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State Recognizes Small Museum Fighting Unemployment with Green Technology

Waltham – Yesterday, April 6, 2010 at the Massachusetts State House it was announced that the Waltham-West Suburban Chamber of Commerce and the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation were selected by the State for a Small Business Technical Assistance grant in support of the museum’s Green Enterprise Train Institute. The grant presented in two parts for \$50,000 will help the organizations train Massachusetts unemployed in environmentally safe weatherization practices and entrepreneurship opportunities.

In response to President Obama’s call to action to create new jobs and protect the environment, last year the museum began working with the Massachusetts Office of Workforce Development, the Olin College of Engineering Entrepreneurship Center, Minuteman Technical High School Career Center, local green construction and design firms, and the West Waltham Suburban Chamber of Commerce to develop a program helping Massachusetts un-employed back on their feet tuition free. The result was Green Enterprise Training Institute (GETI).

“GETI teaches the basics of weatherization, energy auditing, and house systems as well as basic business building strategies need to start and sustain a new business.” Said Dr. Phillip Sutras, GETI’s founder and project director. “We want to provide students with the fundamental building blocks to get them started on a green energy career, and then help them develop their own Green business generating revenue and creating new jobs in the metro west area.”

The grant from the Massachusetts Office of Small Business enables the museum to double the number of students enrolled in the program, expand its offerings and increase support services after graduation.

“This award will enable us to structure several green small business training and mentoring programs for unemployed and low income participants We expect that the Green Enterprise Training Institute will play an active roll in supporting green small businesses and weatherization of low income homes in Waltham and Metro-west.” Said Eln Hagney, Acting Director of the Charles Rive Museum of Industry & Innovation.

Over the past several months, Andre' Porter the Executive Director of the Office of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, has visited the program on several occasions and was impressed by what the small museum was doing. During the awards ceremony hosted at the Hall of flags in the state capital building, Mr. Porter announced he would work with the museum to make GETI the green business model for state training.