



Create a system that anticipates,
addresses and exceeds the
workforce needs of our community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT: Andrew McGough
PHONE: 503-478-7371**

**OMEP in Partnership with Worksystems, Inc.,
and Bi-State Partners
Lands \$5 Million Green Jobs Grant**

Worksystems, Inc is one of four workforce investment boards in the Portland-Salem-Vancouver area that will receive funding as part of a \$5 million Department of Labor green jobs grant awarded to the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP).

The award, announced today by Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis, is one of 25 nationally authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The grant will help dislocated workers, veterans, women, and people of color find jobs in expanding green industries and related occupations.

The project – called Renewable Northwest (ReNW) - will preserve and create over 1,700 jobs in a nine-county region in the renewable energy industry (electric power and biofuels) by building a skilled workforce to support companies that generate power and by assisting local manufacturers with retraining their workforce to produce products in support of the industry. Participants will earn certificates and degrees which meet industry and state-defined standards.

Some 37 companies have expressed interest in participating in the ReNW project, and have projected 775 new jobs over the next two years. Potential companies include SolarWorld, ClearEdge Power, PCC Structural, Vestas, RePower, Iberdrola and PGE.

“We are very excited about this approach and believe that it will help to support the renewable energy industry, create and preserve jobs, and provide training to ensure that people are qualified for the opportunities,” said Andrew McGough, Worksystems’ Executive Director. “WorkSource Portland Metro will provide the connections to the jobs.”

Training will begin this spring for workers in occupational and technical skills needed for green jobs already identified as “in demand.” At the same time, OMEP will conduct an analysis of the skills and production requirements of the renewable energy industry and identify those manufacturers deemed to be good candidates (with employee training) to develop/manufacture new project lines to support these companies.

WORKSYSTEMS, INC.

111 SW Fifth Ave.
Suite 1150
Portland, OR 97204
503.478.7300 tel
503.478.7302 fax
www.worksystems.org





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Other partners include Sheet Metal Workers Local 16, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Dist. No 24, Northwest Oregon Labor Council, Energy Trust of Oregon, Enterprise for Employment and Education, Workforce Investment Council of Clackamas County, SW Washington Workforce Development Council, the Washington Manufacturing Service, the Oregon/Washington bi-state WorkSource system, and also includes six community colleges and economic development partners from throughout the region.

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