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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2009**

***Different Shade of Green* Program Prepares Veterans for Green Jobs**

**Press Conference to be held as follows:                      Monday, September 14, 2009, 1:30 P.M**  
**Amos Project, Amos Building,**  
**210 Water Street, Syracuse, NY 13202**  
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The New York State Department of Labor has awarded more than \$317,000 to Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County to provide green job training to 120 veterans, many of them veterans with disabilities. The job-training program, entitled *A Different Shade of Green*, will give veterans ages 18-65 the necessary skills to seek employment in environmentally sustainable fields.

"American veterans are facing unprecedented challenges in Onondaga County's volatile economy, and hundreds more will come home to face this reality next year," says Anastasia L. Urtz, Executive Director of Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County (CCE Onondaga). "Yet the reasons to hire veterans are evident-their resiliency, efficiency under pressure, and collaborative abilities. *A Different Shade of Green* will give them the cutting-edge skills they need to contribute most effectively to our rapidly changing workforce."

CCE Onondaga will lead the *Different Shade of Green* program as the administrator of the grant, and will work in close collaboration with the Onondaga County Veterans Service Agency; the Syracuse VA Medical Center's Vocational Rehabilitation Program; the Veterans Services representatives of the CNY Works-One-Stop Career Center; Onondaga Community College, and other post-secondary institutions in New York State.

*A Different Shade of Green* is designed to offer a green-focused, preparatory, work readiness program for 120 veterans, at least 30% of whom have been classified as disabled. The program will consist of ten-week training sessions, followed by month-long field training programs, which will provide veterans with hands-on experience with green jobs in the community, including jobs in areas of Syracuse experiencing persistent poverty. Veterans will receive training in basic skills for work readiness, preparation for post-secondary study, and field experience in rural and urban agriculture, food supply and distribution, environmental technology, renewable energy and other "green" topics of study. Participants will also gain enhanced career preparation skills in budgeting, computing, interviewing and resume building that will enable them to seek immediate entry into the green sector or other areas of the workforce. Participation in this program can result in a National Work Readiness Credential and several recognized industry-wide occupational certificates. CCE Onondaga organizers project that at least 75% of eligible veteran participants will be able to obtain any or all of the occupational training certificates that are offered and, through partnership with Onondaga Community College and other area colleges, at least 30% of the veteran participants will pursue related programs in higher education and be eligible for internship placement. To supplement the training program, CCE Onondaga and its partners are planning a Green Jobs Career Fair for veterans in the Central New York region.

"With the breadth and depth of their military experience, veterans can be key players in our emerging workforce, but they must still acquire trade-specific skills to compete in our difficult regional economy," says Urtz. "This program will prepare them for the jobs being created by the green trend and a renewed interest in sustainable sources of food and energy."

For more information on CCE Onondaga and *Different Shade of Green*, visit <http://www.ExtendOnondaga.org/>

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