

Meeting Notes

Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH)

Job Training Organization (JTO) Task Force

September 29, 2023, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Virtually Held Meeting.

Meeting Attendees

SOMAH Program Administrators

Ingrid Murillo | Senior SOMAH Workforce Manager, GRID Alternatives

Walther Perez | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives

Mina Defee | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives

SOMAH JTO Task Force Members

Senait Forthal | OC Goes Solar (Irvine)

Jeff Trirogoff | Elements of Earth and Energy (Humboldt County / Northern CA)

Janie Hodge | Paving the Way Foundation (Antelope Valley / Los Angeles)

Noah Arzola | William M. Maguy School of Education, Proteus Inc. (Central Valley)

Wes Olson | Center for Employment Training - Oxnard (Central Coast)

Genevieve "Gina" Jones | Owens Valley Community Development Center (Central Valley / Eastern Sierras)

Wanda Rogers | Founder of SoCal Pre Apprenticeship Program

Not in attendance: Jon Caffery, Danny Gonzalez, Dr. Mitchell Smith

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Workforce Development Updates
3. JTO Task Force in 2024 and Beyond
4. Review program updates and wins
5. Next Steps, Questions, Closing

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Notes:

Mina introduced the agenda and topics to be discussed during the meeting. The following updates were provided by the JTO Task Force members:

- Proteus received a grant for strategic innovation from PG&E for career training and one from Southern California Edison to expand solar training program.
- The program at Owen's Valley was not funded for the next few years but will re-open in 2026.
- Native American Student Support and Success Program - Targets schools with a large Native American population.
- SoCal Pre Apprenticeship Program has been focusing on prison visits to speak with folks who are transitioning out.

2. Workforce Development Updates

Walther Perez, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Notes:

Walther presented on the findings from the workforce needs assessment conducted in Q2-Q3 2023. The assessment covered several aspects of the program and gauged contractor knowledge and opinions on current practices. Contractors were also able to share what they look for in trainees and discuss hiring trends to expect in the future.

JTO TF Member: What does the recruitment process look like for trainees?

SOMAH PA: They can post on the Job Training Portal or they can work with trainees that they are already familiar with or that they have worked with before.

JTO TF Member: Is hiring a trainee required to be in the county where the project will be taking place?

SOMAH PA: It is not required but encouraged. This often ends up helping contractors because the trainees are within the same region and more easily able to work on the projects that are nearby.

JTO TF Member: Do you have a list of the organizations that you are dealing with? As a workforce lead there are lots of people that are interested in training and getting jobs, but they are not hearing back from the contractors.

SOMAH PA: The Job Training Portal gives trainees access to available jobs. WFD will follow up with contractors. We can help by continuing to send reminders to contractors. We want to build relationships so we can facilitate by using existing rapport.

JTO TF Member: How can we ensure that there are checks and balances on the hiring front? Hiring from the community should be more of a requirement.

SOMAH PA: We can update requirements on the handbook if needed. Continuing to build relationships with contractors and trainees.

JTO TF Member: How many contractors were contacted?

- 11 primary
- 22 eligible contractors

JTO TF Member: What are the eligibility criteria for contractors? Are you able to reach out to contractors outside of this group to get a bigger sample size (i.e., utilities list)?

SOMAH PA: Our target was conservative; the eligibility requirement was that they went through a webinar with CSE.

JTO TF Member: Capital has been a big roadblock for smaller contractors.

SOMAH PA: We are looking into funding resources so that small contractors are able to participate in the program.

JTO TF Member: We want the smaller contractors to be the main and not the sub. They can often complete the work for far less cost.

JTO TF Member: When was the survey done?

SOMAH PA: We started in Q2 and are still administering through the end of the year.

JTO TF Member: Great to hear about soft skills training.

JTO TF Member: Soft skills/safety training is really necessary/important.

JTO TF Member: Wraparound services are integral but are they willing to hire justice-impacted folks? If we knew that they were interested in this we should offer, but we should prioritize folks that really need it.

3. JTO Task Force in 2024 and Beyond

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Notes:

General Updates:

- Starting in 2024, the Advisory Council and the JTO Task Force will have regular crossover meetings. At least twice a year.
- The goal will be to fully combine the committees in the near future.

Successes of the JTO Task Force:

- Inspired questions for the workforce needs assessment.
- Supplement feedback to workforce development team on all audiences, provided clarity on items that were left open at the beginning of the program.

Future goals and priorities for the JTO Task force:

- Apprenticeship program.
- Bring in more contractors.
- Continue to analyze the workforce needs assessment.

- Continue to build on safety and soft skills training and development.

4. Review Program Updates and Wins

Ingrid Murillo, Sr. Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Nic Munoz-Proulx, Tenant Engagement Sr. Specialist

Notes:

Nic provided an overview of updates to the tenant education requirements, mainly that communications will be more robust to meet the needs of tenants. The tenant education team will also collaborate with the workforce development team to integrate training information more seamlessly into tenant communications materials.

Ingrid shared insights from the Bishop Paiute Tribe ribbon-cutting ceremony that took place in August. This project was the first Tribal SOMAH project, serving 24 tenant units with a 44-kW system. SOMAH staff was on-site during the event to provide information on workforce development as well as tenant education.

5. Next Steps, Questions, Open Floor

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Notes:

The next meeting will take place on December 8, 2023, and be a joint meeting with the Advisory Council.