

## Hunters Point Family

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Hunters Point Family (HPF) was selected to continue their environmental workforce development and job training program with EPA assistance. They have just completed their first three cycles of training and placement from the previous grant. The two most difficult issues facing the new EWDJT program at HPF have been:

1. Recruitment—Locating, recruiting, and nurturing those community residents most likely to prosper in environmental remediation and associated jobs.
2. Placement—Convincing local employers that hiring graduates of a new community environmental training program will bring value to their existing workforce.

### Community Background

Historically, Bayview Hunters Point had a diverse, self-sufficient economy of fishing, shipbuilding, and manufacturing. In 1941, the fate of Bayview Hunters Point took a dramatic turn and became driven by the naval shipyard and adjacent development. The Navy used Bayview Hunters Point to support wartime demands for battleships. The single priority of Bayview Hunters Point resulted in rapid expansion of wartime industry phasing out earlier, more diverse industries.

As many as 18,000 people worked at the shipyard during the war with the district's population expanding from 14,000 to 51,000 people, dramatically increasing the blue collar population. After the war, industrial production and jobs declined until the shipyard closed in 1974. As jobs left Bayview Hunters Point, the African American population increased dramatically with displaced families from gentrified neighborhoods in San Francisco. As the white population dropped from 'White Flight', HPF was cut off by freeways, poor public transportation, and urban renewal. Joblessness, which resulted from the shipyard's closure, posed an insurmountable challenge to Bayview Hunters Point.

Concurrently, that same southeast quadrant of San Francisco became the location of choice for wastewater plants, scrap yards, dumps, power plants, battery plants, and other degrading industries that could not be located in other parts of the city.

Fast forward to the last five years.....

Post-base closure—despite having two Superfund sites and over 130 Brownfields sites, Bayview Hunters Point has become one of the largest continuous tracks of bay front real estate in an otherwise overdeveloped city.

Then—Nobody wanted Hunters Point.  
Now—Everyone wants Hunters Point.  
Then—The community was isolated.  
Now—Gentrification threatens community residents.  
Then—No jobs in Hunters Point.  
Now—\$1 billion to be spent on cleanup.

Billions of dollars are being spent on the Hunters Point community cleanup. \*See the news article at the end of this section.

Urban renewal revisited—pushing out those who have endured its degradation. Where are the jobs for local residents?

Bayview Hunters Point is an amplified version of environmental injustice that occurs across the US whether it's Harlem, Brooklyn, or Camden, NJ. Disenfranchised populations without political voice or resources are dominated by big money, big politics, and big development. Hunters Point provides us with a case study for selecting communities best suited for environmental justice and environmental workforce development and training programs. Hunters Point is important in that similar circumstances, more subtle, exist in many communities across the country.

#### About HPF

HPF is a grass-roots, community-based, youth development agency that provides holistic educational, social, and enrichment programs to youth and their families living in the primarily African American Bayview Hunters Point community of San Francisco. HPF's Environmental Job Development program targets low-income, minority residents of San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point community.

#### Key partners

- San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development
- San Francisco City College-Southeast Campus
- Young Community Developers
- Northern California District Council of Laborers
- and San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

#### Recruitment

In an isolated community like Bayview Hunters Point, residents are not only unfamiliar but also suspicious of new training programs. Without a track record of successful placements and job opportunities, participant recruitment remains challenged. While the objective of the EWDJT program is to train and employ local residents, this pool of potential candidates includes individuals who have endured difficult times and carry extensive "baggage." For this reason, it is important to work closely with trusted and respected leaders such as ministers, community organizers, social

clubs, social workers, and informal neighborhood mentors. These are the trusted individuals who must support and promote the program.

The first training cycle is the most difficult both in recruitment and placement. As the program matures, informal word gets out regarding its benefits and rewards. Succeeding cycles attract more attention allowing the EWDJT program to become more selective in finding candidates most likely to succeed. Maximum community awareness is required during program “ramp up.” As training cycles yield job placements, awareness and community support build.

