



Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust

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Pennsylvania Secretary of Labor & Industry visits Laborers' District Council Education & Training Center

Secretary of Labor & Industry Julia Hearshway and two of her staff members met with leaders of the Laborers District Council (LDC) of Metropolitan Philadelphia & Vicinity, Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust (LECET), and the Philadelphia Revitalization Education Program (PREP) in early November, at The Laborers' District Council Education & Training Center in Exton, PA.

Prior to the business meeting with **Sam Staten, Jr.**, LDC President and Laborers' Local 332 Business Manager, LECET Administrator **Juan Ramos**, and **Glenda Collins**, PREP Executive Director, Secretary Hearshway and the group toured the 68,000 square foot facility. As they viewed the site's modern classrooms, Hearshway noted how the smart boards, dual classrooms with collapsible walls, and integrated technologies enhanced the instruction and training received by the union's members.

"We want our workers to receive training that not only provides them with the necessary education and skills, but also allows them to experience situations they may encounter on the job," the center's Executive Director, **Roscoe Green**, told the group, as they proceeded through the training bays set up to simulate on-the-job work environments. The only union-based facility in Pennsylvania to be certified in Weatherization Training, Green told the group how the facility had also attracted the attention of directors from training centers throughout the region, with several of them traveling to Exton to tour the facility.

Following the tour, Hearshway, Staten, and other attendees discussed jobs, initiatives of the laborers' unions, and training and preparation needs of workers. Following a question about pilot programs for high school vocational training, Staten, while noting the importance of pilot programs in cross-training and exposure, emphasized that, "pilot programs are limited in that they don't reach or provide opportunities for capacity in the number of locations and those that can take advantage of them."

As the discussion shifted to strategies to aid those impeded by unemployment and the lack of jobs, Hearshway spoke about the importance of trained workers and her department's undertaking to develop new regulations and guidelines that would help to better match employment opportunities to job seekers' skills. Noting the importance of pre-assessment, Glenda Collins cited the success of the PREP's Diversity Apprenticeship Program (DAP) in enrollment and retention and promised to provide Hearshway with requested information. To improve the connection of jobs to workers, Hearshway stressed, "It will be important for job seekers to know and understand how they fit - realistically - the available job opportunities."

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ABOUT

The Laborers' District Council (LDC) of Metropolitan Philadelphia & Vicinity is comprised of Laborers' Local Union #'s 57, #135, #332 and #413 that represent members in the Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia county areas. The LDC's mission is to assist its membership in securing employment, to defend their rights and advance their interests as working men and women, and by education and co-operation, raise them to that position in society to which they are justly entitled. The LDC and its member unions are members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA).

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