



**NW Innovation Works Announces Partnership to Begin Hiring;
Lower Columbia College, Workforce Southwest Washington, and
Cowlitz County Economic Development to Design Program with NWIW**

Kalama, Wash. --- Dec. 19, 2016 --- NW Innovation Works announced a partnership with Lower Columbia College, Workforce Southwest Washington, and Cowlitz County Economic Development that lays the foundation for training and hiring permanent employees to work at NWIW when its plant becomes operational.

Under the program that is to be developed, Workforce Southwest Washington will be charged with leading the recruitment effort. 20 percent of Northwest's initial workforce of about 200 people will be made up of adults and young people who may have difficulty finding a job traditionally.

Those who are accepted into the program will receive a full-time salary from NWIW while attending Lower Columbia College at no cost, where they will receive specialized training that the college will develop in coordination with Fluor, which has an agreement in place to provide operational support for the NWIW facility.

It is expected that graduates of the program will be offered full-time employment at the NWIW facility in Kalama. [A third-party, independent economic analysis](#) recently forecasted that NWIW would need to hire 192 permanent jobs. The wage and benefit package for the average job is projected to be \$109,000 a year.

Governor Gary Locke, who was recently named as the Chair of NWIW's Global Advisory Council, said, "This is a program I look forward to helping put together. We are going to hire locally, and we are going to do it right. These are going to be great paying jobs, and the people who work at NWIW will go to work every day knowing they are making a positive impact in the fight against global climate change."

"We can't wait to start the recruiting process," said Jeanne Bennett, CEO of Workforce Southwest Washington. "In the first half of 2017, we will be designing the program in close coordination with Cowlitz County Economic Development, Lower Columbia College, NWIW, and Fluor. It's our goal to start the recruitment process sometime in the second half of 2017."

"I've been a part of this community for a long time, and I've seen a lot of jobs go away. That we can be part of an effort that will provide local families the chance to make over \$100,000 a year and not have to leave Kalama or Cowlitz County to do so is just fantastic," said Ted Sprague, CEO of Cowlitz County Economic Development.

“To be clear, we will be paying people who go through this program a full-time salary while they are receiving training from Lower Columbia College. Also, we will pay for the cost of the training as well. We think this is the right way to show people here locally that we are serious when we talk about being in this community and doing the right thing,” said Vee Godley, President of NWIW.

“We are proud to be part of this effort, and look forward to coordinating closely with Fluor,” said Christopher Bailey, President of Lower Columbia College. “We have the resources and the people to implement this program and provide best-in-class training to the people who will come here.”

END