

News Release

Region 2 - New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands



Fortune Society Will Provide Green Job Training Through EPA Brownfields Grant

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(New York, N.Y. – July 26, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded the Fortune Society of New York a \$300,000 workforce development and job training grant to help fund the organization’s program to recruit, train and place formerly incarcerated people in green jobs assessing and cleaning up brownfields and other contaminated sites. Brownfields are properties at which moderate contamination can interfere with redevelopment. EPA Regional Administrator Judith A. Enck joined Fortune’s President JoAnne Paige to announce the grant and tour Fortune’s training facility in Long Island City. Former students demonstrated the jobs skills acquired through a similar job training program.

“EPA’s green jobs program is helping people acquire in-demand job skills,” said Regional Administrator A. Enck. “In addition to creating a better trained green workforce, this grant will help create cleaner, healthier communities. The training that the Fortune Society is providing will lead to living wage jobs and a better environment.”

The Fortune Society will train 60 formerly incarcerated people, place at least 42 graduates in environmental jobs, and track graduates for one year. The training program will consist of three 280-hour, eight-week training cycles, and will include courses in leaking underground storage tank prevention, innovative treatment technology, and EPA’s lead renovation, repair, and painting rule. The Fortune Society will work with private companies and local government agencies to place graduates in environmental jobs.

The Fortune Society is a nonprofit social service and advocacy organization, founded in 1967, whose mission is to support successful reentry from prison and promote alternatives to incarceration. Fortune serves approximately 3,000 men and women annually via three primary New York City-area locations: a service center in Long Island City, and both the Fortune Academy (a.k.a. “the Castle”) and Castle Gardens in West Harlem. The organization’s program models are frequently recognized, both nationally and internationally, for their quality and innovation.

The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed in 2002, establishing a Brownfields Program that provides funding for brownfields assessments, cleanups, revolving loans and green job training. The program encourages redevelopment of America’s estimated 450,000 abandoned and contaminated waste sites and promotes job creation.

Additional information on EPA Region 2 Brownfields activities is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region02/brownfields/>

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