

Storm Warnings: Best Practices provides timely information, trends and ideas that relate to the looming storm and impact on our lives.

# BEST PRACTICES

“Practical solutions for challenging times”

Issue 1, 2015

Sustainability Training and Practices

**Best Practices Award:** *Weathering the Storm* periodically recognizes organizations that provide practical, effective and quantifiable solutions for addressing the challenges of the perfect storm.

It is a privilege to present our “*Best Practices Award*” to **Summit Academy OIC** for so effectively integrating sustainability training into their construction job training curriculum. Summit’s mantra that “the best social program in the world is a job” is enhanced by their efforts to prepare students to meet the future needs of a more sustainably-oriented workforce and society.



**Organization:**

Summit Academy OIC (SAOIC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational and vocational training center that has prepared and empowered low income-adults throughout the Twin Cities to become educated, employed and contributing members of their communities. Since 1996,

Summit has provided industry-recognized certifications—in only 20 weeks—in the fields of construction and healthcare to low-income individuals at no out-of-pocket cost to them and with no loans to pay back.

**Mission:**

“We exist to assist individuals in developing their ability to earn and to become contributing citizens in their community.”

**Key Value Proposition:**

In part sponsored by President Obama’s economic stimulus package, Summit Academy added a green component to its construction training program. Summit’s green initiatives include innovative vocational training, job placement, and support in the areas of renewable and sustainable energy fields so that people from our most economically disadvantaged communities can enter the economic mainstream through the growing green construction field. By training minority members and women in the skills of the future, Summit gives them access to these green collar jobs, thus multiplying the effectiveness of every federal dollar spent in Minnesota.

“Green is no longer the wave of the future, it is the wave of today and we want our students to learn the skills that will enable them to find jobs now, and years from now,” said Louis King, President and CEO of Summit Academy OIC. “There truly is no better social service program than a job and by providing useful, marketable skills to our students, we are giving them the tools they need to succeed.”

**How it Works:**

In partnership with Stock Roofing Company and the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, Summit Academy successfully trained 128 students in Summit’s Green Roofing specialty course. This course was specially designed to expose students to job-site expectations, demands and applications for commercial roofing installers and included instruction from both Summit Academy faculty as well as industry partners.

After completing their Green Roofing training, many Summit graduates went on to work on the Target Center’s green roof and the St. Paul fire station on Randolph and West 7th Street. Target Center’s green roof was the largest in Minnesota and the first of its type for a U.S. arena. The 18 Summit alumni on that project earned an average hourly wage of \$32.44.

Summit Academy’s Weatherization Technician training was developed in collaboration with some of the nation’s top subject experts including Conservation Service Group and Center of Energy and Environment. This training program consisted of both classroom training and hands-on application in energy efficiency diagnostics; bypass sealing; insulation of foundations, floors, walls and attic; and window retrofitting/replacement.

After the completion of several successful Weatherization Technician courses, the program was blended into Summit's core construction program so that more students could benefit by learning green construction methods. Current students study the following green concepts:

- Energy Auditing & Building Science
- Thermal Insulation & Other Insulating Methods
- Sound Control
- Solar Energy

Current construction students also benefit from a 4-day course in Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED). In LEED training, students learn the internationally recognized rating system for the best-in-class building strategies and practices for the design, construction and operation of green buildings. Upon completion of this training, students receive a LEED certificate.

#### **Track Record:**

- Green House: During 2010 and 2011, Summit's construction students built the Green House, a special building that showcases environmentally friendly products and processes that went into its construction. The Green House sits on the Summit training facility grounds and serves as a teaching model for the students of the techniques for weatherizing specific areas of a home.
- 56 Weatherization Technician students graduated and received the 40 hour certificates.
  - In a unique partnership with Leech Lake Reservation, Summit Academy led two trainings on the reservation resulting in 30 individuals being successfully trained in Weatherization.
- 128 students graduated from the Green Roofing program.
- 149 students have received LEED certificates.

#### **Ways to Engage/Connect with Summit Academy OIC:**

Supporting Summit Academy is an investment in your community. That investment, multiplied by others who give to Summit, has the power to bring about real changes in our community, helping low-income people gain the skills they need to transition from poverty and dependency to self-sufficiency. Your donation will be carefully spent to have the greatest impact on people's lives.

#### **How to Become Involved:**

- Donate: Tax-deductible donations help Summit Academy OIC in a variety of ways.

- Hire a Summit Graduate: Interested in hiring one of our skilled graduates? Please fill out the [Employer Workforce Order Form](#) and email to Thomas Scott at [TScott@saoic.org](mailto:TScott@saoic.org).
- Partnership: Partner with Summit Academy OIC. Our programs redefine vocational training. Students are prepared with a well-rounded set of skills and traits that employers are looking for to ensure on-the-job success.
- Volunteer: People volunteer for different reasons—to give back to the community, for self-improvement, to fulfill a work or school requirement, to keep busy, or just because they care about others.
- Sponsorship: Summit's Annual Golf Classic each June offers multiple corporate and individual sponsorship opportunities which create the foundation necessary to continue the mission of Summit and enables your company to achieve both community involvement and business goals.

Follow us online:

- <http://www.saoic.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SummitAcademyOIC>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/saoic/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/saoicmn>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/summit-academy-oic>

### **Weathering the Storm: Closing Commentary:**

Summit Academy OIC has done an excellent job of anticipating and responding to a growing societal concern for a cleaner environment and efficient use of energy. Its exemplary efforts to prepare students for this new environment – by incorporating sustainability training throughout its curriculum – are producing quantifiable results. In this effort, the students, employers and communities served are all winners.

And so, it is with great pride that we salute you, **Summit Academy OIC**, for a job well done.

-----

**Note:** For purposes of full disclosure, the founder and publisher of the *Weathering the Storm* website, R. Michael Conley, is a proud member of the Summit Academy Board of Trustees.

[Follow Us on Facebook](#) | [forward to a friend](#)