

Media Contacts: Bernie Kohn Kirkland Murray
Office 410-230-6071 Office 410-987-3890

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor's Workforce Investment Board Announces Launch of a New Solar Energy Green Jobs Training Program in Anne Arundel County

Monday, August 23, 2010: The Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) is excited to announce the launch of Go Solar!, a new solar energy training program made possible through a \$5.8M Recovery Act grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Go Solar!, an innovative collaboration between GWIB, Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, Anne Arundel Community College, and the Independent Electrical Contractors-Chesapeake (IEC), will train entry-level workers for careers in solar photovoltaic installation or a transition into a traditional electrical apprenticeship program. This forward-thinking initiative will provide even more Marylanders with adaptable skills to ensure success in the expanding green economy.

The training, which begins today, will run 8:30 – 4:30, Monday – Friday for 14 weeks, with sessions held at IEC's training facility at 1424 Odenton Road, Odenton, MD. The class, which offers entry-level electricity basics and photovoltaic (PV) installation training, will develop basic skills and understanding of electrical and mechanical solar PV array design and components, as well as good safety practices. The training is open to new students and will combine 420 hours of lectures and lab work with 80 hours of on-the-job training. Completion of this program will prepare workers for the NABCEP Solar PV Installer Certification examination, for placement in a traditional electrical apprenticeship program, and employment in the solar PV industry or other applicable green/renewable energy opportunities.

“In Maryland we have set a goal of creating at least 100,000 green jobs by 2015, and we are working across our State – along with partners in business, community colleges, One Stop career centers, and trade associations – to train our next generation of workers to meet the growing workforce needs in the solar industry,” Governor Martin O'Malley said. “This project implemented in Anne Arundel County kicks off our effort to train over 1,500 Marylanders with the skills to compete in new and growing jobs in Maryland and provides more Marylanders with the skills they need to succeed.”

In February of 2010, GWIB was awarded a \$5.8 million grant by the U.S. Department of Labor to establish the Maryland Energy Sector Partnership, which develops and implements programs that will prepare more than 1,500 Marylanders for green jobs in manufacturing, construction, environmental technology and solar energy.

The Maryland Energy Sector Partnership (MESP), led by GWIB, is a comprehensive and representative partnership of DLLR/GWIB, local WIBs, State Cabinet officials, energy efficiency and renewable energy business and industry leaders, labor organizations, education institutions, and community organizations. The MESP monitors four regional

consortia that will create an integrated system of education, training, and supportive services that promotes skill attainment and career pathway development in green jobs in the fields of manufacturing, construction, environment technology and solar energy for more than 1,500 Marylanders. One of the consortia is the Go Solar! Group. The solar energy sector, while still young, has seen an average annual growth of 25% over the past 10 years. Skilled installers are in high demand, starting out at \$12 – \$20.

“Green industry is the future,” said Kirkland J. Murray, President and CEO of Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation. “This training will give Marylanders the edge they need to compete in the high-growth field of solar energy, and is a major step towards reaching our goal of getting our citizens back to work.”

For more information, contact the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation at 410-987-3890 or Kirkland Murray, kmurray@aawdc.org
