



Environmental Justice

Capacity Building Project with Howard University *(April 1999)*

The purpose of this initiative is to build community capacity for public participation in environmental and energy decision-making. The target communities are those impacted by DOE facilities and in Washington, D.C., the DOE Headquarters host community. The primary focus is on environmental justice communities, low income and minority communities. The project is conducted in partnership with [Howard University](#).

The initiative includes the following activities:

- **Community Technology Centers**
- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Community Groups**
- **Charleston Community Empowerment Research Conference**
- **HBCU Faculty GIS Summer Institute**
- **Samuel P. Massie Chairs of Excellence Program**

Community Technology Centers – establishes community technology centers in selected communities using excess DOE 486 computers. The centers include at least four computers, Internet access, various training classes, and continuous technical assistance. The classes are taught by Howard University, DOE employee volunteers and other volunteers. The partnership helps community groups design and implement training programs that focus on:

- Basic Computer Skills Training
- Internet Research
- Access to Toxic Release Inventory Data
- Chemical Impact Analysis
- Risk Assessments
- Use of Geographic Information Systems for Community Decision-making
- Use of E-mail to Communicate with Decision-makers and Peers
- Youth Development
- Economic Development activities designed to make the centers economically self-sufficient

The centers are under the direction and control of the impacted community that will establish and enforce access and use rules. For example, in a center in Anacostia, S.E. Washington, D.C., computers are used to track environmental restoration work at neighborhood federal facilities, federal environmental initiatives, and grant opportunities. They are also used to teach basic computer literacy, and are available for children's use for homework assistance and entrepreneurship training. (See [Highland Community Technology Center](#))

Since 1998, the Environmental Management/Howard University partnership has donated more than fifty computers to various groups around the country. (See [Environmental Justice and Public Participation Through Electronic Access](#))

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Capacity Building Project with Howard University (continued)**

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Community Groups – establish and strengthen relationships between local community groups and their host college. Where possible, the relationship will be between the community group and a historically black college or university. One role of the college or university is to provide technical assistance to the local community group, in person or through Internet e-mail.

Centers in place:

Augusta, Georgia	Paine College
S.E. Washington, DC	Howard University

Centers are planned for the following locations:

Savannah, Georgia	Savannah State University
Memphis, Tennessee	Meherry Medical School
Oak Ridge, Tennessee	Tennessee State University
Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, Montana	Fort Belknap Community College

Charleston Community Empowerment Research Conference – examined how communities, colleges and Federal agencies can work collaboratively to build and sustain community capacity for environmental decision-making. Representatives from eight colleges and universities, three communities, and Federal agencies participated in two days of fact finding and discussions. For more details see the [Urban Environment Institute Site](#).

HBCU Faculty GIS Summer Institute – serve on the HBCU Faculty Geographic Information System (GIS) Summer Institute Advisory Board. The project thrust is to strengthen the capacity of faculty members from HBCUs and Minority Institutions (MIs) to incorporate the use of GIS into their academic instruction and research. The project recognizes that limited resources and lack of expertise have resulted in inequities of opportunity for students at these institutions to acquire this knowledge in a rapidly growing market. The HBCU GIS Summer Faculty Workshop has more than sixty faculty alumni from over thirty HBCUs and MIs. Many of these faculty members are the single points of contact for information about GIS in their colleges and universities. For more details see the [Urban Environment Institute Site](#).

Samuel P. Massie Chairs of Excellence Program – consists of the Deans of Engineering from nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities and one Hispanic Serving Institution. The Massie Chairs of Excellence are designed to assist the institutions in producing top-level graduates in environmental disciplines and to produce groundbreaking environmental research. The Massie Chairs will constitute the backbone of web-based environmental technical assistance for the community technology centers.