



**"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY"**

# **Sewerage & Water Board of NEW ORLEANS**

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## **SEWERAGE & WATER BOARD/LIMITLESS VISTAS PARTNERSHIP SHOWCASED DURING EPA ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2013 JOB TRAINING GRANTS**

The Sewerage & Water Board East Bank Wastewater Treatment Plant was the location last week for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) announcement of its 2013 Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training grants. The site was selected to make the announcement in order to showcase a unique partnership between the Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans and the not-for-profit training provider, Limitless Vistas, Inc. The Sewerage & Water Board/Limitless Vistas partnership was originally funded by the EPA in 2011 to provide water and wastewater operator training and internships to 10 at risk young adults.

At the announcement Thursday Sewerage and Water Board Executive Director, Marcia St. Martin said, "I'd like to thank the other partners that assisted in launching the Limitless Vistas Water and Wastewater Training program at the Sewerage and Water Board. While the board provided the training, facilities, internships and staff, Veolia Water provided the internships for practical applications." Veolia Water is the operator of the East Bank Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Program participants received training on water treatment, water distribution, water production and wastewater collection, spending 128 hours in the classroom and another 300 hours working in the field. "This partnership in the training of water and wastewater operations through Limitless Vistas can help to address the critical need for succession planning as our workforce ages. It also can prepare our young people to become vital participants in the water and wastewater industry", added St. Martin.

With the success of the water and wastewater operator training program in New Orleans, the EPA recognized the need for this operator job training and consequently added water and wastewater treatment training to its 2013 grants.

The Limitless Vistas program is one of 15 programs funded with grants totaling \$3 million across the country for 2013. Limitless Vistas will receive \$200,000 over a two year period to train 40 at risk young adults and place a minimum of 32 program graduates in environmental jobs. The Sewerage and Water Board and Veolia Water will work with Limitless Vistas with the 2013 program grant.

According to the U.S. EPA, the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training program seeks to stimulate public-private partnerships and helps to enhance the skills and availability of local labor. These investments will protect the health of local communities by targeting economically disadvantaged neighborhoods where environmental cleanups and jobs are often most needed. During the announcement Thursday, Mathy Stanislaus, assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response said, "People want and deserve both a healthier environment and greater economic opportunity."

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