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Contact: Margret Graham, WDC
(206) 448-0474, ext. 3029
mgraham@seakingwdc.org

New grant to open green Pathways Out of Poverty

SEATTLE— More than 450 low-income people will be trained in green skills and occupations as a result of a new \$3.6 million Recovery Act grant.

The GreenLight Project will concentrate on serving the poorest areas of southeast Seattle over the next two years, connecting disadvantaged individuals to green-sector jobs. The project is one of 40 Pathways Out of Poverty grants announced yesterday by the U.S. Department of Labor.

"We are thrilled that this important project has been funded," said Marléna Sessions, CEO of the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County.

"We sought these funds to ensure that people in poverty are not left behind as 'green jobs' become available. By training people in skills that will be needed by employers, this is a victory for both our community and our economy."

Commitments for more than 250 jobs in the sectors of deconstruction and materials use, energy-efficient building, and sustainable manufacturing have already been secured from local employers. More opportunities will be developed by through other Recovery Act projects and the private sector.

GreenLight will include short-term introduction courses to green construction and manufacturing jobs at South Seattle Community College's Georgetown campus, Seattle's preeminent training site for green skills in the trades. The project will also provide training and certification in weatherization. Finally, participants will have access to more in-depth training in the fields of deconstruction, green manufacturing, and green construction.

The goal is to ensure that participants are skilled up for immediate job openings and prepared to retain those jobs.

GreenLight partners include South Seattle Community College, industry groups, labor unions, Seattle and King County housing authorities, community-service organizations, industry groups and environmental training organizations.

The GreenLight Project grant represents the WDC's second success in competing for Recovery Act "green grants." The first, a \$3.9 million grant for a Puget Sound-wide partnership for job training in energy efficiency, was announced on Jan. 6.

For more information, visit the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County's website at www.seakingwdc.org.

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The **Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County** (www.seakingwdc.org) is a nonprofit workforce "think tank" and grant-making organization that oversees employment-related programs for youth, the adult workforce and employers in King County, with the goal of a strong economy and self-sufficiency for every resident.