



Good Green Jobs for Colorado

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**Colorado Workers Graduate Green Jobs Training Program, Ready for Employment
Weatherizing Homes**

***First Class of Skilled and Certified Denver-Area Weatherization Workers
Graduate Training Program on National Weatherization Day***

Denver, CO – The Laborers’ International Union of North America (LIUNA) graduated its first class of 11 skilled weatherization workers today, October 30, National Weatherization Day. The new graduates completed a challenging three-week training program where they learned general construction skills in addition to core weatherization competencies, such as energy auditing and insulating.

“The skilled and credentialed weatherization workers LIUNA graduated today are now prepared to go to work retrofitting the thousands of poorly insulated homes in our area and help local families save money on their energy bills,” said Larry Gray, Business Manager of Laborers’ Local 720, who led local officials on a tour of LIUNA’s training facility after the graduation ceremony while the graduates demonstrated their newly acquired weatherization skills. **“LIUNA wants these new graduates to have the skills they need to advance in family-supporting jobs and make a good career out of weatherizing American homes and businesses for years to come.”**

LIUNA has designed a breakthrough national program to train thousands of workers in communities across the country to do skilled energy efficiency retrofits, in order to meet the demand for a skilled weatherization workforce. LIUNA trainees learn detailed weatherization skills at LIUNA’s nationwide network of training centers, and have the opportunity to advance in family-supporting careers.

It is estimated that LIUNA’s national training program will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs, reduce household energy costs by \$3.5 billion a year and save the equivalent of 500 million barrels of oil annually. Both Green for All (www.greenforall.org) and Good Jobs First (www.goodjobsfirst.org) have highlighted LIUNA’s weatherization model as an example of weatherization work done right.

“Investing in energy efficiency is the right choice for our economy and the planet. Buildings are responsible for 40 percent of global warming pollution. Green jobs that increase building efficiency ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for future generations,” said Jonah Fruchter, Regional Conservation Organizer for the Sierra Club.

The average family can save \$350 a year on their utility bills after a weatherization. Retrofitting is also a cost effective way to help our environment, because the energy wasted in homes contributes heavily to pollution in communities. American homes (particularly those in the Northeast) burn oil that comes from foreign sources, so weatherization can also bolster our nation’s energy security by helping to curb the amount of foreign oil that is wasted on poorly insulated windows, doors and roofs.





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“We’ve gotten really good training, like safety training. Our trainers really know what they’re doing and I feel like I’m learning a lot. LIUNA’s training program is a chance for me to gain new skills and start a career,” said trainee and graduate Alisa Sykes.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested \$5 billion to expand the Department of Energy’s Weatherization Assistance Program and meet the Obama Administration’s goal of weatherizing one million homes a year. This is a nearly 10-fold increase in the amount typically invested in weatherizing poorly insulated homes, but it is still not enough to fix all of the nation’s energy inefficient homes. DOE recently announced that it will be allocating over \$400 million in competitive energy efficiency grants, which could help fund weatherization projects in cities like Denver and around the country. LIUNA is working with partners, such as the Sierra Club, Change to Win, Clean Economy Network, and FRESC to help close the remaining weatherization investment gap and identify ways to ramp up both public *and* private investment in America’s weatherization industry, including “pay-as-you-save” models, utility partnerships, bonds and pension fund investments.

For more information on LIUNA’s weatherization training program please visit <http://www.liunabuildsamerica.org/weatherize>.

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