



NYSERDA



Public Employee Union provides clean energy training for employees

Case Study

Organization Name:
District Council 37.
Public Employee Union

Location:
New York, NY

NYSERDA Program:
Workforce Development
and Training; PON 3981
(Energy Efficiency and
Clean Technology Training)

Background

District Council 37 (DC 37), New York City's largest public employee union, represents 160,000 active members and 50,000 retirees, and its current workforce boasts more than 1,000 unique job titles. DC 37 offered a Green Jobs Initiative Program to train employees of New York City Agencies in support of renewable energy and energy efficiency innovations in line with the New York City Climate Mobilization Act of 2019.

Following a Green Path to Environmental Literacy

This training aligns with the U.S. Department of Labor's Career Pathway for workers in the building sciences and gives them exposure to the basics of buildings systems, which includes estimating and assessing. The Program teaches participants about the energy use requirements of large buildings, commercial spaces, and institutional spaces so they will know how to implement energy efficiency operations and measures.

Additionally, the training helps New York City achieve its green economy goals by equipping city employees with increasingly valuable environmental literacy foundations. By providing the energy efficiency and renewable energy certifications necessary for a future-facing and technically skilled workforce, city employees can conduct the work In-house through City Agencies. 106 U.S. Green Building Council certifications were earned by 96 participants.

“As we work to maintain and sustain communities into the future, we need infrastructure and energy sources that are renewable, resilient, and accountably and functionally efficient. Many types of job training can assist in reaching these goals, including building energy auditing and retrofitting, green infrastructure maintenance, wind and solar power maintenance, and citizen education and outreach for home action impact.”

– City Research Scientist,
Department of Design
and Construction

Prioritizing Employees from Disadvantaged Communities

Of the 96 employees trained so far, 25 reside in [disadvantaged communities](#) (as defined by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act) and 22 are from [priority populations](#). The hybrid approach, which combines classroom instruction with hands-on training, gave trainees relevant education and experience. With a renewed confidence, union members can confidently serve as the next generation of building superintendents, operators, facility managers, operating engineers, and stationary engineers.

After successfully completing the initial training, a comprehensive national training and certificate program on sustainability in buildings developed by Urban Green Council, an estimated 65–70% of participants can elect to continue their education with two additional courses: “Renewable Energy Essentials” and “Elements of Energy Efficiency.”

Union participants are now able to:

- Employ a systemic approach to operating and maintaining various types of commercial buildings
- Evaluate the performance of commercial and institutional buildings
- Describe at least three immediately actionable measures that will improve the health, energy, or water efficiency of a building, as well as the steps required to achieve them and
- Explain the costs and benefits of each additional measure

Learn more about clean energy workforce development opportunities with NYSERDA

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