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\$4M Grant to Support Displaced Oil and Gas Workers in Contra Costa County

Program planning is underway to address policy and economic forces that will reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Concord, CA (March 1, 2024) – The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County, a business-led board that builds public-private partnerships with education, economic development, labor, and community organizations to solve complex workforce challenges, is one of only four organizations awarded a grant to support displaced oil and gas workers across the region.

The \$3.8M grant is supported by the State of California's General funds to pioneer new initiatives that will guide displaced oil and gas workers toward new job opportunities and career paths within five high-growth sectors, including transportation, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, energy, and construction. The program will utilize existing relationships and establish new ones with organizations to enhance workforce development infrastructure in the region.

Policies and economic forces that will reduce fossil fuel use are driving the grant's need. Investment in clean energy generation and technologies reached a new record in 2022. [The Business Council for Sustainable Energy](#) reports that despite supply chain disruptions, an international energy crisis, and rising interest rates, power generation from renewable sources hit a new record, and consumers purchased nearly 1 million new electric vehicles. As a result, sustainable industries are expected to grow and provide high-quality employment, resulting in a larger pool of available jobs with livable wages in the sustainable industry sector.

The Covid-19 pandemic ushered in record low levels of gasoline consumption, with an initial sharp decrease beginning in March 2020 due to pandemic lockdowns and then more gradual decreases in the years following as fewer Americans commuted to work, according to the [Energy Information Administration](#). In addition to pandemic-related decreases in refinery activity, [California's Just Transition](#) was introduced in 2022, a 12-year state roadmap to phase out fossil fuels while also transitioning many of the state's 112,000 oil and gas workers to high-wage jobs in more sustainable industries.

"We are excited about the opportunity to help our region's skilled oil and gas workers transition into sustainable careers for the future green economy," said Tamia Brown, executive director of the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County. "We look forward to deploying these critical resources to help achieve equity by providing for the training, work-based learning experiences, wrap-around supports, and other resources needed to accomplish our goals."

This grant is expected to have a significant impact by providing training, upskilling, or placement opportunities to a minimum of 200 participants in quality jobs with sustainable wages. The project will focus on supporting displaced oil and gas workers, ensuring their successful placement over two years. For more details about the program, contact Yelena Miakinina at ymiakinina@ehsd.cccounty.us.

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About the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County: a business-led board that builds public-private partnerships with education, economic development, labor, and community organizations to solve complex workforce challenges. Our work achieves equitable economic growth for Contra Costa County. We ensure a pipeline of diverse workforce talent is available to keep local companies competitive. Through our strategic connections and partnerships, we find innovative, sustainable solutions to solve complex workforce issues and leverage public-private resources to benefit the workforce and businesses alike. More at www.AchievingEquityContraCosta.com