



**Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity**

Pat Quinn, Governor

December 18, 2012

Dear Governor and Members of the General Assembly:

The Urban Weatherization Initiative (UWI) Act (30 ILCS 738/Article 40) requires the Office of Urban Assistance to administer the weatherization assistance program that is designed to increase employment opportunities and provide energy assistance for low income households by decreasing their energy usage through the process of weatherizing their residence. The Urban Weatherization Initiative Program targeted the following five eligible communities during the FY12 fiscal year that included Cook County, East St. Louis, Kankakee, Peoria, and Rockford. Detailed below is an overview of the initiative and a summary of the FY 12 program accomplishments, challenges, and plans of action to address those challenges.

**Program Summary**

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Office of Urban Assistance, in conjunction with the Urban Weatherization Initiative Board of Directors, is responsible for administering and implementing the UWI Program. The purpose of the Urban Weatherization Initiative is to create green jobs; increase skills for the under/unemployed; improve energy efficiency by decreasing energy usage and costs for residents in low income areas; and stimulate local economies.

The UWI Board of Directors has dedicated their time and expertise while working with staff, to ensure that the program is running effectively and in a transparent manner. The Board currently has one open voting position and two open ex-officio member positions available.

The UWI Board members are:

**VOTING MEMBERS**

Percy Harris, Chairman  
Deborah Harrington  
Melissa Williams  
Beth Delgado

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

Senator Donne Trotter  
Representative Ken Dunkin

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### Program Model

The UWI program model focuses on job creation efforts in the field of weatherization in order to advance new economic opportunities to residents within the identified eligible communities for the purpose of providing weatherization services within those communities. As such, this initiative operates on a two pronged fashion by first providing training to residents through the training grants (Home Energy Auditor and Weather Specialist Training) and then employment via the Residential Weatherization Program. It is imperative to note that the Residential Weatherization Program is slated to begin January 2013.

The training programs are designed to provide both classroom and hands-on training to participants on either a full or part-time basis within the eligible communities. This provides an opportunity for local community organizations to conduct market-relevant training and education, while creating a strategic path to employment and career advancement opportunities. Upon completion of the training program participants are expected to pass either their Building Performance Institute (BPI) Exam or the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Certification.

In addition, the program will stimulate local economies by utilizing local contractors, suppliers, distributors and/or manufacturers of equipment and supplies necessary for the weatherization work. Targeted buildings for the program include single family homes and multi-family dwellings up to six units in a census tract with high rates of unemployment, underemployment, and poverty.

Eligible grant applicants included private, non-profit, and public entities that were able to provide weatherization training/services in collaboration with local community based organizations. All grants were awarded via a competitive selection process up to \$500,000.00 per fiscal year.

Weatherization activities include:

- Repair/replacement of inefficient heating or cooling units
- Addressing air infiltration issues (i.e. weather stripping, caulking, window/door replacement)
- Repair/replacement of water heaters
- Pipe duct installation/insulation
- Minor roof repair

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## Program Accomplishments

During FY12, the Urban Weatherization Initiative successfully achieved the following:

- Hired three permanent staff for the program in April of 2012, which consisted of one Program Manager and two Grant Managers in order to provide continued monitoring and oversight of the sixteen training grants;
- Released the Request for Application for the Residential Weatherization Program that will enable the weatherization process itself to go forward in the 5 current service areas of Cook County, Kankakee, East St. Louis, Peoria, and Rockford
- Received UWI Board approval to significantly scale up the program by expanding eligible coverage areas to include 24 additional counties beyond the current 5 county service area. Additional counties include: Alexander, Boone, Bureau, Clark, Clay, Franklin, Grundy, Kane, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Macon, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Pulaski, Putnam, Rockford, Rock Island, St. Clair, Stephenson, Union, Will, Winnebago. All of these counties will be eligible for the next phase of the UWI grants;
- Conducted a meeting in the East St. Louis area along with UWI's Board of Directors in an effort to market the training programs in that area. The program was attended by the Mayor, former DCEO Director David Vaught, UWI training programs administrators/participants in the East St. Louis area, and community residents;
- Conducted Best Practice Session for all UWI grantees in order to discuss and develop best model standards;
- Met with University of Illinois in order to discuss developing a training curriculum for future UWI training grants;
- Developed marketing pamphlets for UWI;
- Began developing Residential Weatherization Program procedure manual.

## Program Challenges

- 1) The UWI program had no permanent staff assigned until 4/16/12, which impacted the start and conclusion dates of the Home Energy Auditor (HEA) training grants, as well as the Residential Weatherization Program (RWP) grants. The HEA training grants were

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originally slated to conclude on 5/31/12, however the lack of staff capacity to provide program implementation and oversight, required an extension of the conclusion date to 10/31/12. UWI has recently gained one 75 day contractual staff person to assist with program implementation to ensure adequate staff capacity at this stage. Due to the anticipated expansion of the program, UWI will ultimately require five additional permanent staff for FY 13. DCEO has committed to addressing this need and to ensuring sufficient staff capacity to implement the program in a timely fashion and provide effective monitoring for grant compliance.

