

# Meeting Notes

## Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH)

### Job Training Organization (JTO) Task Force

September 30, 2022, 9:30AM - 12:30PM

Virtually Held Meeting.

## Meeting Attendees

### SOMAH Program Administrators

**Staci Hoell** | Senior SOMAH Workforce Manager, GRID Alternatives  
**Walther Perez** | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives  
**Mina Defee** | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives  
**Ingrid Murillo** | SOMAH Workforce Development Specialist, GRID Alternatives  
**Sana Sheikholeslami** | Senior SOMAH MEO Coordinator, GRID Alternatives  
**Adewale OgunBedejo** | VP of Workforce Development, GRID Alternatives  
**Christopher Walker** | Senior Program Director, GRID Alternatives  
**Peterson Pierre** | SOMAH Tenant Services and CBO Coordinator, GRID Alternatives  
**Monica De La Cruz** | SOMAH Marketing, Education, & Outreach, Coordinator, GRID Alternatives  
**Stacey Lee** | SOMAH Program Administration Coordinator, GRID Alternatives

### SOMAH JTO Task Force Members

**Jon Caffery** | Saddleback College/College of The Desert (Orange County)  
**Senait Forthal** | OC Go Solar (Los Angeles)  
**Mitchell Smith** | Young Community Developers (Bay Area)  
**Danny Gonzales** | Center for Employment Training - Colton (Inland Empire)  
**Jeff Trirogoff** | Elements of Earth and Energy (Humboldt County / Northern CA)  
**Janie Hodge** | Paving the Way Foundation (Antelope Valley / Los Angeles)  
**Genevieve "Gina" Jones** | Owens Valley Community Development Center (Central Valley / Eastern Sierras)  
**Stuart Cooley** | Formerly, Santa Monica College (Los Angeles)

*Not in attendance (provided feedback asynchronously):*

**Noah Arzola** | William M. Maguy School of Education, Proteus Inc. (Central Valley)  
**Wes Olson** | Center for Employment Training - Oxnard (Central Coast)

# Meeting Agenda

*Fill in ahead from Facilitation Plan + Slide Deck*

1. Chair & Vice-Chair Introductions
2. Discussion of Policy Updates: CSLB licensing proposal and AB 2143
3. Review of Working Group Meeting Outcomes
4. Continue development of Task Force priorities
5. Review program updates and wins

## Meeting Notes - *Fill in ahead from Facilitation Plan + Slide Deck*

### 1. Welcome, Chair & Vice-Chair Introductions and Individual Share Outs

*Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA*

Mina introduced the new Chair and Vice-Chair, Jeff Trirogoff and Senait Forthal respectively, who shared their visions for the position and for the task force.

#### Jeff Trirogoff:

Vision for the Position:

- Jeff provided a brief summary of his qualifications, full biography can be found [here](#).
- Adhere to the purpose of the task force as it pertains to the SOMAH values.

Vision for the task force:

- Listen to the existing interests of the JTOs
- Ensure that trainees have a meaningful experience.
- Help curriculums stay current with the market's demands.

#### Senait Forthal:

Vision for the Position:

- Senait provided a brief summary of his qualifications, full biography can be found [here](#).

Vision for the task force:

- To add to Jeff's goals, to focus on centralizing info for job seekers.
- Trainees know where jobs are.
- Privy to local jobs and opportunities
- How to make the SOMAH program to various communities that would benefit from the opportunity.

### 2. Discussion of Policy Updates: CSLB licensing proposal and AB 2143

*Staci Hoell, Senior Workforce Development Manager, SOMAH PA*

Staci Hoell presented updates on the CSLB licensing process that would preclude the C-46 solar contractor from installing an energy storage system larger than 80 kWh when paired with PV, and on AB 2143, which would require contractors to pay all crew members prevailing wage

#### General Notes CSLB Licensing:

- Only 22% of the solar and storage installations in the past 5 years were done by contractors holding only a C-10 license. The majority are installed by contractors who hold a C-46.
- The rulemaking process is underway
- Public suggestions will be accepted at some point in the process.
- **TF Member:** What does it mean to connect an electronic device? This will determine at what point an electrician is needed or not.
- **PA Member:** It is hard to tell because the language is broad.

