



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

# NEWS RELEASE

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## The Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$500,000 for Sante Fe Community College to Recruit and Train New Mexico Workers for Community Revitalization and Cleanup Projects

*Latest funding for EPA's Brownfield Job Training Grants is supported by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and will boost workforce training in underserved and overburdened communities*

**DALLAS, TEXAS (December 12, 2023)** - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the Sante Fe Community College will receive a total of approximately \$500,000 for environmental job training programs as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda. The grants through EPA's Brownfields Jobs Training Program will help recruit, train, and place workers for community revitalization and cleanup projects at brownfield sites across the country.

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is having a powerful, real-world impact on the ground, creating good-paying jobs and revitalizing communities," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "The President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has supercharged our Brownfields program, enabling EPA to invest in the next generation of environmental workers to take on the much-needed work of cleaning up legacy pollution in communities across America."

"The Investing in America Agenda continues to provide crucial funding to environmental programs across New Mexico," **said Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance**. "With this \$500,000 investment, EPA will give back to New Mexico communities by helping job-seekers gain professional skills and experience needed in the environmental workforce. We thank and congratulate Sante Fe Community College for their dedication to serving impacted communities and for providing invaluable resources to students."

"I'm proud to welcome this important EPA grant to Santa Fe Community College to help clean up and protect New Mexico communities from hazardous materials while creating opportunities for good-paying jobs," **said Senator Ben Ray Luján (NM)**. "This critical investment will not only focus on serving New Mexican students, veterans, and low-income individuals, but also those on Tribal Lands, ensuring our local workforce continues to develop to meet the needs of our community."

"I'm pleased to welcome this investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help Santa Fe Community College prepare the next generation of New Mexicans for careers they can build their

families around,” said **Sen. Martin Heinrich (NM)**. “With this grant, we’re creating new, high-quality jobs in our state that will help revitalize our communities and create a safer, cleaner environment for the future.”

“Proud to see Santa Fe Community College receive this up to \$500,000 grant thanks to the Biden Administration’s Investing in America Agenda. The Brownfields Jobs Training Program will provide students in New Mexico with wonderful employment opportunities — leading to high quality environmental science careers. This grant will also promote environmental justice through the revitalization and clean up of land that was polluted by hazardous materials,” said **Rep. Leger Fernández (NM-3)**. “When I voted for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which made this grant possible, I knew it would provide New Mexico with the resources to thrive. I’m excited to see students from across my district take advantage of this opportunity.”

Sante Fe Community College established the New Mexico Environmental Job Training program to provide certifications and skills for entry level job positions. With this \$500,000 grant, the Santa Fe Community College plans to train 134 students and place at least 125 in environmental jobs. The training program includes 168 hours of instruction and students who complete the training will earn up to 11 state or federal certifications. This program is targeting students within Bernalillo, Los Alamos, Santa Fe, San Miguel, Mora, Taos, and Rio Arriba counties, and specifically Native Americans from the area’s 17 Indian Pueblos and Tribes.

These grants will provide funding to organizations that are working to create a skilled workforce in communities where assessment, cleanup, and preparation of brownfield sites for reuse activities are taking place. Individuals completing a job training program funded by EPA often overcome a variety of barriers to employment and many are from historically underserved neighborhoods or reside in the areas that are affected by environmental justice issues.

High-quality job training and workforce development are an important part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to advance economic opportunities and address environmental justice issues in underserved communities. All of the FY24 Brownfields Job Training Program applications selected have proposed to work in areas that include disadvantaged communities as defined by the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool, delivering on President Biden’s [Justice40 Initiative](#) which aims to deliver at least 40% of the benefits of certain government investments to underserved and overburdened communities.

Under the Brownfields Jobs Training Program, individuals typically graduate with a variety of certifications that improve their marketability and help ensure that employment opportunities are not just temporary contractual work, but long-term and high-quality environmental careers. This includes certifications in:

- Lead and asbestos abatement,
- Hazardous waste operations and emergency response,
- Mold remediation,
- Environmental sampling and analysis, and
  
- Other environmental health and safety training

For more information on the selected Brownfields Job Training Grant recipients, including past Grant recipients, please visit [EPA's Grant Factsheet Tool](#).

## **Background**

President Biden's leadership and bipartisan congressional action have delivered the single-largest investment ever made in U.S. brownfields infrastructure. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests more than \$1.5 billion through EPA's highly successful Brownfields Program, which is helping more communities than ever before begin to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges caused by the legacy pollution at brownfield sites. Today's funding for Brownfields Jobs Training grants comes from this historic investment, which is allowing more communities, states, and Tribes to access larger grants to build and enhance the environmental curriculum in job training programs to support job creation and community revitalization at brownfield sites. Ultimately, this investment will help trained individuals access jobs created through brownfields revitalization activities within their communities.

Since 1998, EPA has announced 414 grants totaling over \$100.5 million through Brownfield Job Training Programs. With these grants, more than 21,500 individuals have completed training and over 16,370 individuals have been placed in careers related to land remediation and environmental health and safety. The average starting wage for these individuals is over \$15 an hour.

For more information on this, and other types of Brownfields Grants, please visit [EPA's Brownfields webpage](#).