- 2) The total number of Building Performance Institute certified participants that completed the program was smaller than originally anticipated. The low numbers can be directly attributed to the following three variables:
  - a. The grantee training population had education deficits specifically in the areas of reading and math below 8<sup>th</sup> grade level;
  - b. Training programs did not administer post-module exams, which would have allowed grantees to gauge their clients' strengths as well as areas that required additional development in order to increase their likelihood of passing the certification exam;
  - c. Each program established its own curriculum for the certification exam. The lack of a standardized curriculum, however, sometimes resulted in training that lacked a direct link to the information on the exams.

In order to guarantee that these same issues are not experienced in the upcoming round of training grants, baseline reading and math scores (8th and 10th grade respectively) have been implemented. In addition, each grantee must now administer a post-module exam in order to gauge the participants' level of understanding of each module and provide tutorial assistance as needed in order to remediate. UWI is exploring developing a standardized curriculum that will be used for all training grants.

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<b>UWI TRAINING Grants</b>	<b>Total Awards Granted</b>
Home Energy Auditor Training Grants	\$1,600,000.00
Weatherization Specialist Training Grants	\$3,398,444.00
<b>TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED DURING FY12</b>	<b>\$4,998,444.00</b>

**FY12- HOME ENERGY AUDITOR TRAINING GRANTEES**  
Grant Period 06/1/11 through 10/31/12

<b>GRANTEE</b>	<b>AREAS COVERED</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>
Albany Park Community Center, Inc	Cook County	\$250,000.00
City of Rockford	Rockford, Il	\$250,000.00
Hispanic American Construction Industry	Cook County	\$300,000.00
Local Economic & Employment Development Council, Inc	Cook County	\$250,000.00
Opportunity Advancement Inc	Cook County	\$250,000.00
Southwestern Illinois College	East St. Louis	\$300,000.00

**FISCAL YEAR 2012 PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

<b># OF PARTICIPANTS TRAINED:</b>	<b>286</b>
<b># OF PARTICIPANTS CERTIFIED:</b>	<b>92</b>

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**FY12 WEATHERIZATION SPECIALIST TRAINING GRANTEES  
Grant Period -1/1/12 through 12/31/12**

<b>GRANTEE</b>	<b>AREA COVERED</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>
Emerson Park Development Corporation	East St. Louis	\$350,000.00
Genesis Housing Development Corp.	Cook County	\$270,000.00
Healthcare Consortium of Illinois	Cook County	\$350,000.00
Illinois Youthbuild Coalition	Rockford, Il	\$400,000.00
North Lawndale Employment Inc	Cook County	\$325,407.00
Pembroke Hopkins Park Construction	Kankakee, Il	\$250,000.00
Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity, Inc	Peoria, Il	\$311,885.00
Proviso-Leyden Council for community Action, Inc	Cook County	\$356,252.00
Southwestern Illinois College	East St. Louis	\$400,000.00
The Black Star Project	Cook County	\$384,900.00

**FISCAL YEAR 2012 PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

**\*This grant does not conclude until 12/31/12, so performance measures provided in this report only extend through third quarter (September 31, 2012).**

**# OF PARTICIPANTS TRAINED: 382\***

**# OF PARTICIPANTS CERTIFIED: 158\***

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**FY 2013 Program Goals:**

UWI's overarching programmatic goal is to sharply increase the scale and reach of this program.

To that end, UWI will award the first Residential Weatherization Program (RWP) grants to eligible applicants who will have the responsibility of completing actual weatherization work on the homes in the original five target areas. These grants will be awarded in January 2013 in order to ensure that the program will be up and running for the spring construction season.

In addition, the second round of training grants for the significantly expanded set of counties will be posted and awarded with an anticipated start date of April 2013. It is the hope of the Board, along with the office of Urban Assistance, that at least one training grant be awarded in each county identified.

It is anticipated that the second phase of RWP grants (work directly on homes) will then be posted and awarded for the expanded counties in January 2014, which would allow for this program to be implemented for the spring construction season.

In parallel with the increased scale of the program, UWI, along with the Board of Directors, will continue to explore the possibility of developing a curriculum for both training programs in an effort to standardize the curriculum and increase certification rates. In addition, the Board will review an evaluation plan for the overall program.

It is our goal to expand employment opportunities in low-income areas in an effort to increase participants' marketability in the green energy job-sector, decrease energy cost to low-income residents, and improve local economies through the utilization of local businesses when purchasing supplies and materials required to weatherize homes utilizing local contractors. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity – Office of Urban Assistance is committed to implementing the Urban Weatherization Initiative allowing continued development of Illinois' workforce while addressing the energy efficiency needs of our urban communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Pollet  
Acting Director

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