



"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"

Sewerage & Water Board OF NEW ORLEANS

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GE FOUNDATION \$1.5 MILLION GRANT WILL SUPPORT TRAINING OF NEXT GENERATION OF S&WB EMPLOYEES

NEW ORLEANS --- On Wednesday, October 1, 2014, Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Delgado Community College Chancellor Joan Davis, Cedric Grant, Executive Director, Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, and Deborah Elam, President of GE Foundation announced a multi-year grant to support the development of advanced manufacturing and water management skills in New Orleans. The announcement took place at the 87th Annual Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC) the annual, international meeting of engineers and experts in water management hosted this year at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

At the announcement Delgado Community College received a \$1.5 million grant from the philanthropic organization the GE Foundation. The grant will be used to help pay for the costs of training 250 new employees for New Orleans' Sewerage & Water Board over the next three years. The program will support Delgado Community College's ongoing efforts to train certified water infrastructure personnel, helping to fill critical infrastructure jobs by connecting job seekers to opportunities at the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans.

"Water equals jobs," Mayor Mitch Landrieu said. "That's really, at the end of the day, what it's about."

Landrieu described the injection of cash as an early investment in his wide-ranging aspiration to help low-wage workers climb a few economic rungs to higher paying jobs through education and training.

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GE FOUNDATION \$1.5 MILLION GRANT

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"This aligns with our focus on job training based on employer needs, part of my Economic Opportunity Strategy, through which we are creating pathways to prosperity for all New Orleans residents," said Landrieu

The water board could be facing a dwindling labor force just as the agency embarks on a \$3.3 billion overhaul of its pipe networks. "The grant is meant to establish a training program at Delgado that focuses on advanced manufacturing and water management skills", said Deborah Elam, president of the GE Foundation. She added, "Building on GE's rich manufacturing history and commitment to bridging the skills gap in communities around the world, the GE Foundation is proud to support Delgado Community College, in partnership with the City of New Orleans and the Sewerage and Water Board. Together, we'll create career pathways for water management personnel and continue our long-standing partnership with the City of New Orleans."

"We have a huge task before us in upgrading our water infrastructure and I need the skilled professionals to get the job done", said Sewerage & Water Board Executive Director Cedric Grant. He continued, "In the coming years, 40% of our staff will become eligible for retirement; and currently in New Orleans, 52% of all working African-American men are not working. We have amazing opportunity to recruit and train the next generation of S&WB employees and we are committed to building pathways for job seekers."

According to Grant, the Sewerage & Water Boards goal over the next five years is to hire 75 machinists, 50 plant workers and operators, 50 mechanics, 50 welders, and 25 electricians.

This contribution builds on GE's longstanding commitment to the City of New Orleans. GE and the GE Foundation supported the city's water infrastructure development 100 years ago and New Orleans is home to the GE Capital Technology Center, which opened in 2012. The GE Foundation contributed to Hurricane Katrina relief and has provided support to the World War II museum. This program adds to the breadth of skills-building efforts already underway at the GE Foundation, equipping people with the necessary skills to meet critical needs around the world.

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