

# The Star-Ledger

## Building green community, Newarkers learn latest technology

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**BY BARRY CARTER**

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Fuquan Scales knows how to do sheet rock, tape and paste. He knows how to install insulation, paint and frame a house.

But he's not satisfied. He wants to learn more.

He'll get that opportunity in the next few weeks on a construction project that is building an environmentally green community in the Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District in Newark.

Scales, 20, of Newark will get to cut his teeth on the latest technology that subcontractors hired by the cultural district will use to revive 11 acres of a downtown city neighborhood.

"Someday I want to own my own business," he said. "I want to learn every thing I can."

The Green Collar Apprenticeship Program is targeting 100 Newark residents, including veterans, ex-felons and at-risk young people. Over the next three years they will get training in plumbing, electrical and HVAC systems that employ standards certified by the United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design or LEED.

"We're employing Newarkers to build a green community," said Baye Adofo-Wilson, executive director of the cultural district, which is currently redeveloping one of the city's oldest neighborhoods.

Adofo-Wilson said city residents will be in on the ground floor of training that will help them get hired quickly.

"We're training people on the newest technology, " he said.

Under Adofo-Wilson, the cultural district has partnered with many organizations that champion building environmentally green communities. One in particular, Green For All, has been the compass for the cultural district as it moves forward with its projects.

"If you're going to solve unemployment, let's make sure you have jobs that help the environment," said Van Jones, founder of Green For All. "If you are going to solve the environment, let's make sure we're doing that in a way that it helps poor people. That's the whole point of green jobs. You can't solve one with out the other."

In the cultural district, which is bordered by Lincoln Park, West Kinney Street, Broad Street, and Washington Street, there will be an artists' community anchored by a 70,000 square foot Smithsonian Institution-affiliated Museum of African American Music. There will be 300 units of mixed-income housing, including two-family homes, condominiums and apartments for low-income residents. Art galleries, retail stores and other commercial spaces also are planned.

As Scales upgrades his skill set, he said he views the apprenticeship program as a way for others to also improve their lot in life and get back on their feet.

"This can better the community," he said. "Nobody won't be on the corner selling drugs. "

It's even more personal for his friend, Terry Lang, 28, of Newark.

His three-year-old son has asthma. Building environmentally safe housing across the city, he says, could improve the health of the city and many others who have asthma.

" I want to give people from Newark something they haven't seen before," he said. "This is my way of giving back to the city," he said.

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