.bpwfoundation.org>

<http://www.nnetw.org>

In 2009 Business and Professional Women's Foundation launched Moving from Red to Green: Working Women in the Green Economy, an initiative to connect women with green jobs and increase their participation in the emerging green economy. With generous support from the Walmart Foundation, BPW Foundation has established 4 pilot programs across the country to expand the capacity to engage and train women for green jobs. One of the selected sites, Vermont Works for Women, helps women and girls explore, pursue and excel in nontraditional careers that pay a livable wage. Here is the story of Shalonda:

Shalonda was one of the first hires for the program, coming to FRESH Energy after three months on Vermont Works for Women's Modular Home Building Program crew at Northwest State Correctional Facility. Prior to this, she had a combined employment history totaling 9 months and no experience in the construction field. Although she was entirely new to the Weatherization field, she clearly recognized the work as valuable to the community as well as to her architectural aspirations. Shalonda has flourished through her tenure on the crew. She has received very positive feedback from her on-site supervisor and she started her first college classes in January 2010.



Trang Donovan

*Electrical Contractor / Renewable Energy Installer
/ PV Instructor, Midwest Renewable Energy
Association*

Wisconsin

<http://www.the-mrea.org>

As a mainstream electrician, I took the very first PV courses offered by the IBEW because I thought the technology was interesting. It wasn't until I had spent some time on a small remote island off the East Coast of Nicaragua that I got the inspiration to pursue renewable energy as a calling.

On the island resources were limited, replenishing supplies was challenging. I had several epiphanies. One, this precious island was a microcosm of our planet. Two, renewable energy is not only viable, but also crucial for sustainable living. Three, I was really slow not to have gotten this all sooner. I also realized that I was ill equipped and lacked the experience to face the challenge of working on so many of the funky and defunct off-grid energy systems I encountered on the island.

When I came back home to the States, I aggressively pursued more renewable energy training through places like the MREA and SEI to set myself in the right direction. The MREA was instrumental in honing my skills and field experience as an installer to transform me into a more confident and effective instructor. They gave me the opportunity to make a contribution, gave me guidance, and continue to support my growth.

(My advice for women interested in the entering the renewable energy field...) Better get started now, you clever gals! There's a lot to be done..."

Article excerpted from interview posted on RE News-Newsletter of the Midwest Renewable Energy Association



Heidi Leugers *Reclaimed Wool*

<http://www.trilliumartisans.org>

<http://www.etsy.com/shop/trilliumartisans>

In the late of 1998, Heidi Leugers created her first ornament from recycled wool sweaters. At the same time, as with most all human activity, she also created waste: scraps and by-products from this new ornament. She knew that one item could bring delight, and that no one would notice if she just packed the scrap in a trash bag for Monday's curbside pick up. She decided that if this waste went to the landfill or incinerator, or to who knows where else, her artistic practice was no different than any other manufacturer of "stuff-for-sale." Taking responsibility for the waste she created in the studio, became a creative enterprise. She would use and reuse the it herself to create new items. Each year Heidi recycles hundreds of pounds of post-consumer garments and textile industry waste and sends almost nothing to the landfill. Her zero-waste practice has received critical attention in the textbook 'Cycle-Logical Art' by Linda Weintraub.

WE NEED TO CONNECT THIS ARTIST WITH THIS SPACE:

Trillium Artisans is an innovative, green, nonprofit community economic development program that empowers artisans and actively connects them to markets. Trillium was founded on John McKnight's principles of asset-based community development, which finds a way out of the tangled web of poverty by focusing on talents and capacities, rather than what is lacking. In 1994, we conducted an asset inventory of extremely low-income neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon, and found talented residents wanting to sell their handmade goods and build their own businesses. To facilitate this, the Eco-Biz program was established and later renamed Trillium Artisans. The Trillium name was chosen because the three-pointed trillium flower reflects the triple bottom line principles (people, planet, and profit) of the sustainability movement.



Evelin *WAGES*

<http://www.wagescooperatives.org>

Before co-founding a new eco-housecleaning co-op, Evelin worked with toxic products. Her boss did not allow gloves, saying she could

work better with bare hands. She worked 10 hours a day for \$50. Heading home from her old job, Evelin struggled with cracking skin on her hands as well as daily headaches and dizziness. These days she returns from work happy, almost as if she hasn't been to work at all. And best of all, she says, she no longer smells like bleach.

Joining a co-op, Evelin became a business owner, earning three times what she made before. Evelin says she's not the only one who's happy. Her sense of financial security extends to her mother in El Salvador. Evelin's small monthly payments are now bigger checks that arrive twice a month. But the happiest of all may be her five-year-old daughter, who finally got the special boots she had been admiring.

GREEN THE BLOCK

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