

President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

WorkNet Pinellas, Inc.

Grantee: WorkNet Pinellas, Inc.

Industry Focus: Nuclear Energy

Key Partners: Plumber & Pipefitters Local Union 123; Pinellas Technical Education Centers; Withlacoochee Technical Institute; Progress Energy; and Bechtel Corporation.

Grant Amount: \$1,000,000

Leveraged Amount: \$2,000,000

Location of Grant Activities: The west-central Florida counties of Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Sumter, Sarasota, Manatee, Hardee and DeSoto counties.

Challenge: Energy construction is expected to increase 60 to 80% between 2008 and 2011. There is a need to develop a pipeline of certified welders to fill a shortage of skilled craft labor which is crucial to the timely, cost-effective, completion of nuclear power plants planned for construction in Florida. A skilled workforce is also needed to complete other major industrial projects in progress in the region.

Addressing the Challenge: The CLEAN Energy (Certification, Licensing and Education of Apprentices for the Nuclear Energy Industry) program will create a pipeline of skilled workers for the nuclear energy industry. CLEAN Energy is modeled after a successful program developed by the Pipefitters Training Fund Local Union 597, in Chicago, in which more than 200 welders are being trained each year. It is a 16-week, full-time hybrid welding program including an accelerated apprenticeship track that promotes students with higher skill levels up the program ladder. In conjunction with the Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 123, the region proposes to replicate the hybrid-welding program in three training locations strategically selected to reach potential participants through Plumbers & Pipefitters Apprentice Training Center in Hillsborough County, Pinellas Technical Education Centers in Pinellas County and Withlacoochee Technical Institute in Citrus County.

Projected Outcomes:

- CLEAN Energy will provide training to 450 welders
- 382 participants will pass the United Association 21 certification, accredited by the American Welding Society in accordance with the American National Standards Institute
- A projected retention rate of 85%
- An estimated 362 (95%) program participants will be employed at a wage of at least \$18.41/hr.