## Placement

Placement issues can be as daunting as recruitment in early training cycles. Despite billions of dollars entering Bayview Hunters Point, little interest has been demonstrated in sharing the remediation prosperity and jobs with local residents. Workers from outside can experience the wealth effect of massive remediation and reconstruction with institutional constraints limiting opportunities for EWDJT graduates.

The resolution to this issue may reside in relationships with remediation contractors and local labor organizations. Every community is different. In the case of Hunters Point, organized labor represents a large portion of workers (with remediation at federal facilities). It is difficult for shop stewards and business managers to encourage new membership when current members remain on the bench. This issue is resolved as the demand for trained workers increases.

The challenge for EWDJT programs is to nurture union leadership relationships. As contractors seek out workers, labor organizations need to be familiar with ready labor resources. Bringing local shop stewards and business managers into the program as advisors and guests helps create familiarity and beneficial relationships. As the program matures and the demand for certified environmental workers increases, organizations like Construction Craft Laborers will seek new membership from the EWDJT program.

### \*News article:

*Hunters Point Shipyard tour a peek at \$1 billion cleanup*

*Michael Cabanatuan*

*Updated 4:14 pm, Saturday, June 28, 2014*

*San Francisco has big plans for Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, closed in 1974 and being cleansed of contamination by the Navy since 1991, but the city's largest piece of developable land remains a mystery to most.*

*About 45 curious folks got a close-up look at the deactivated shipyard Saturday on a bus tour offered by the Navy's environmental cleanup program. While the focus of the tour was the \$1.1 billion cleanup effort, the group also got a glimpse behind the locked gates and chain-link fences.*

*During the nearly two-hour tour, they saw already cleansed hillsides, big pits where soil is being tested and fields where it's inspected. They rolled past massive dry docks once used to repair vessels as large as aircraft carriers and a 10-story barracks that was never inhabited.*

*Tour-goers also got close-in views of the six-story glass periscope tower, the world's largest traveling movable gantry crane, the sound stage where "James and the Giant Peach" was filmed - and a coyote trotting past an air-monitoring station.*

*San Francisco plans to redevelop the shipyard, long used by the Navy for shipbuilding and repair. Some of the historic structures will stay, but most of the three-story ramshackle wooden buildings will be demolished and replaced with 12,000 new homes and apartments, shopping areas and office and manufacturing buildings, along with hundreds of acres of open space.*

*But before the city can proceed, the Navy has to clean the 440-acre site of contaminants ranging from radium, arsenic, nickel and manganese to dioxins, PCBs and chlorinated solvent - and it's a big job, the biggest base cleanup in the world, according to the person in charge of the cleanup.*

*"They call this the billion-dollar base," said Keith Forman, the Navy's environmental coordinator for the shipyard and Saturday's tour guide.*

*The Navy has spent about \$800 million on the cleanup, and expects to spend another \$300 million to \$400 million before it hands over the final pieces of land to the city in 2021.*

*"It's just got a lot of contamination," he said. "Much of it is low-level contamination, but it is spread all over the base."*

*The Navy has already turned over 25 acres to the city, and the first cluster of apartments and condominiums is under construction at the corner of Innes Avenue and Donahue Street. Much more land is expected to be cleaned up and transferred to the city in the next two years.*

*While the extended cleanup and the development plans have generated controversy in the Bayview-Hunters Point community, there was no animosity or political bickering aboard the bus. The tour, which is held a couple of times a year, was open to the public and attracted mainly neighbors of the sprawling shipyard.*

*They asked so many questions - ranging from the types of contaminants to the plans for the giant crane (undetermined) - that the tour leaders had to limit them so the bus could keep moving. Tour-goers applauded Forman and said they enjoyed the tour.*

*"I didn't feel like we got a lot of political spiel," said Christina Pavlov, who lives in the Bayview. "I had expected PR spin. But they answered everybody's questions."*

*Molly Bloom, who moved to the Bayview three years ago, said she took the tour to satisfy her curiosity about the shipyard.*

*"It was great learning about what happened here and about what the Navy has been doing," she said. "I'm glad I got a chance to see the base before it's all demolished."*

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