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NEWS

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PVSC Welcomes Temporary New Workers from Metro Newark Brownfields Training Program *Partnership with NJISJ Helps Graduates Apply Their Skills and Gain Experience*

NEWARK, NJ – Today, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) welcomed ten new men and women to its workforce, as part of an ongoing collaboration with the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (NJISJ) and its Metro Newark Brownfields Training Program. The majority of the workers are coming from PVSC's service district and largest ratepayer, Newark.

The new temporary hires will apprentice in the PVSC's Maintenance and Operations Departments, and assist in running one of the largest and most advanced wastewater treatment facilities in the world.

"I'm pleased to welcome these new workers to the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission," said PVSC Executive Director Michael DeFrancisci. "In the midst of the most recent devastation from Superstorm Sandy, we have an urgent need for qualified technicians to help us restore the plant and resume critical operations as a result of the storm damage. This is a win-win for us and these men and women. We have the good fortune of getting well-trained workers who will gain excellent experience and receive a good-paying job."

Although the jobs are temporary, the possibility of regular full-time employment may present itself in the future. The new workers will acquire the intermediate and advanced skills needed to work at a wastewater treatment plant during their tenure with the PVSC. The positions, which were created as a result of Superstorm Sandy, will last a minimum of 60 days, and wage costs will be reimbursed by FEMA.

According to DeFrancisci, the assignments will be conducted throughout the PVSC main treatment facility in Newark and at other locations, if necessary. The new employees will be working under the direction of veteran employees as the plant continues its clean-up activities after Superstorm Sandy.

"PVSC has many experienced employees willing to assist in making the apprenticeship a useful experience for the new employees. The new employees will be working alongside many of our long-time workers as we continue the task of cleaning up from Sandy," said Kenneth J. Lucianin, PVSC Commissioner.

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Cornell William Brooks, President and CEO of NJISJ, said, “With the technical training and certifications this program provides, our participants have a real opportunity to earn a living wage and begin a lifelong career. Amidst an uneven, uncertain and unrealized recovery, these jobs provide a critical first step through a doorway of opportunity for men and women willing to work.”

Last year, DeFrancisci began a discussion with the NJISJ when he served as commencement speaker of the program’s third graduating class. After becoming more involved with the organization and meeting the graduates, he worked toward making this post-graduation apprenticeship program a reality.

“It was clear to me, that this was a program PVSC should not only participate in, but help expand. Any time PVSC can get highly trained local employees and continue the education process, that is a positive for the organization,” said DeFrancisci.

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In order to protect and preserve local streams and rivers from water pollution, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission operates one of the country's oldest and largest treatment plants for the wastewaters of northern New Jersey, serving over 1.4 million people in five counties.