

Superfund Job Training Initiative

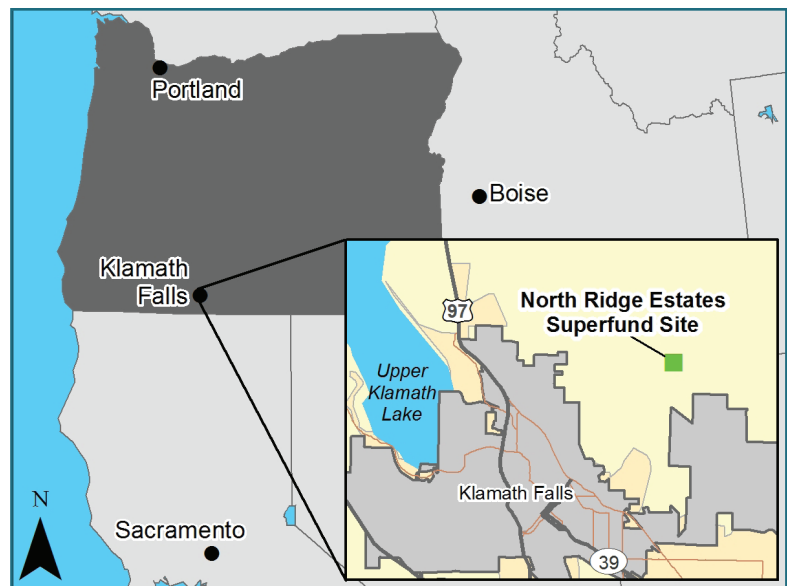


MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT THE NORTH RIDGE ESTATES SUPERFUND SITE IN 2016



Introduction

The North Ridge Estates Superfund Job Training Initiative (SuperJTI) Cycle 1 is an environmental remediation job readiness program that provided career development opportunities for 16 trainees living near the North Ridge Estates Superfund site in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Through a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce, Klamath Community College, remedial construction manager EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, and excavation and restoration contractor North Wind, North Ridge Estates SuperJTI provided local job seekers with new skills, certifications and hands-on training linked to construction and cleanup. EPA's goal is to help ascertain employment opportunities available for affected communities during the cleanup and redevelopment process, and to provide the workforce development skills needed to take advantage of those opportunities.



A U.S. Marine recuperation barracks was once located on the North Ridge Estates site. A residential subdivision is now located on site. (Map Sources: Esri, DeLorme, AND, Tele Atlas, First American, UNEP-WCMC and USGS.)

Outreach, Recruitment and Screening: April – May 2016

EPA Region 10 staff and the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce reached out to the Klamath Falls community by posting flyers, sending emails, advertising on social media, and running ads in a local newspaper and on a local radio station. SuperJTI and Klamath County Chamber of Commerce staff hosted information sessions on the program at Klamath Community College. In March 2017, over 60 people came to the program's 10 information sessions and completed a preliminary testing process. Following these sessions, 48 people returned and submitted required documents. Forty-four people participated in program tryouts. The tryouts included leadership, team-building and role-playing activities, a physical fitness evaluation, and observation by a team of evaluators from the program's partners. Sixteen of the 18 trainees selected during tryouts went on to complete the program.

Training and Job Placement: June 2016

The four-week North Ridge Estates SuperJTI Cycle 1 training program took place in Klamath Falls. Work readiness preparation provided during the program included pre-employment training modules on environmental justice, interpersonal communication, building cultural competence and effective work habits. EPA contractor Skeo provided the pre-employment training. Trainees then completed and earned certifications in five courses recommended for inclusion by site contractor North Wind:

1. 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER)
2. CPR/First Aid
3. 10-hour OSHA Construction
4. Asbestos Operations & Maintenance Class III
5. Work Zone Flagging

Klamath Community College and Argus Pacific provided the courses. Upon completion of the program, trainees were placed in positions on site working with North Wind. This North Ridge Estates SuperJTI marks the first of two times that SuperJTI, EA Engineering, Science, and Technology and North Wind have partnered at the North Ridge Estates site to place community members into jobs cleaning up their community. Through SuperJTI, trainees are provided with the marketable skills needed to begin a successful career in environmental remediation and become valuable members of the workforce in their community.



Site Background

The North Ridge Estates Superfund site is located in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The site includes the 144-acre North Ridge Estates residential subdivision. Much of the site was formerly a U.S. Marine recuperation barracks. The barracks closed in 1946. After several interim uses, parties demolished buildings on site and began work on a residential subdivision. Due to improper demolition practices, asbestos from demolished buildings contaminated area soils and sediments. EPA placed the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List (NPL) in 2011. Since 2003, EPA has removed 60 tons of asbestos-containing materials from the site every year. The final cleanup plan focuses on removing 2 to 4 feet of contaminated soils from privately-owned properties and replacing the material with clean soil. The cleanup spans three construction seasons, from 2016 to 2018. Season one started in July 2016 and finished in November 2016. EPA expects to complete cleanup of the entire site by December 2018.