#### General Notes on AB 2143 Update:

- Exclusions: single-family, public works, modular homes, multifamily housing properties housing less than 3 stories.
- Unclear whether it will apply to solar installers
- **TF Member:** average wage non-prevailing on the most recent job was \$25, whereas the same job for Fed. P.W. was \$77.98 for electrician (311% increase) in labor alone. This was for an apartment building and the job cost went from \$800 K to \$1.1 M. an extra 10%. Also "domestic equipment" and "domestic" in general needs to be defined, i.e. 50% manufactured, vs. assembled in U.S.
- **TF Member:** Would like to know how the IRA will impact and be impacted.

## 3. Review of Working Group Meeting Outcomes

*Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA*

#### Working Group 1: Targeted JTO engagement & connection to jobs

- Insights & Findings:
  - There are regional gaps in SOMAH projects and JTO partnerships - including in Tribal communities
  - Connect with instructors directly, CBO's in the area, and do in-person presentations when possible
  - Work on removing barriers - simplify website, grants for languages other than English, assistance with resumes
  - Work on highlighting a specific project as a model of what success looks like
- Priorities
  - Focus on finding JTOs in Northern California
  - Research which JTO's have electrical trainee card program and which ones have the potential for offering that instruction

#### Working Group 2: Opportunity accessibility

- Insights & Findings:
  - Limitations to participation due to location of projects and lack of reliable transportation
  - Need to increase the confidence of trainees by guiding them (application,

- project, apprenticeship) and preparing resources to track skills learned
  - Increase resources focused on re-entry populations (i.e. FAQ, webinars, workshops)
  - Projects & hiring opportunities need to be available before Tribal serving JTOs are engaged
  - Survey of Tribal communities to determine the knowledge base and needs assessment
- Priorities
  - Workshop on fair hiring practices
  - Definition of multifamily for Tribal access
  - Workshop/webinar on steps to continue in career/field

### Working Group 3: Career advancement strategies

- Insights & Findings:
  - Successful careers in solar also include other aspects of the industry like sales, maintenance, R&D, etc
  - SOLAR + Connection to green building and related work
  - Assist trainees with collection of skills, job descriptions, career navigation - case managers
  - System to acknowledge contractors that hire trainees, work with re-entry populations etc
  - Highlight non-traditional pathways
  - Release annual reports focused on WFD
  - Research the potential for a solar apprenticeship program
- Priorities
  - Introduce case managers/career navigators through SOMAH PA
  - Research for potential apprenticeship track

## 4. Continue development of Task Force priorities

*Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA*

After reviewing the insights and findings from the working groups, the task force members discussed which strategies or goals should be prioritized.

### Case Manager/Career Navigation:

**TF Member:** Is the case manager/career navigator possible?

**PA Member:** With the current capacity, having someone do this is difficult, but in the interim, could focus on developing a list of local resources for different regions where folx can get help with resume building, career navigation, etc.

TF members agreed that the PA should highlight success stories and other achievements through social media (and ask partners to share in their channels)

### Fair Hiring Practices Webinar:

**TF Member:** Once a year for the fair hiring practices webinar is a good goal, especially if we can record and upload to youtube.

**TF Member:** May occur naturally, would be optimal if we can combine workshops, then we can do less webinars but have more info out there.

**TF Member:** Thinks students would benefit from the right career webinar, an open forum that conducts a QnA would be ideal.

**PA Member:** We are developing a Solar Career Pathways webinar for 2023 and looking to have different solar employees speak regarding their typical work day and how they got to where they are.

**TF Member:** Do you have a summary on what JTO's are saying?

**PA Member:** Yes, interested in knowing what is the typical career pathway of a JTO graduate. Is it residential or multi-family or commercial solar?

**PA Member:** We have a pretty good idea of going about putting together a workshop on Fair Chance Hiring Practices. Is there a thought on when to have it?

**TF Member:** Is there a season for hiring? Is it based on the end of the academic year or after some cycles?

**PA Member:** Some JTO's are semester based. Spring is when they're graduating.

**TF Member:** When are employers hiring?

**TF Member:** Spring, before the summer rush

**PA Member:** We can ask that during our workforce assessment for contracts around hiring cycles and timing

#### Apprenticeship or Pre-Apprenticeship:

**TF Member:** We should ask employers if they are willing to host potential apprenticeship track trainees. The program would need a reliable intermediary

**PA Member:** As a group we come up with a program with apprenticeship, and then hand it over to an intermediary?

**TF Member:** Yes. SOMAH can create a program and then hand it over to an intermediary, and workforce development boards can help with funding,

**TF Member:** It is difficult to have employers involved. I realized through partnership how hard it is to get employers who are really busy involved in meetings. We asked them for feedback and approval, and after there was buy in, they started hiring graduates. Building relationships is important with open lines of communication, like SOMAH does with the TF.

