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## Initiative Will Put Americans Back to Work in Growing Clean Energy Sector

Bank of America Charitable Foundation and Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Support Launch of **The Greenforce Initiative** On Community College Campuses

**BOSTON** (*September 22, 2010*)—With jobs in the country's emerging clean energy sector growing more than twice as fast as jobs overall, the <u>National Wildlife Federation</u> (NWF) and <u>Jobs for the Future</u> (JFF) have joined forces on a two-year project that will spur green jobs education, innovation and training at community colleges in the United States.

<u>The Greenforce Initiative</u>™: Advancing Greener Careers and Campuses seeks to strengthen the capacity of community colleges in the United States to implement or refine high quality green career pathway programs while responding to immediate and long-term workforce needs in emerging green sectors. Support for the initiative comes from a two-year, \$1 million grant from the <u>Bank of America Charitable Foundation</u>, while a two-year, \$250,000 grant from the <u>Charles Stewart Mott Foundation</u> is supporting the initiative's implementation in Michigan.

A 2009 study found that the number of jobs in America's emerging clean energy economy grew nearly two and a half times faster than overall jobs between 1998 and 2007, growing at a national rate of 9.1 percent, while traditional jobs increased by only 3.7 percent between 1998 and 2007<sup>i</sup>. Research also shows that clean energy investments at the level of about \$150 billion per year can generate around 1.7 million net new jobs throughout the economy, including nearly half that are accessible to workers with relatively low formal educational credentials<sup>ii</sup>.

America's community college systems are the premier job training and education providers in the United States and can be a driver in the creation of local workforce partnerships—bringing together green sector employers, workforce development organizations, unions, and other community stakeholders. Community colleges are often at the forefront of efforts to green facilities and operations, so school investments in campus greening projects have the potential to directly create hands-on learning opportunities for the targeted student population.

"While community colleges have emerged as the leading provider of training for green jobs, for many of them it is unchartered territory," said Kerry Sullivan, President, Bank of America Charitable Foundation. "In working with both the National Wildlife Federation and Jobs for the Future, we saw an opportunity to introduce these organizations and have them collaborate to help rebuild the capacity and competitiveness of America's workforce. By connecting graduates of community colleges' environmental programs to the pipeline of available jobs, we are enhancing the economic and social health of the communities we serve."

The Greenforce Initiative<sup>™</sup> was highlighted as a featured commitment at the April 2010 Clinton Global Initiative University meeting in Miami, Florida. The initiative has created six regional *Learning and Action Networks* and has partnered with community colleges in **North Carolina**, **Northern Virginia**, **Metro Chicago**, **Southern Texas**, **Seattle** and **Michigan**.

"There are 1,200 community colleges in the United States, making them the nation's largest job training, certification and preparation platform," said Jack Litzenberg, senior program director at the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. "The Greenforce Initiative™ will capitalize on those schools' strengths to help prepare low-income, low-skilled workers in Michigan and across the country for success in the global green economy."

The Greenforce Initiative™ will provide high-quality assistance to community colleges to strengthen their capacity to develop, expand, or refine green pathway programs that are designed for lower-skilled adults/non-traditional students who cannot currently access such programs. The initiative will also utilize campus sustainability efforts as a "learning laboratory" for education and training activities.

"Post-secondary credentials are increasingly required for careers that pay family-sustaining wages," said Gloria Mwase, Program Director, Jobs for the Future. "While the labor demand in key "green" sectors offer job growth opportunities in many communities, it is critical that we ensure that under-prepared adults can access and succeed in these careers."

"The demand for a clean energy economy is here now and community colleges must be prepared to equip people to enter the green workforce," said Lisa Madry, Campus Field Director for the National Wildlife Federation. "The Greenforce Initiative™ commitment will help community colleges meet this challenge while providing greater economic opportunities for underserved students."

About Bank of America Charitable Foundation: Building on a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves, last year Bank of America embarked on a new, 10-year goal to donate \$2 billion to nonprofit organizations engaged in improving the health and vitality of their neighborhoods. Funded by Bank of America, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation gave more than \$200 million in 2009, making the bank one of the largest corporate cash donors in the United States. Bank of America approaches investing through a national strategy under which it works with local leaders to identify and meet the most pressing needs of individual communities. Reaffirming a commitment to develop and sustain a culture of service, the bank announced the "Million Hour Challenge," a pledge by the company's associates around the world to donate 1 million volunteer hours by the end of 2010. In 2009, bank associate volunteers contributed more than 800,000 hours to enhance the quality of life in their communities nationwide. Recognizing that climate change is a significant issue faced by the clients and communities it supports, Bank of America also has launched a 10-year, \$20 billion environmental business initiative to address this issue through lending, investing, services, operations and philanthropy.

**About Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**: The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, established in 1926 in Flint, Michigan, by an automotive pioneer, is a private philanthropy committed to supporting projects that promote a just, equitable and sustainable society. It supports nonprofit programs throughout the U.S. and, on a limited geographic basis, internationally. Grantmaking is focused in four programs: Civil Society, Environment, Flint Area and Pathways Out of Poverty. Besides Flint, offices are located in metropolitan Detroit, Johannesburg (South Africa) and London.

**About Jobs for the Future**: Jobs for the Future identifies, develops, and promotes new education and workforce strategies that help communities, states, and the nation compete in a global economy. In more

than 200 communities in 41 states, JFF improves the pathways leading from high school to college to family-sustaining careers.

**About National Wildlife Federation**: NWF is America's largest conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. National Wildlife Federation has a 20-year history of working with colleges and universities to green their operations, ensuring more sustainable campuses, and improving their overall green educational programming. Its student outreach programs, campus consulting, technology competitions, and educational events reach about 1,000 colleges each year.

Visit www.greenforceinitiative.org to learn more.

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The Clean Energy Economy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>ii</sup> The Economic Benefits of Investing in Clean Energy, Center for American Progress; Department of Economics and Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2009