GRADUATE PROFILES



Clint Skinner

An army veteran of the Desert Shield and Desert Storm campaigns, Clint Skinner was working as a janitor for \$11 an hour, three hours a day, seven days a week when he learned about SuperJTI and tried out for the program. A few weeks after training and graduation, Clint was hired by North Wind as a flagger and laborer, earning \$350 a day. Clint recalled that it was challenging at first – “I lost about 60 pounds!” He also emphasized SuperJTI’s remarkable impact on his life. “The difference for me before and after SuperJTI has been monumental,” he said. As a result of his new job with North Wind, Clint has been able to pay off his student loans, his wife’s student loans and their car loan. He and his family are now renting a home with the option to own. “Three years ago, I couldn’t imagine any of this,” he said. “I thank God to this day that I was selected for the program.”



Lisa James

When she returned to Klamath Falls after 20 years away, Lisa James was looking for a change. After 18 years as a painter, she was interested in a career in the environmental field. When she heard about SuperJTI on the radio and saw a program flyer in the paper, she decided to apply. After being selected and starting the program, Lisa found the HAZWOPER course to be the most interesting part of the training. At the end of the program, Lisa was excited to start working at the North Ridge Estates site. “We had already spoken with [site remedial contractor] North Wind, so at graduation we were basically waiting for an offer letter from them,” she said. “With everything we were taught in the program and all the certificates we earned, it was a big opening for a new career for me.”

Today, Lisa is in her second year of employment with North Wind at the site. “I am more financially stable now. When this job site work is completed next year, I will have three years of experience,” she said, reflecting back on her experience. “I am earning three times more now than before the program when I was painting.” Lisa is grateful to have been a part of SuperJTI. “Without it,” she noted, “I would have never had all of this.”

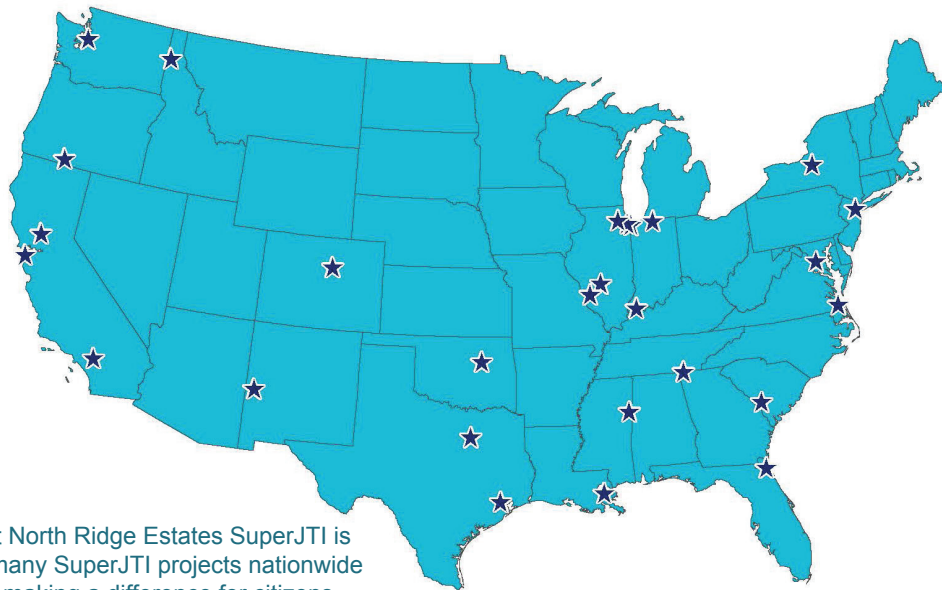


Graduation for the program’s 16 trainees took place at Klamath County Fairgrounds in June 2016. Tony Barber, EPA Region 10’s Oregon Operations Office Director, attended the ceremony and handed out certificates to the graduates. The ceremony included remarks from program partners as well as the graduates.

NORTH RIDGE ESTATES SUPERJTI TRAINEES:

Live near the site: Ninety four percent of the trainees (15 people) live in Klamath Falls.

Include women and men: Twenty-five percent of the trainees (4 people) are women. Seventy-five percent of the trainees (12 people) are men.



The first North Ridge Estates SuperJTI is one of many SuperJTI projects nationwide that are making a difference for citizens living in communities affected by Superfund sites.



What is the SuperJTI Program?



The Superfund Job Training Initiative, or SuperJTI, supports job readiness programs in communities affected by nearby Superfund sites and encourages the employment of trainees at local site cleanups.

The SuperJTI program combines extensive classroom instruction with hands-on exercises for each participant. Upon completion of the program, each participant possesses the marketable skills required to become a valuable member of the community's workforce.



EPA offers SuperJTI training at no cost to training participants.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:
<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-job-training-initiative>

Or contact SuperJTI's National Program Managers:

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