**TF Member:** Benefits for apprenticeship are win, win, win. The student wins because they have job opportunities; the JTO wins because they have higher enrollment; and employer wins because they get a trained employee. Solar programs who are struggling will want to participate because they'll have higher enrollment. They'll have higher enrollment because students will get paid on day 1.

**TF Member:** Can the apprenticeship be offered by CBOs? What does it look like for different organizations?

**TF Member:** There's a lot of communication, and that's what the intermediary does, collect information and disseminate it to stakeholders.

**PA Member:** What do we need before we jump into this? Do we need to build out case management?

**TF Member:** First survey employers and gauge interest. Is there enough demand? Are employers asking for more trained employees?

**PA Member:** We're conducting contractors' needs assessment surveys. We can ask, 'is your company interested in partnering with apprenticeship programs?'

**TF Member:** we have to be careful how we word it to not call it electrical apprenticeship because the IBEW will stomp it out.

**TF Member:** Can we partner with SEIA on this? They have a lot of members.

**PA Member:** Potentially. SEIA apprenticeship info:  
<https://www.seia.org/initiatives/solar-apprenticeship-programs>

**TF Member:** We can also do a pre-apprenticeship, like pulling wire and bending conduit pipe.

**TF Member:** Proteus started building a pre-apprenticeship program, although the state and federal governments have not approved a solar-specific program yet. We are exploring a safety pre-apprenticeship program with a renewable energy track with a focus on solar.

The Task Force decided that the following strategies would be the priorities in the short-term:

- Research which JTOs have electrical trainee card program and which ones have the potential for offering that instruction
- Once a year workshop on fair hiring practices
- Research for potential apprenticeship track

## 5. Review program updates and wins

*Staci Hoell, Senior Workforce Development Manager, SOMAH PA*

Updates from the SOMAH PA:

Program statistics:

- Serving 34,526 tenant units
- 783 paid training opportunities
- Projected over 51,000 paid training hours
- Over \$1 million in projected wages
- 118 nearly completed or completed projects
- 19.6 MW AC of Electricity

Upcoming milestones:

- The PA will be updating the program handbook by the end of September
  - Streamlining applicant process and removing application deposit
  - Annual MEO plan which will go over how will reach all of our audiences
- Update on program incentive changes proposal
  - Originally the program had an incentive step-down structure due to projections of solar costs going down
  - PA proposes to remove step-down
- Increasing Tribal Participation in SOMAH
  - Cultural competency training for all staff is scheduled for October 18, 2022

Inflation Reduction Act:

- Direct pay for nonprofits, can get the cash value of the ITC
- Interconnection cost are eligible
- Prevailing wage requirements apply to projects over 1 MW (AB 2143)

Upcoming deliverables:

- Contractor workforce development needs assessment will be sent out in late 2022 or early 2023
- Salary Negotiation Webinar will be on October 28, 2022

- Job training newsletter is in development and will be sent out in late 2022
- Heat Spring SOMAH Academy still in development, will be published on CalSOMAH.org in 2023
- Upcoming events can be found on the website

Discussion:

**TF Member:** Let's say we go down rabbit-hole of tribes using multi-family funds when they're also receiving SASH, isn't that double-dipping?

**PA Member:** We will look into that and let you know

**TF Member:** If no funds were distributing to their homes, maybe there weren't served the first time

**TF Member:** There are 110-115 federally recognized tribes in the state of California. It would be very beneficial to know that diversity, not that you have to tailor it for every tribe. Try these resources: <http://www.cimcinc.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/ittccinc.org/>

**TF Member:** Who knows if carports are included in the cost of installation for residential apartments?

**PA Member:** I can find out if that's an eligible cost in SOMAH's incentive cost structure

## 6. Next Steps, Questions, Open Floor, Exit Survey

*Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA*

General notes:

**TF Member:** Will the links that were shared during the meeting be shared?

**PA Member:** The links will be sent to all members.

The next meeting will be a crossover with the SOMAH Advisory Council.