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**Contact:**

Dayle Zatlin  
 (518) 862-1090, ext. 3359  
[dez@nyserda.org](mailto:dez@nyserda.org)

**NYSERDA-Supported Training Prepares Unemployed for Green Jobs through The Altamont Program**

*Work Readiness Skills, Internships Prepare Disadvantaged New York State Residents to Work in Energy Efficiency Sector, Become Self-Sufficient*

**ALBANY** – The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) today announced the success of the first group of graduates from a program designed to help prepare individuals from hard-to-serve populations for jobs in the clean energy economy.

The Altamont Program, which is offering training in Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Utica, reported that eight individuals who had been unemployed and receiving social services support are now employed in energy-related fields in the Capital Region after completing training through its Albany program.

The graduates include a homeless veteran now completing an apprenticeship in lighting retrofits at Midstate Electric in Greenwich, N.Y., a single mother and long-term family assistance recipient now conducting lighting audits for RISE Engineering in Albany, and a long-term social services recipient who had faced significant setbacks in life now working at Foam Guys Inc. in Glens Falls. The training, which will serve 115 people overall, is receiving \$186,875 from NYSERDA’s Career Pathways for Disadvantaged Workers program.

The Altamont Program, a subsidiary of Peter Young Housing Industries and Treatment, provides professional treatment, a safe place to stay, job training and a meaningful job to people who are addicted, impoverished and socially disenfranchised. Its overall mission is to create taxpayers.

The organization began a “Green Jobs” training program a year ago that taught basic weatherization skills, but found that participants needed help with job-readiness skills, math for the construction

industry and literacy skills in order to succeed in the marketplace.

Financial assistance from NYSERDA filled these gaps by funding training in these areas and others, including a course in understanding the green industry sector. It also pays for a job coach/internship coordinator, transportation to and from internships, tools and equipment.

In addition, the NYSERDA dollars are helping to leverage private dollars. One training graduate from the current Albany class will receive a scholarship from Hannaford Bros. Co. to attend Hudson Valley Community College upon completion of the program.

“NYSERDA is proud to work with The Altamont Program and other programs across New York that are offering vitally needed opportunities for people to get jobs in the clean energy economy,” said Francis J. Murray, Jr., President and CEO of NYSERDA. “NYSERDA’s funding for training programs supports education across the continuum from work readiness to very technical training.

The Career Pathways award builds on The Altamont Program’s existing training curriculum to increase job success for a very vulnerable population, to expand New York’s green jobs infrastructure and to improve energy efficiency in our state.”

The Altamont Program training includes four weeks of basic skills training and a 6-week internship.

“There’s a lot of interest in this program,” said Jackie Gentile, chief operating officer, The Altamont Program. “It’s exciting for our population to be part of the green industry. They see it as a career path. The NYSERDA funding enables us to provide the foundation so participants can be successful and move up quickly.”

NYSERDA is working with partners across the state to offer training opportunities to support energy efficiency programs approved by the NYS Public Service Commission. Its Career Pathways initiative is an addition to existing NYSERDA workforce development funding programs, which have traditionally focused on technical training for those already involved in the building industry. With the addition of Career Pathways and internship funding, NYSERDA now supports training along a full continuum – from basic skills training for disadvantaged workers to technical training for individuals seeking to advance their careers. Career Pathways also provides funding for train-the-trainer programs. The Career Pathways program, which is being offered through community colleges, BOCES, trade unions, nonprofit community based organizations and private training providers, is expected to provide critical skills training to prepare more than 6,000 new and transitional workers across New York State for jobs serving the energy efficiency industry.

Green jobs help improve energy efficiency, reduce energy costs and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. They include conducting energy audits, manufacturing energy efficiency products, installing weather stripping or insulation, upgrading thermostats, repairing and replacing storm windows, and replacing inefficient electric fixtures. They also include manufacturing or installing clean energy technologies, such as solar heat and hot water systems, wind turbines or geothermal systems.

NYSERDA-sponsored training programs have the potential to save taxpayers significant dollars. According to the Albany County Department of Social Services, a family of three receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) costs taxpayers \$40,000 per year, compared to a \$1,575 investment per participant in this green jobs training program, which can lead to gainful employment and self-sufficiency.

#### **About NYSERDA**

*The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority offers objective information and analysis, innovative programs, technical expertise and funding to help New Yorkers increase energy efficiency, save money, use renewable energy and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. NYSERDA professionals work to protect our environment and create clean-energy jobs in New York State. A public benefit corporation, NYSERDA has been developing partnerships to advance innovative energy solutions in New York since 1975.*

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17 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203-6399 Toll-Free: 1-866-NYSERDA or Local: 518-862-1090 Fax: 518-862-1091