

Training Grant Helps Ambient Technologies Upgrade Employee Skills



Carlos Lemos accepting the Presidential E-Award for Excellence in Exporting

How can Florida companies increase their employees' skill levels without breaking the bank? As Pinellas company **Ambient Technologies, Inc.** discovered, one answer lies in Florida's **Incumbent Worker Training** grant program. In March 2013, Ambient Technologies was awarded over \$41,000 to upgrade the skills of 25 of its employees. "The IWT program will be a huge help to us," states ATI President Carlos Lemos. "By offsetting some of the cost that comes with advanced training, we'll be able to increase the overall expertise of our highly skilled staff."

Ambient Technologies, Inc. (ATI) has been providing high-quality geo-services since 1993. Headquartered in **St. Petersburg**, Florida, the company employs 25 individuals locally and 15 more in its overseas subsidiary, including geologists, geophysicists, surveyors, geographers, drillers, technicians, energy conservation experts and administrative personnel. "Our projects can range from small, residential ventures to large-scale, technically challenging undertakings," says Lemos, "so it's critical that our team's talent pool is ready for whatever may come its way."

"As a state-certified Minority-Owned Business Enterprise and U.S. Small Business Association-certified Small Disadvantaged Business, ATI was already familiar with programs designed to assist small businesses," explains Scott Talcott, Business Development Manager with **Pinellas County Economic Development**. "Meeting

with the company last fall, I learned that training was a concern and I suggested a number of options, including the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program.”

Florida’s IWT program provides training to currently employed workers at Florida companies for the purpose of maintaining competitiveness in a global economy and for business retention. The program is open to businesses that have been in operation for at least one year and employ at least one full-time employee, with funding priority given to businesses in qualified targeted industries and with less than 25 employees. Structured to be flexible to meet each business’ training objectives, businesses can use public, private or their own in-house training providers, based on the nature of the training.

“The IWT program is ideal for companies like ATI that need to maintain a high caliber of staff skill sets,” says Talcott. “For the company, it can mean the difference between lagging behind or rising to the top of its industry sector. For the business community, it offers the assistance necessary to keep a company and its high-skill jobs in place.”

Lemos agrees, adding, “Our work is highly technical and ever-changing. Training to improve upon our employees’ skills is paramount, but expensive – the IWT grant will allow us to reduce the cost while increasing proficiencies. We’re very happy with the assistance we’ve received through Pinellas County and look forward to continuing to grow here.”

Visit Ambient Technologies at www.ambienttech.com.

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