

REPORT: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Background

Community Outreach is a subtopic of EM Communications, generated by the Board's March 6-7, 2007 meeting discussion and public comment periods in Knoxville, Tennessee. The consensus at the meeting was that outreach initiatives that provide educational opportunities can add value to the EM program and help younger students connect with EM's mission long before they embark on a career path.

Discussion

There is a wealth of activity throughout the EM Complex aimed at educating children and encouraging students to pursue interests in math and science. Many of these educational programs are run by partnerships comprising DOE, other federal agencies, local governments, utilities, and private companies and contractors that work together to provide projects and scholarships for students. Notable initiatives include the Battelle Memorial Institute Foundations Scholarship Program for high school graduates of Benton and Franklin Counties in Washington, the Los Alamos Super Computing Challenge, the Savannah River Regional Science Bowl, and the Bechtel Nevada, Nevada Power Company, Stoller-Navarro, and University of Nevada sponsored joint ventures. These are just a few examples of contractors, education providers, and other organizations working together with DOE to provide resources for local area students.

However, regardless of the quantity of community outreach programs, these activities face two significant challenges. They must (1) identify and secure volunteers to organize the programs, recruit students, and raise funds; and (2) sustain momentum throughout a program's duration, specifically with regard to volunteer and participant retention. Increased monetary support, volunteer recognition, and incentives for participating contractors would demonstrate that DOE appreciates these initiatives, further fostering its good-neighbor policies with the sites. Ultimately, outreach and educational opportunities will benefit the development of EM's future workforce, as well as the program's credibility in the stakeholder community.

Recommendations

Recommendation 2008-09: Continue to support outreach and educational initiatives with monetary grants and volunteer incentives.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Explore methods to encourage contractors to provide and support additional public participation programs.

- Adopt Community Outreach as a programmatic value and include a community support or volunteer component in employee performance appraisals.