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## Green Jobs—The New Trend by Madeline Buthod



There has been a lot of attention given in the media lately to green jobs being the salvation for our failing economy and warming planet. But what does this “Green Deal” mean for current job seekers? This green revolution will need workers of varying skill levels in many different fields. From accountants to weatherization contractors, there will be a huge demand for workers to help forge a new, more positive direction for the United States, a major contributor to global warming. Weatherizing and retrofitting homes, building wind turbines, installing solar panels, converting public, unused space into organic, community

gardens and improving infrastructure are all an example of Green Jobs. These jobs cannot be outsourced. Training programs are going to teach people weatherization contracting, auditing techniques, and business ownership. With these skills people will be able to start their own businesses, hire more people and help homeowners save energy. Wind turbines are massive structures that can weigh tons; it would not be practical to transport these structures from another country. They need to be built near where they will be used. With more and more community gardens

popping up, full-time workers will be needed to tend to these gardens and sell the produce at farmer’s markets, this is already being done in many major cities.



(left to right) Kennard Haynes, Dwayne Walker, Madeline Buthod, Darrell Steed & Tony Steed.

### CAASTLC’S GREEN TEAM

By-Kathi Lucas-Johnson

The Community Action Agency of St. Louis County, (CAASTLC), has a green team. CAASTLC offers the services of highly trained certified technicians and other skilled staff to provide an environmentally friendly and economically wise weatherization program. Qualified agency professionals also provide energy conservation education to residents of St. Louis County through

presentations and other special projects. During the current economic crisis and as the United States moves toward a “Green Economy,” CAASTLC will aide in the recovery by expanding its energy and weatherization programs. The expansion of programs like weatherization will result in the creation of jobs, cut heating and cooling bills for low income residents and conserve energy.

CAASTLC will support our mission to end poverty by providing green job training and green collar job opportunities. Through the delivery of these services, CAASTLC implements an overall strategy to help create a more secure and sustainable world.



Community Action Agency of St. Louis County recently completed a series of *Money Management Classes* for the YWCA Head Start Program staff & parents. The classes were offered for 5 weeks and topics included:

- Budgeting and Saving
- Checking Accounts and Banking Services
- Credit: Understanding credit reports and using credit cards wisely
- Borrowing money and consumer loans
- Protecting yourself from Identity theft
- Homeownership

Over twenty participants completed all of the classes that were offered every Saturday for 5 weeks. It took dedication and hard work but participants were very committed and now the staff are more prepared to help the young families they work with, and parents can

avoid many costly mistakes and plan for the future.

Ms. Marguerite Wilkes, who is a parent and member of the Head Start Policy Council, completed the classes. She shared with us how difficult it was to save and manage money because she has 8 children and is expecting her 9th. She is so happy that she accepted the challenge I made to the class to keep a log of their daily expenses. Everyone in class was challenged to log every penny they spent for one week and then continue to do so for a month. It is not an

easy thing to do but it is a great way to find money to save. By assisting her with her family budget she is now preparing to establish a savings account with the money she did not realize she could commit to saving. Ms. Wilkes also received help to review her credit report because she wants to prepare to refinance her home in order to lower her interest rate. Ms. Wilkes encourages everyone to take advantage of the opportunity to take these classes. She says these classes will change your life.



(left to right) Marguerite Wilkes meets with Literacy Class instructor Janice McKinney to discuss how to continue to work toward her financial goals.

## Answers to Green IQ Test (page 6)

(1.) 10 million (2.) 4.6 million (3.) it's a toss up (4.) produce (5.) 1,200 miles (6.) 21 million (7.) glass bottles (8.) unplug (9.) 40% (10.) thirty-six

Check out your Green IQ on page 6. You can learn a lot about energy conservation by attending the workshops held at CAASTLC on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM and on Wednesdays from 2:30 PM until 4:30 PM.

Information received during these workshops will save you money!!!

For more information or to make an appointment to attend a workshop, call Rich Krueger, Energy Conservation/Education Outreach Coordinator



## CAASTLC Initiates Department of Treasury Financial Access Pilot



(left to right) Jackie Hutchinson, Director Energy Programs-HDC, Dan Iannicola, Jr. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Education-Dept. of the Treasury and Janice McKinney,-Education Outreach Coordinator – CAASTLC.

