

## HAMMER and Hanford Training helped students

**F**rom the time the Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center opened its doors in September 1997 through the end of fiscal year 2002, the facility has recorded 137,090 Hanford student days (the number of days Hanford employees train at HAMMER). Hazardous waste classes, initial and refresher courses for basic medic first aid and respiratory protection, crane and rigging classes and sessions for radiation workers and nuclear criticality are some of the training courses regularly held for Hanford workers. HAMMER also trains a number of non-Hanford workers in a variety of subjects that are compatible with its mission.

The variety of props at the facility offers many different types of workers a testing and training opportunity to hone their skills or work out the bugs in a procedure. Recently, a 7-by-10-by-8-foot pit offered a crew of nuclear chemical operators, pipe-fitters, teamsters, a radiation control technician and a field supervisor from the Central Plateau Remediation Project the chance to mock up a pumping system designed to filter solids and then transfer liquid into a tanker truck for disposal. The mock-up helped identify ways to improve instructions for actual operation of the system.



Native American Fire Academy recruits work with ropes and ladders at HAMMER.

In the area of homeland security, HAMMER hosted training for bioterrorism responders for the 10th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team of the Washington Army National Guard. International and domestic border security training classes and international first responder classes conducted by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory are also held at HAMMER.

HAMMER also worked with Columbia Basin College to present a fire recruit academy, which served as a pilot for an Intertribal National Fire Academy. Approximately one third of the attendees were from the Warm Springs and Yakama Nations. Students went on to complete an emergency medical technician certification through CBC, as such training could be useful for future employment opportunities.

Students training at HAMMER and Hanford Training learn new tasks and put into practice methods that help them do their jobs safely. The DOE Voluntary Projection Program awarded HAMMER and the Hanford Training organization “star status” in September, recognizing the safety covenant shared by the workforce and management at the facility. “It’s a validation of all the work we have been doing to create and maintain a safe environment for those presenters, instructors, students and visitors who pass through our gates,” said Don Brock, training specialist. ■