

Texas Community Colleges Convene for Clean Energy Jobs Summit

Campus Education and Training Program Supported by Bank of America Charitable Foundation and Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

MCALLEN, Texas (October 28, 2010)—[National Wildlife Federation](#) (NWF) and [Jobs for the Future](#) (JFF) today held the first [Greenforce Initiative™](#) summit, hosted at South Texas College. As the state's unemployment rate hovers around 8.4 percent, the summit is a critical part of the economic solution to spur green jobs education, innovation and training at Texas community colleges.

The summit is organized in collaboration with partners from South Texas, Houston, Lone Star, Laredo and Alamo Colleges.

With jobs in the country's emerging clean energy sector growing more than twice as fast as jobs overall, the work of NWF and JFF will help campuses take full advantage of this economic opportunity. The Greenforce Initiative™ will help campuses implement or refine high quality green career pathway programs that put Texans back to work.

Support for the initiative comes from a two-year, \$1 million grant from the [Bank of America Charitable Foundation](#), while a two-year, \$250,000 grant from the [Charles Stewart Mott Foundation](#) is supporting the initiative's implementation in Michigan and beyond.

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 2007ⁱ.

"Our community colleges in Texas, and throughout the country, are at the forefront of renewable and low-carbon energy growth, innovation and job creation," said Kim Ruth, Texas President for Bank of America. "In working with both the National Wildlife Federation and Jobs for the Future, Bank of America saw an opportunity to have these two organizations 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're helping support both economic recovery and the vitality of the Texas communities we serve."

Research 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 national economy, including nearly half that are accessible to workers with relatively low formal educational credentialsⁱⁱ.

"Community colleges play a vital role in helping to connect economic development and economic opportunity by meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job-seekers. The Greenforce Initiative will help to strengthen the capacity of these institutions to advance lower-skilled adults to family-sustaining green careers," said Gloria Mwase, Program Director, Jobs for the Future.

Officially launched last month, the Greenforce Initiative™ was also highlighted as a featured commitment at the April 2010 Clinton Global Initiative University meeting in Miami, Florida. In addition to its work in Texas, the initiative created five other regional *Learning and Action Networks* and has partnered with community colleges in **North Carolina, Northern Virginia, Metro Chicago, Seattle and Michigan**.

“The Texas Greenforce Summit will help community colleges and workforce development agencies in the southern region of Texas share strategies to better equip the local workforce for new economic opportunities that are emerging in the clean energy sectors.” said Praween Dayananda, Campus Field Coordinator for the National Wildlife Federation in Austin.

Texas Participants Include:

South Texas College
Alamo Colleges
University of Texas Brownsville/Texas Southmost College
Houston Community College
Texas State Technical College - Harlingen
University of Texas Pan American
Workforce Solutions - South Texas
Workforce Solutions - Lower Rio Grande Valley
McAllen Economic Development Corporation
Starr County Industrial Foundation
MET, INC
Vida Careers
WCVI

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.

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 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. To learn more please visit www.bankofamerica.com/foundation.

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.

Visit www.greenforceinitiative.org to learn more, and follow related news on Twitter @[Greenforce](https://twitter.com/Greenforce).

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ⁱ The Clean Energy Economy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009

ⁱⁱ 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

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