

Chinatown News

AACA and CPA receive green grants from SkillWorks

SkillWorks, the local funders' collaborative that has invested over \$17 million to date to equip area workers and employers with competitive skills for the 21st century, announced in May the first job training awards in their new Green Jobs Initiative. The grants will be used to train Boston area residents to become certified Energy Efficiency Auditors, Technicians, and Weatherizers.

"We are pleased to award job training grants to the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) and the Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) which will train local workers for higher paying middle skill jobs." Loh-Sze Leung, Director of SkillWorks announced. "The planning grants we made last spring leveraged federal stimulus funds for weatherization improvements in the greater Boston area. These grants will ensure we have trained and certified workers to help businesses and residents meet energy efficiency standards. Over the course of the next three years, we expect to invest \$750,000 to help create and support green jobs in greater Boston."

The Asian American Civic Association was awarded \$76,235 to create the Energy Efficiency Technician Apprenticeship Program. Energy Efficiency

Technicians combine the skills of an energy auditor with the basic skills of a weatherization worker. "This program will target low-income, unemployed and underemployed residents of Metro Boston," said Chris Albrizio, Green Programs Director. "Participants will receive classroom instruction and extensive on-the-job training to become journeymen energy efficiency technicians. Through the unique arrangement of the apprenticeship program, participants will be working at partner employers and earning wages throughout the entire training program."

The Chinese Progressive Association was awarded \$35,000 to prepare limited English proficiency workers from Chinatown and the Boston area for weatherization jobs at a living wage with a long-term union career pathway. CPA is a member of the Green Justice Coalition, which recently influenced the state's and the utilities' new \$1.4 billion plan to expand energy efficiency programs across the Commonwealth. The utilities committed to creating several weatherization community mobilization pilots around the state.

"The pilots' unique model links the bundling of weatherization work and job creation with the training and hiring of local residents," said Lydia Lowe,

Executive Director of CPA. Chinatown is the first pilot being developed and implemented using this unique model. CPA will serve as the lead agency for the Chinatown Green Collar Pathways Program, and other primary partners include the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 35 and The Aulson Company.

SkillWorks Green Jobs Initiative

SkillWorks will utilize its expertise and collaborative infrastructure in sectoral workforce development to help shape the development of green collar career pathways in Massachusetts. SkillWorks' "Green Jobs Initiative" will:

- support emerging workforce development efforts in "green" industries; and
- ensure access to green collar career pathways by lower skilled, low-income adults.

SkillWorks will achieve these goals by:

- building the capacity of community-based green job training programs;
- building a community of funders to coordinate investments in the green sector;
- engaging in advocacy to ensure green sector policies and

public investments foster job creation and are influenced by sound workforce development principles;

- supporting research efforts in order to provide the community with labor market information and best practice models; and

- increasing training opportunities for lower-income, lower-skilled adults that lead to employment in green collar jobs

SkillWorks is a ten-year, \$25-million investment partnership among local and national foundations, the City of Boston, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts designed to create opportunities for people to gain skills needed to be successful in the MA economy. SkillWorks does this by investing in training programs, preparing people for and connecting them to post-secondary education, working on public policy efforts to create better pathways to post-secondary training and education, and prioritizing growing sectors in our state's economy.

For more information please contact SkillWorks Director Loh-Sze Leung at 617-338-4377, Loh-Sze.Leung@tbf.org or visit www.skill-works.org