

JOIN: The Job Opportunity Investment Network

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Emily E. Rosenberg

W: 215-665-2509

C: 215-906-6310

emilyr@uwsepa.org

JOIN Funding Collaborative Connects Philadelphia Workers to Living-Wage Green, Healthcare Jobs

(Philadelphia , PA) The Job Opportunity Investment Network (JOIN) today announced new grants totaling \$850,000 for initiatives that will qualify more of the region's underemployed workers and new job seekers for living-wage jobs in the "green" and health care industries. JOIN, a regional funding collaborative founded in 2008, will invest at least \$2.7 million to increase the number of workers in the Greater Philadelphia area who earn family-sustaining wages.

Living Cities, an innovative philanthropic collaborative of 21 of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions, awarded JOIN a grant of \$250,000 for an initiative to prepare low-skilled job seekers for employment in the clean energy sector. This pilot project, under the leadership of one of JOIN's founding partners, the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, brings together the Smart Energy Initiative of Southeastern Pennsylvania, the Federation of Neighborhood Centers and three of its member agencies (Diversified Community Services, Friends Neighborhood Guild, and United Communities Southeast Philadelphia), and the City of Philadelphia to ensure low-skilled adults have access to well-paying jobs and advancement opportunities in this emerging industry. Specifically, the grant will support the development and implementation of a coordinated infrastructure to assess new and marginally employed Philadelphia workers and connect them to pipelines for advancement in green jobs. Grant activities begin in May 2009, and will continue through August 2010.

JOIN has awarded \$300,000 over three years to each of two Industry Partnerships, The Pennsylvania Partnership for Direct Care Workers, managed by the District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund, and the Delaware County Health Care Employers Consortium, managed by Pathways PA. The grants will fund initiatives to qualify unemployed adults and workers in low-skill, low-wage jobs for higher-skill positions in allied health and nursing that pay family-sustaining wages. The initiatives will help meet the needs of health care providers, which are currently facing critical shortages of qualified allied health and nursing professionals. "The JOIN grant will enable us to provide entry-level health care workers with the significant supports they need to move up the career ladder and earn family-sustaining wages," said Cheryl Feldman, Executive Director of District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund. "It's a win-win for workers and employers."

Industry Partnerships include groups of employers and workers from within the same industry, collaborating with education and training providers to address employers' common workforce needs. "For the past several years, Industry Partnerships across the region have been helping employers in key sectors train their current workers, and both the employers and workers have benefited greatly," said Laura Boyce, Director of United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania's financial stability initiatives. "JOIN is investing in those same Partnerships, inspiring them to replicate their previous successes with new and underemployed workers."

The need is great. According to a study released this month by PathWays PA, a third of Philadelphia households and more than one out of every five Delaware County households lacks income sufficient to meet basic family needs. Forty percent of working Philadelphians are earning poverty wages, and 36% have found only part-time work. More than 60% of Philadelphia adults are classified as “low-literate.”

The Founding Partners in this public-private initiative are the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, The William Penn Foundation, the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Department of Labor and Industry. JOIN is also supported by contributions from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and Living Cities.

United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania

United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania is part of a national network of more than 1,300 locally governed organizations that work to create lasting positive changes in communities and in people’s lives. United Way engages the community to identify the underlying causes of the most significant local issues, develops strategies and pulls together financial and human resources to address them, and measure the results. United Way is advancing the common good in southeastern Pennsylvania by focusing on education for children, income for families and health for seniors. For more information about United Way, please visit: www.LIVEUNITEDsepa.org.

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation promotes excellence in journalism worldwide and invests in the vitality of the U.S. communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects with the potential to create transformational change. For more, visit www.knightfoundation.org.

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry is the state agency dedicated to improving the quality of life and economic security of Pennsylvania’s workers and businesses. Through a variety of programs, services and initiatives, Labor & Industry works to create a highly educated and skilled workforce to help the commonwealth’s businesses remain competitive in the global economy. Learn more about the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and Workforce Development by visiting www.state.pa.us or www.paworkforce.state.pa.us.

Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board

Founded in 1999, the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board is a volunteer commission appointed by the Mayor of Philadelphia with the legislated responsibility to govern the public workforce system in the city, including the CareerLink Centers. The organization that supports the commission – Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, Inc. – provides expertise in all facets of workforce development, and works to align the skills of the region’s labor force to meet the needs of industry, ultimately supporting the region’s growth and prosperity. The organization’s vision is a thriving and inclusive regional economy and its mission is to advocate and advance a demand-driven opportunity agenda that effectively prepares Philadelphians to compete in the economic mainstream.

William Penn Foundation

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that foster rich cultural expression, strengthen children’s futures, and deepen connections to nature and community. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance a vital, just, and caring community. Learn more about the Foundation online at www.williampenfoundation.org.

Living Cities

Founded in 1991, Living Cities is an innovative philanthropic collaborative of 21 of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions. Living Cities members participate at the senior management level on the organization's board of directors and contribute the time of more than 80 expert staff toward crafting and implementing the Living Cities agenda, which is focused on improving the lives of low-income people and the urban areas in which they live. Over the past 18 years, Living Cities members have collectively invested over \$600 million which has, in turn, leveraged more than \$16 billion in tangible community assets—a remarkable leverage ratio of 29:1. This funding has helped build homes, stores, schools, child care, health care and job-training centers and other community assets.

National Fund for Workforce Solutions

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS) is a five-year, \$30 million effort to strengthen and expand high-impact workforce development initiatives around the country. NFWS is dedicated to moving America's low wage workforce into higher paying jobs, while providing employers with the skilled workers they need. NFWS is supported by the Annie E. Casey, Ford, Hitachi, John S. and James L. Knight, Prudential and The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundations, Microsoft Corp., and the U.S. Department of Labor. Jobs for the Future and the Council on Foundations are national partners with the National Fund for Workforce Solutions.

The Founding Partners in this public-private initiative are the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, The William Penn Foundation, the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Labor and Industry. JOIN is supported by contributions from the partner organizations, the [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#), and [Living Cities](#).