Earlier this year the US Department of Treasury developed the Community Financial Access Pilot. The concept is to change the reality of our neighbors who are living outside of the financial mainstream. It's estimated that nearly 10 million households in the United States have no type of bank or credit union account. Being "unbanked" often makes

individuals more susceptible to theft and predatory loans, less likely to save for the future, or gain acceptable credit ratings. A collaborative in the St. Louis region and seven other communities nationally have begun implementing this project to develop a lasting approach to expanding financial opportunities to the underserved.

The collaborative consists of St. Louis City and County, the Federal Reserve Bank, United Way, CAASTLC, HDC and a host of other community based organizations.

## CAASTLC-Employment Program—by Melissa Benton

CAASTLC has many programs that help make our community better, the Employment Development program is one of those programs. CAASTLC helps get job seekers ready by assisting with resume writing, interviewing techniques, personal finances, time management, completing applications, and workplace etiquette. The program helps place motivated candidates with suitable employment opportunities throughout the area. Employment Coordinator, Melissa Benton has improved employment services by focusing to accomplish three objectives: recruiting a wider variety of businesses to offer employment, recruiting employers who will hire ex-offenders and employers who will hire people with limited English. These services have been a tipping point that has opened many doors to nontraditional job applicants. Now, as the rate of joblessness is on the rise in

our community CAASTLC's employment program has been able to



CAASTLC staffer Madeline Buthod assists a job seeker at the February Job Fair at Overland Community Center.

prepare newly unemployed individuals to adapt to the current market. From the senior applicants who have to acquire skills to start over in a new career direction to the first time applicants who are having trouble finding

the first job opportunity the Employment Development Program helps them all.

Many employers see the CAASTLC Employment Development program as an asset because they can see how much it helps them recruit quality trained and informed applicants without the expense of using traditional recruitment firms. The Employment Program will be holding another quarterly job fair on May 12, 2009 at the Overland Community Center.

There will be no fee for employers and there will be many qualified job seekers. If you are interested in attending the job fair contact Melissa Benton at (314) 446-4431.

*The Employment Program will be holding another quarterly job fair on May 12, 2009 at the Overland Community Center.*

The audit will include a health & safety inspection of the furnace and hot water heater, blower door test, combustion analyzer test and various other procedures

The escalating cost of utility bills has made it hard for the average family to heat their homes and is an even greater hardship for the low income and disadvantaged. With the onset of the spring and summer months the hardship is not over. Families will now be faced with the challenge of keeping their homes warm for the balance of the cold season and cool through the warmer months. The Community Action Agency of St. Louis County will continue to assist by providing energy audits and energy conservation kits free of charge to income eligible residents of St. Louis County. Weatherization services are available to income eligible residents at no cost and plans are in place to service

community at a sliding fee scale.

The first step in getting your home weatherized as an energy efficient dwelling is to achieve a certification of eligibility through an intake and assessment by CAASTLC staff.

Next an energy audit or inspection will be set-up. The audit will include a health & safety inspection of the furnace and water heater, blower door test, combustion analyzer tests and various other procedures.

Professional bonded and insured contractors, selected through a sealed bid process, perform the actual work. Each com-

pleted job must pass a final inspection for materials and workmanship by a certified weatherization professional from the CAASTLC staff.

If you would like to schedule weatherization services call Madeline Buthod at (314) 446-4436.



## First Time Homeowners Get Tax Break

by Janice McKinney

Community Action Agency of St. Louis County is a HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency. We have programs available to assist First-time homebuyers and now is a great time to invest in your future. Recently, the Federal Government announced a Tax Credit to assist First-time homebuyers. Here are some of the details.

