

# Keystone Utilities Partnership

A Statewide Joint to Meet the Needs of PA's Utilities Workforce

Underwritten by the PA Department of Labor and Industry and  
Managed by the Keystone Development Partnership (KDP)



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## PARTNERSHIP UPDATE JULY 2010

**INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP TRAINING:** In Program Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, KUP subsidized high skill training for 396 participants at an average cost of \$480 per trainee. The Partnership offered 88% consortium-based training. This exceeded the 75% multi-employer training required by the PA Department of Labor and Industry grant guidelines. The consortia based training reduces the cost of training per student and offers the opportunity to schedule repeat sessions of the course.

KDP assisted stakeholders to identify training priorities to create an economy of scale by offering classes to multiple employers statewide to include: Automotive Electric/electronics, Automotive hydraulics, CDL Certification and Upgrade, Crane Operator Certification, and Dam Safety. Additional training subsidized included: Basic Water, Trenching and Shoring, and Welder Blueprint.

The article **“Job Training, Job Saving”** featured KUP in the May/June 2010 issue of UGI's Newsletter *Watts in the Pipeline*. Fred Kaczor, UGI Vice President of Planning and Implementation, was quoted, *“This training maintains our workforce and gives our employees additional skills to make them more employable.”* He added, *“This Partnership has already been fruitful and we hope to continue it and use it as an ongoing training tool as we hire new field employees.”*

**“We are proud of this program and grateful for the support of the KDP grant funding,”** said Joan Shott, Learning and Development Consultant at PA American Water referring to the Advanced Trenching and Shoring classes attended by 262 employees. *“It is a hands-on program that was developed with subject matter experts across PA! It is difficult to calculate the cost savings of programs like this-- preventing just one accident and one injury is priceless.”* Ms Shott serves as the Co-Chair of the Labor Management Training Committee at PA American Water along with Kevin Booth, President of the Utility Workers Union of America Local 537. This training is a result of the Labor/Management joint process subsidized by KUP resources to develop curriculum and to reduce cost through in-house training delivery. The employer in-kind match far exceeded the grant contribution.

**CAREER OPPORTUNITY GRANT:** With PA Department of Labor & Industry funding, KUP subsidized promotional on-the-job training and wage reimbursements for 231 pre-employment, new hire, and incumbent workers at an average cost of \$1,298 per trainee. In addition to newly acquired skills, the training resulted in wage increases, promotions, and/or layoff aversion. The grant subsidized on-the-job training for Substation Personnel at Duquesne Light, Electricians at PPL, Utility Gas Workers at UGI, Utility Water Workers at PA American Water, Electrical Apprentices at IBEW Local 712 and Lineworkers through the IBEW NorthEast Apprenticeship and Training (NEAT) program. The NEAT pre-employment lineworker boot camp prepared graduates for entry into the NEAT apprenticeship.

**PARTNERING WITH WIBS AND OTHER INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS:** KDP is partnering with the Lehigh Valley, Lackawanna, Luzerne/Schuylkill, Three Rivers Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), and the Pennsylvania WIB as well as other Partnerships to coordinate employer contact and Energy Industry Partnership activities. By working with Local WIBs and Industry Partnerships, KUP leverages resources for training and hiring while reducing duplication.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry awarded the Lackawanna WIB a grant for Project Waterways submitted by KDP for PA American Water. KUP stakeholders participated in the successful Lehigh Valley WIB proposal for the Northeast Regional Green Team. KUP members served as an advisory board for state proposals for federal grants. KDP advised the NE Energy Industry Partnership to coordinate activities with IBEW Local 81 JATC to provide Solar PV training for laid-off Electricians.

**HIGH PRIORITY OCCUPATION DESIGNATION:** KDP collected data and processed the petition for electric distribution companies statewide to designate *Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay*, SOC code 49-2095 as a High Priority Occupation (HPO). This collaborative effort included PPL, Duquesne Light, Allegheny Energy, Westmoreland/Fayette WIB, North Central WIB, Lehigh Valley WIB, Southwest Corner WIB, Luzerne Schuylkill WIB and the Center for Workforce Data and Analysis as well as the State WIB. Last year KDP helped to designate Water & Liquid Waste Treatment Plant & Systems Operators (SOC Code 51-8031) as an HPO.

**SUBSTATION STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE:** Statewide Substation Standards Committee representatives include: Allegheny Energy/UWUA Local 102, PPL/IBEW Local 1600, Duquesne Light/IBEW Local 29, IBEW Local 614 (PECO), IBEW International - 3<sup>rd</sup> District, PA Public Utility Commission, The State WIB and curriculum development consultants. The goals for the committee are to catalogue substation job titles by employer, to establish definitions of core skills, to capture the knowledge of potential retirees, and to list specific training needs. Substation subject matter experts are reviewing the job task list to group each set of tasks by occupation for each employer. This matrix will be used to develop a skill gap survey used to pinpoint training needs. This project serves as a pilot for the PA Energy Workforce Consortium to gather data for a statewide training gap report.

**ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS DATABASE:** KDP Partnered with a curriculum development specialist and community-based organizations (CBO) to create a Utility Sector Entry-Level Jobs Profile database. KUP employers provided lists of entry-level jobs, job descriptions and time to discuss new hire pre-requisites. KDP received Planning and Capacity Building grants from the Pennsylvania Fund for Workforce Solutions to identify utility industry employers and unions to participate in developing pre-employment training to include foundation skills curriculum to provide opportunities for low skilled adults in the South Central WIB area. The Harrisburg based Foundation for Enhancing Communities facilitated the KDP partnership with the Employment Skills Center (ESC) of Carlisle for this project. KDP is also partnering with the Labor Management Clearinghouse to support projects that enable entry-level workers to advance into skilled positions in southwest PA. The Utility Industry Entry-level Jobs Database will be available to CareerLinks and other workforce development agencies.

**KUP OUTREACH:** KDP would like to welcome **First Energy/Met Ed/ IBEW Local 777, FE Bruce Mansfield/IBEW Local 272**, and **Columbia Gas/UWUA Local 475 and 479** into the Partnership.

**CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGEMENT:** Sargent Electric is leading a pilot program that is designed to provide effective tools for communicating with customers on the job site for inside electricians. This program will enable employees to support their contractors to increase their market share and avert lay-offs. This could lead to new hiring opportunities. Once the pilot is successfully completed, the program will be offered statewide.

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING:** The PA Department of Labor & Industry awarded KDP additional funds for KUP training up to March 31, 2011. To date, KUP has subsidized training for 127 participants under the this grant. Listed below are the training opportunities identified by stakeholders.

Red Zone Robotics	CDL and CDL upgrade	Mobile Hydraulic Certification
ABB Breaker	Customer Relations Management	Nuclear Maintenance
Asbestos Removal	Engine Diagnostic	Apprentice
Beck Drive	Elementary Blueprint	Relay and Protection Testing
Backhoe	Lineworker Safety	Siemens Breaker
Basic Electric	Mercury Instrument Training	Welding