U.S. EPA awards $200,000 to City College of San Francisco to promote biodiesel

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(PressZoom.com) - SAN FRANCISCO – Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a $200,000 grant award to City College of San Francisco to fund improved access to biodiesel for public and private diesel powered fleets.

The grant funds will be used to bring together a consortium of bio-diesel advocates to help develop distribution and fueling infrastructure and provide classroom training to fuel distributors, mechanics and users. Ultimately, the project will transform biodiesel from a “boutique” fuel into a mainstream fuel option, making it readily available throughout the Bay Area, and eventually, throughout the West Coast.

“This grant gives City College of San Francisco a unique opportunity to help jump start the use of biodiesel in the Bay Area,” said Wayne Nastri the EPA’s Administrator for the Pacific Southwest region. “Bringing biodiesel into mainstream use provides a homegrown fuel source that improves air quality and reduces the impact of waste oil to our waterways.”

“Biodiesel reduces our dependence on foreign oil, provides jobs locally and improves air quality,”. “This project will educate users and help transform biodiesel from a marginal fuel to an accessible, mainstream fuel option.”

Nastri joined Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr. City College Chancellor, Phyllis McGuire, Associate Vice Chancellor and Jared Blumenfeld, San Francisco Department of Environmental Services Director on a tour of City College of San Francisco’s Alternative Transportation Technology Institute automotive shop where students manufacture and test bio-diesel on engines, trucks and cars.

“CCSF has a long history of developing technical skill training for existing and emerging industries” said CCSF Chancellor Dr. Philip R. Day Jr, “This ‘Bridging the Biodiesel Gap’ initiative will facilitate the introduction of biodiesel fuel to users throughout the Bay Area. Beyond this training, however, will be emission reductions, improved air quality and improved health here in BayView-Hunters Point and other parts of the City.”

“San Francisco is committed to taking the lead on developing biodiesel fuel, and introducing it into the mainstream as quickly as possible,” said Jared Blumenfeld, Director of San Francisco’s Environment Department. “We consider biodiesel an important element in reducing conventional diesel emissions in neighborhoods that have for too long carried a disproportionate environmental burden, and it is a renewable resource that can be produced locally.”

This project, part of the larger, West Coast Collaborative, brings in Bay Area biodiesel experts and projects, including: Community Fuels, Peoples’ Fuel, BioSolar, and CytoCulture International, Inc. The team also includes the City’s environmental justice program, which focuses on the air pollution and energy concerns in Bayview-Hunters Point. City College will establish two distribution services and use biodiesel blends on eight Bay Area fleets. Additionally, City College will share the biodiesel training curriculum with other Alternative Transportation Technology Institutes, state-wide. Though not a distributor, City College uses waste oil to produce and test biodiesel.

Biodiesel is a simple to use, biodegradable, non-toxic, alternative fuel produced from renewable resources. It is safe to use in any diesel engine and is far less polluting than conventional petroleum diesel. When compared to diesel fuel available at the pump, biodiesel—even when blended with conventional diesel—reduces asthma-causing soot, greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide, and sulfur dioxide in air emissions. Replacing traditional diesel with biodiesel fuel is especially important in low-income environmental justice communities, like Bayview-Hunters Point, which is heavily burdened by truck traffic from nearby industrial operations.

The manufacture, use and promotion of biodiesel are increasing throughout the Pacific Southwest. Today, the EPA launched a website dedicated to showcasing various entities committed to biodiesel use and to inform the public about the benefits of biodiesel, particularly waste-oil derived biodiesel. For more information on biodiesel throughout the Pacific Southwest, go to http://www.epa.gov/region9/biodiesel

For more information on the West Coast Collaborative, please go to: http://www.westcoastcollaborative.org For more information on City College's Alternative Transportation Technology Institute, please go to: http://www.ccsf.edu/att
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Contact Information: Margot Perez-Sullivan, Desk/415.947.4149; Cell/415.760.9161 perezsullivan.margot@epa.gov