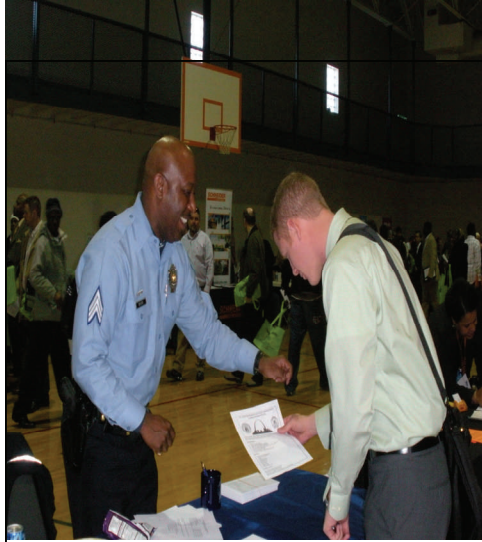
### Homeownership Tax Credit Basics

- First-time homebuyers who have not owned a home in the past three years.
- Purchased a home between January 1, 2009 and November 30, 2009.
- The home must be their primary residence.
- The Home can be a new or resale home, a co-op, condo or manufactured home.

If you buy a home in 2009, you can request an extension from the IRS or file an amended 2008 tax return. If you are interested in preparing to purchase a new home, please contact Ms. Janice McKinney, Program Education Specialist at 314-863-0015 ext. 429 or e-mail address is [janice@caastlc.org](mailto:janice@caastlc.org).



## Today's Labor Market-“Is There Any Hope?” -by Melissa Benton



Recruiter from St. Louis Police Department gives job seeker the 411 on career opportunities.

openings in their departments. One company in attendance, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, received recent media attention by laying off upper management employees. The date of the fair, an Enterprise representative explained that while lay-offs are occurring in one area, other departments are continuing to grow and take on new employees. Job-seekers should carefully guard themselves against media hype that can lead to further discouragement in their search.

If there are still jobs available, how does a candidate get one?

**A job-seeker needs to “up his game.”**

While casually strolling up to the counter of a restaurant and asking for an application may have been enough to land a job in the past, job-seekers are now facing stiffer competition. Today's candidates need to outshine their opponents by demonstrating professionalism in all aspects, including job-search documents (resumes, cover letters, thank you notes). They also need to market themselves to specific industries in order to indicate their relevant skills

and experiences. A general, “I’ll take anything” approach is not successful in today’s market. Many seekers have benefited from employment training seminars such as the Career Jumpstart Program offered by CAASTLC and classes at Missouri Career Centers. These programs can be instrumental in building a seeker’s confidence and teach methods that make a candidate stand out from the crowd.

A candidate is prepared, but where does she find jobs?

**Friends and family are a job-seeker’s top resource.**

While job search methods have undoubtedly changed with the introduction of online applications and internet job search engines, the most successful method remains the same: networking. As many as 75% of all candidates find employment by talking with family, friends, and strangers that become friends. Face to face contact is still preferred and will lead to better results than hours spent alone on the internet.



CAASTLC

Job FAIR

May 12, 2009

Call: 446-4431

**If there are still jobs available, how does a candidate get one?**

“Unemployment Hits a 7 Year High!” “8 Percent of Americans Now Unemployed!” Today’s headlines paint a grim picture for job-seekers.

With statistics showing little reason for hope, many job-seekers have dropped their searches all together and have resigned themselves to simply surviving the labor market storm. Others, not quite ready to give-up, ask themselves, “Is there any hope for job-seekers in today’s economy?”

**Yes; there is still hope.**

While the media reports hundreds of layoffs and freezes, many companies are still hiring. Even amidst the turmoil, 27 companies gladly attended the CAASTLC job fair last month eager to fill



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The mission of CAASTLC is to end  
poverty.

## Test Your Green IQ (composed by Rich Krueger)

1. **By replacing 5 incandescent light bulbs with CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lights) in every US home, we would prevent greenhouse gas emissions equal to how many cars?**
2. **How many tons of electronic waste end up in American landfills each year?**
3. **Is it better to shop online or at the mall?**
4. **If purchasing organic food is important to you, what should your priority be?**
5. **On average, how far does our food travel from grower to table?**
6. **How many barrels of oil are consumed in the US each day?**
7. **Which is less expensive to manufacture: glass bottles or aluminum cans?**
8. **What should we do: leave the computer in sleep mode or unplug it?**
9. **In the average home, what percentage of electricity is used when our electronics are turned off?**
10. **How many states are anticipating sever water shortages by 2016?**