

## NATIONAL GREEN ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE WORKER PROJECT From Entry Level to a Green Career: The “Green Grant”

The Green Grant enabled the Labor Management Project (LMP) to provide training and program support for Environmental Service/Building Service department (EVS/BSD) teams at Montefiore Medical Center (Montefiore), New York–Presbyterian Hospital (NYP), and New York University Langone Medical Center (NYULMC) from 2009 to 2011.

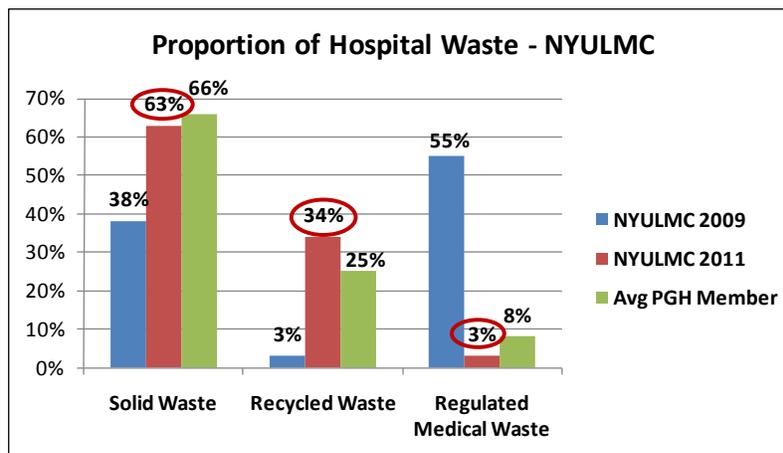
(Note: The employees at Montefiore and NYP are identified as environmental service workers, while NYULMC employees are referred to as building service department workers.)

**The Challenge:** Healthcare institutions must increasingly consider how environmental factors impact health outcomes as well as financial bottom lines. For instance, hospitals must develop efficiencies in the use of energy, water, and waste in order to become safer, greener, and more economical. There is, therefore, a need to train individuals who are equipped to generate sustainable “green” improvements.

**The Solution:** The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act’s Energy Training Partnership Grant presented opportunities for labor-management partnerships to secure funds for training from the U.S. Department of Labor. The LMP secured this funding to train new and incumbent EVS/BSD workers at Montefiore, NYP, and NYULMC. The LMP also supported the establishment of labor-management EVS/BSD project teams at each hospital to lead efforts to create more environmentally sustainable institutions. The EVS/BSD teams selected among the following goals:

1. Develop and implement recycling programs to reduce hospital waste
2. Convert chemicals to green chemicals
3. Create energy and water tracking mechanisms for EVS/BSD workers
4. Reduce regulated medical waste by both volume and cost
5. Develop a sustainable hand washing program

**The Results:** From 2009 to 2011, the hospitals implemented strategies that benefitted the environment, saved money, and created jobs. The LMP certified 52 employees as trainers who then facilitated “green” trainings for approximately 800 of their peers (incumbent workers) across the three participating institutions. More than 500 job-seekers completed the LMP’s Green Pre-hire Training Program (112 were placed in jobs), and seven participants who completed the grant-funded “Sustainability in Healthcare” certificate program through Lehman College were upgraded to newly-created Green Sustainability Coordinator positions. Also during the grant period, NYP reduced its total waste portfolio cost by \$108,500, largely through a 14% reduction of regulated medical waste (from 581 to 499 tons) and a 7% reduction of solid waste (from 4,819 to 4,497 tons). Montefiore increased its recycling share from 6% to 16% - much closer to the Practice Green health (PGH) national average of 25%. And as seen in the chart below, NYULMC avoided approximately \$5,000 in waste expenses by increasing its recycling share from 3% to 34%. NYULMC also saved over \$200,000 by reducing its proportion of regulated medical waste from 55% to 3%.



**Positive Feedback:** Montefiore’s EVS Green Coordinator reported a heightened awareness among staff about the importance of “going green” and noted that, “For the individuals involved, this project [Green Grant] has provided a greater appreciation and approach to their jobs.”