Confined Space Training

Along with their classmates and harnesses the young and old of heart from the JFY NetWorks started their day at The New England Consortium’s (TNEC) training center in Lowell this past January to be trained in the intricacies of working in a confined space. JFY NetWorks, founded in 1976, is Boston’s largest workforce and career development training center for youth and adults.

One of the keys to JFY NetWorks success has been its expertise as an intermediary between the needs of the community and the needs of the labor market. The organization brings together employers who have unfilled job openings and individuals who need training and motivation to enable them to work. JFY NetWorks has developed its curricula in collaboration with local employers, colleges and universities, and other community-based organizations.

Responding to a rapidly changing labor market, JFY NetWorks has continued to evolve over time with new strategies that address the training needs of a skills-deficient labor pool and the increasingly specialized needs of industry. With the boom in environmental technology industries and biotechnology related jobs, JFY NetWorks teamed up with TNEC for hazardous materials training and confined space training.

TNEC has worked with the group for over 10 years. This year was the first time the students worked with TNEC to learn how to protect their own health and safety when entering a confined space. According to OSHA, “Many workplaces contain spaces that are considered to be ‘confined’ because their configurations hinder the activities of any employees who must enter into, work in, and exit.
Confined Space Training

The students he has worked with for over 10 years. Comments from
of the students ranged from,
“U Guys Rock,” “Keep up the good
work,” to “All the instructors were
excellent and very knowledgeable
of their work. Everybody brought
different qualities and insight to
my learning, thanks and keep up
the good work.”

Confined Space training is pre-
sented by TNEC at our training site
in the Wannalancit Mill in Lowell,
MA. On-site training is also avail-
able. For further information on
TNEC training please visit our
website at www.uml.edu/tnec or
contact us at 978.934.3257.

Still a work in progress, the
Institute has offered a number of
classroom trainings in response to
emergency preparedness needs
identified by Regional Coalitions.
It is now working to enhance
web-based training opportunities
and on-line resources to comple-
ment the classroom offerings—
and to present the information in
a way that helps users navigate
the overwhelming number of
resources now available.

Another current Institute
initiative involves helping individu-
als in various local health roles
identify the essential skill sets
(“competencies”) for their work
and highlighting trainings that are
available to develop these compe-
tencies. Check back for updates
on this important project.

During the 2006 spring semester
TNEC hosted and assisted the
Institute with the logistics of
setting up its twelve week
Foundations of Local Public Health
Practice course here at UMass
Lowell for local public health staff
in our region. It was well attended
and holding the course here at
UML was greatly appreciated by
our colleagues around the state.

A new two-hour course has
been developed relative to
Educating Communities on Flu
Care at Home. It will be offered
eleven times at different locations
throughout the state.

To learn more about the Flu
Care at Home initiative, visit the
Massachusetts Department of
Public Health Influenza website at
www.mass.gov/dph/flu.

For more information on
the Institute and its programs
go to the website address:
http://www.masslocalinstitute.org/
Continued from Back Page

Passes in MA Senate
Legislation to Reign in Toxic Chemicals Use

MassCOSH

MassCOSH is Mike Florio. Mike has served on the board of Western MassCOSH and will now lead the program as the new Program Director and trainer.

New Hampshire COSH

The New Hampshire House Bill 533, requiring OSHA 10-Hour construction safety training for workers on all public works contracts over $100,000, has gone into effect on September 14, 2007. All employees are to complete the training prior to starting on the job.

The New England Consortium (TNEC) and New Hampshire COSH present 10-Hour Construction Safety and Health training. For training dates and times please visit TNEC’s website at www.uml.edu/t nec.

MassCOSH Teens Lead At Work (TL@W)

TL@W is known throughout the state as a forceful advocate for young worker safety and workplace rights. TL@W provides an empowering environment where teens develop their leadership and organizing skills, reach out to other teen workers, and monitor the enforcement of the Child Labor Laws.

MassCOSH forges alliances between unions and TL@W to improve safety for youth workers and educate youth about the critical role that unions play in creating worker rights. A cadre of teen leaders provides a wide range of educational programs; in unions, schools, and communities to expand protections for young workers. TL@W builds bridges among native-born, documented and undocumented teens in the fight for young worker rights.

Legislation to Reign in Toxic Chemicals Use

News from the COSH’s

Western MassCOSH....

John Thoma, the Program Director and Trainer at Western MassCOSH is moving on from his work here in New England. It is with a deep amount of sadness that we say good bye to John. John made friends quickly and helped steer Western MassCOSH through some very difficult times when Aaron Wilson, the Program Director prior to John, suddenly passed away.

John joined Western MassCOSH in 2000 and will be moving on to warmer and sunnier environments in the western part of the country. His wit, charm and intelligence will be sorely missed by the staffs of The New England Consortium and Western MassCOSH and certainly the lives that he touched through his training. We wish him nothing but the best in all of his endeavors!

Taking over the helm at Western MassCOSH is Mike Florio. Mike has served on the board of Western MassCOSH and will now lead the program as the new Program Director and trainer.

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Legislation to Reign in Toxic Chemicals Use Passes in MA Senate

The Massachusetts Senate passed legislation that will safeguard public health by replacing toxic chemicals with safer alternatives. Supporters of An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts: Safer Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals (The Safer Alternatives Bill) praised the Senate’s action that takes the bill one step closer to becoming law. The bill would also help Massachusetts expand trade with foreign markets that have recently tightened toxic chemical standards such as the European Union.

Led by Senator Steven Tolman (D-Brighton) and Senator Pam Resor (D-Acton), efforts to move the bill forward in the Senate gained momentum in the wake of last year’s product recalls over hazardous ingredients such as lead in children’s toys and lipstick. It is supported by the Alliance for a Health Tomorrow (AHT), a coalition of over 160 organizations (health, labor, scientific, environmental, faith and community groups) working to promote the use of safer alternatives to toxic chemicals where feasible. Legislative sponsors and advocates from AHT proposed the legislation in response to mounting scientific evidence that indicates toxic chemicals are contributing to a chronic disease epidemic.

“The Senators have realized that this is a business friendly way to protect our health from toxic chemicals. It gently weans companies off outdated toxic chemicals by providing safer and more competitive alternatives,” said Lee Ketelsen, Clean Water Action Regional Director. “We owe President Murray, and all Senate champions, our thanks for their leadership in protecting the health and economy of Massachusetts.”

“Asking manufacturers to make safer products is nothing extraordinary especially when proven, effective alternatives to toxic chemicals exist,” said Senator Pamela Resor (D-Acton), Co-Chair of the Environment Committee. “Massachusetts is poised to be the leader in the nation for promoting toxic substitution with the important research being done at the Toxic Use Reduction Institute (TURI) at UMass Lowell. If we can keep toxics out of everyday products, then we will be safeguarding the health of our environment and our children.”

“This legislation will put Massachusetts at the forefront of responsible chemical policy and safeguard the residents of the Commonwealth from the very real and unseen dangers of toxic chemicals,” said Senator Steven Tolman (D-Brighton), lead Senate sponsor of the bill. “These chemicals have, unfortunately, become a part of our everyday lives and have been proven to be the root cause of many of the health disorders affecting the people of this state.”

Continued on Page 3