



## **San Antonio College San Antonio, Texas Curriculum**

### **SCHOOL**

San Antonio College, public, 2-year, 22,028 students, San Antonio, Texas.

### **ABSTRACT**

San Antonio College entered in an Agreement with the Greenforce Initiative for a grant that will allow San Antonio College (SAC) the opportunity to combine the efforts of its primary weatherization instructor and one of its most experienced English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors. The primary objective is to focus the content of SAC's building trades vocational English course in a way that it better prepares Spanish speakers with limited English language and with experience in the field; thus transition successfully into our green building and weatherization courses.

### **GOALS AND OUTCOMES**

#### **Goals**

At present, the San Antonio College Service, Trade, and Industry Center offers green building and weatherization courses in English, but these courses are not reaching the many Spanish speakers in our community who have backgrounds in building trades, but lack fluency in English. We had planned to offer a vocational English class incorporating vocabulary from the building trades starting six months ago, but didn't have the opportunity to focus the course on the needs of the local job market and to incorporate "green" building terminology. Under the Green Pathways Basic Skills Project we intend to combine the efforts of our primary weatherization instructor and one of our most experienced English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to better focus the content of our building trades vocational English course so that it prepares Spanish speakers with experience in the field to enter our green building and weatherization courses. The vocational English course would also position graduates to take other green initiative specialty courses offered at San Antonio College and our sister colleges under the Alamo Colleges umbrella. Those courses include Building Trades, Green Entrepreneurship, Introduction to Asbestos Abatement, Introduction to Lead Abatement, Solar Technician, OSHA Hazardous Materials, and Water Catchment Technician.

The Green Pathways Basic Skills Project will also allow us to pull sustainable lifestyle components from the existing green building and weatherization courses to produce a 4-hour workshop offered via the HSIAC EcoCentro community outreach program. This workshop will cover steps that homeowners in our service area can take to improve their energy efficiency and cut down on water consumption. The workshop will also be made available to college staff in support of the SAC Go Green campus sustainability campaign.

### **Accomplishments and Outcomes**

- We have researched the following topics: ESL for Construction Workers; Building Construction - Student Required Tool List; Basic Construction Tool List; Construction Technology-Carpentry Tool List; Green Models for Site Development; National Green Building Standard; NAHB-OSH current standards.
- We interviewed Spanish speakers engaged in the construction trades to determine what expressions, phrases, and vocabulary are most important for inclusion in our course
- We have met with the San Antonio Hispanic Builders Association to obtain their input on English communication skills that hold their members back from advancement.
- We identified reference materials for use in this project, which are: "Say-It Language Cards," "National Green Building Standard," "NAHB-OSHA Trenching and Excavation Safety Handbook, English-Spanish;" "Jobsite Safety Video" and "Residential Construction Performance Guidelines , 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Consumer Reference (10 Pack)."

### **Challenges and Responses**

We discovered that, even though San Antonio's construction slump is less severe than that in other cities around the country, it is limiting the upward mobility of Spanish speakers in the field. This is true even in cases where the worker's level of English is already fairly good. One way we are approaching this issue is to offer our students "green" building job skills courses.

Since most of the "green" building courses are taught only in English, we plan to address this challenge by assigning those students whose English level is too low to take the vocational ESL course being developed under this grant. That course should bring their English level up enough for them to take the "green" building courses.

### **ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

#### **Project Partners**

Eco-Synergy Advisors – Will function as course content advisors

Chris Flores

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Build San Antonio Green - Will provide input on LEED certification

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Solar San Antonio - Will function as advisors on solar content and solar jobs

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All Things Green Energy - Will serve as course content advisors related to energy efficiency

David McCord

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EcoStrategies - Will serve as course content advisor on water conservation and environmental issues  
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Texas Solar Power Company - Will serve as course content advisors on solar installation  
Mark Rangel  
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### **Funding and Resources**

This project received a Greenforce Initiative grant. The Greenforce Initiative, a partnership of Jobs for the Future and National Wildlife Federation, strengthens the capacity of community colleges to green the skills of the modern workforce.

### **Education and Community Outreach**

The communication plan includes coordination with the journalism department for purposes of publishing an article in the campus newspaper (The Ranger) describing the program and encouraging the campus community to attend the lifestyle workshops. In addition, the ESL course will be included in the course bulletin published multiple times per year by the Continuing Education Network. The workshop and ESL courses will be promoted via numerous public presentations offered not only at our campus but at other relevant locations throughout our service area.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **Contacts**

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### **MORE ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL**

#### **Campus Sustainability History**

San Antonio College (SAC) is a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and is the largest single-campus community college in Texas, with 38,175 students enrolled during the 2009 fiscal year. The Service, Trade, and Industry Center headed by Mr. Lewis was the birthplace of what is now the Alamo Colleges Green Training Initiative, and it continues to offer core courses within that initiative. The HSIAC grant managed by Mr. Lewis is the College's focal point for "green" workshops offered to the surrounding community and related workforce training. In fall 2009, 48.3% of SAC students were Hispanic, 5.2% were African-American, 41.6% were white, and 4.8% were classified as "other." In fall 2009, 58.1% of SAC students were female. SAC's fall 2009 CBM report to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

indicated that 93.3% of incoming freshman were academically disadvantaged, 57.7% of all SAC students were economically disadvantaged, and 49.4% of all SAC students received financial aid.