**Winsted resident is first hire at new Energy Systems Sales and Training in Waterbury**

*Company Hired Veteran Using State’s Step Up for Vets Program*

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WATERBURY -- Cornel Sampson, Jr. of Winsted has been named the first hire at the newly-created Energy Systems Sales and Training LLC (ESST), a ‘green resource center’ located at 179 Freight Street in Waterbury, as manager of warehouse and distribution. ESST was established to distribute solar products throughout Connecticut. This center was created for green building contractors and Connecticut-area homeowners through IMTI, The Industrial Management and Training Institute at 233 Mill Street in Waterbury, Connecticut ([www.IMTI.edu](http://www.IMTI.edu)) founded by Marcel Veronneau, co-owner of the Freight Street complex of offices and warehouses which are located in Waterbury’s Enterprise Zone.

“In addition to being a green resource center, ESST was created to offer job opportunities. Cornel Sampson is the first of six employees we will hire in 2013,” stated Veronneau. “There is no place in Waterbury better suited for jobs and green resources. ESST was the first tenant in the Freight Street building that is located in downtown Waterbury, immediately off I-84, and close to public transportation. The building currently has 18 tenants including 3 manufacturers, two warehouses, one trucking company and one flower distributor. Our ambition is to create jobs, and this building, and ESST, can accommodate those goals.”

A 2012 graduate of IMTI’s Solar PV Apprentice Training Program, Cornel Sampson Jr. is currently a staff sergeant with the CT Army National Guard in New Haven. In July 2013, he will celebrate 17 years in this service. A trained emergency medical technician with extensive combat service, Sampson was honorably discharged and awarded the Combat Medical Badge in 2010 when he returned from the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Recovering from combat injuries, he sought employment through the Department of Labor in Waterbury where advisor Jason Coppola connected him to New Opportunities, Inc. in Waterbury.

Through New Opportunities, Inc., Sampson secured a position as assistant manager of the Connecticut Conservation Corps. in 2012 where he assisted in the finishing of building structures and restoration work in state parks statewide. In collaboration with the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB) and the Department of Labor, Sampson was able to enroll in IMTI’s Solar PV Training Program from which he graduated in 2012. Upon graduation, he became the first hire for the newly-created Energy Systems Sales & Training, LLC green resource center.

ESST’s hiring of Sampson was made possible through a collaborative effort between the State of Connecticut’s Department of Labor Office of Workforce Competitiveness [Step-Up subsidized training and employment program](https://www.step-up.ct.gov) and the Smaller Manufacturer Training Grant Program which offers employer incentives to hire new employees and create jobs. Veronneau explained, “the Step Up program provides grants up to $12,500 for the first six months of employment. The grant we received help pay for Cornel Sampson’s solar PV training course at IMTI, plus subsidize his wages in his current position with ESST.”

Ray Sullivan, project manager and job coordinator with the Connecticut Department of Labor and the NRWIB was instrumental in placing Sampson in the position with ESST. He explained that, “Veterans eligible for the DOL’s Step Up program must have been a member of the Armed Forces or any reserve component. They must have also actively served in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan which Cornel did. Small businesses or manufacturers such ESST, with less than 100 employees, can apply for one Step Up program for each new hire. We met Cornel Sampson when one of NRWIB’s divisions partnered with the DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) to establish a modern..."
day version of the Conservation Corps of the Roosevelt. Mike Hammond in our division selected Cornel as an assistant supervisor, and the project went very well for us. We found the people from the Waterbury area put in a good effort. We believe that had a lot to do with the supervisors on the teams.

The board wanted to offer workers two paths of opportunity for long term employment. Cornel was one of five who chose IMTI's NABCEP 200 hour course, normally a 370 hour course, in solar PV installation. The course at IMTI included 135 hours toward an electrical apprentice training and culminated with a nationally-recognized exam know as the NABCEP-North American Board of Certified Electrical Practitioners. Cornel graduated third highest in the course and is currently awaiting results of the exam.

IMTI's Solar PV Apprentice Training Program began in 2011 after founder Veronneau secured approval from the State of Connecticut Department of Labor, the State of Connecticut Department of Higher Education and the State of Connecticut Workforce Investment Boards. “We did this in anticipation of opening a solar product distribution center at our 179 Freight Street location which we did officially in December of 2012,” stated Veronneau. “IMTI is one of the first institutions in Connecticut to offer a formal, apprenticeship program that qualifies course graduates the immediate ability to secure jobs in the solar PV industry. Cornel Sampson was trained to step right into this employment position with Energy Systems Sales & Training, LLC.”

Upon completion of IMTI's 15 week training program, graduates are job-ready for solar electric jobs. Veronneau stated that, “Nearly 80% of IMTI’s PV graduates are currently employed in the solar PV industry. IMTI offers a program that teaches students how to install, replace, repair and maintain solar photovoltaic systems, plus the storage and distribution of the energy created. Mr. Sampson is the first of five employees we plan to hire in 2013. Our ambition is to increase the number of employees from 5 in 2013 to 60 or 70 within the next 5 years for the distribution, retail sales, and eventually, manufacturing of solar products from our Freight Street location.”

IMTI, The Industrial Management & Training Institute, was founded by Marcel Veronneau in 1986 at 233 Mill Street in Waterbury. A branch technical school was opened in 2004 in the Con Edison Training Center in Long Island City in Queens, New York. IMTI successfully trains electricians, solar PV technicians, plumbers, electronic systems and HVAC technicians in current technologies and job skills. All IMTI programs are career-oriented with classroom curriculums plus hands-on industry skills training. All classes are limited to 20 students for optimal one-on-one training.

For more information on Energy Systems Sales & Training LLC, visit www.energysystemsllc.com. To learn more about IMTI technical training programs, visit IMTIUSA.COM or call (203) 753-7910 in Waterbury, Connecticut.

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