

Washington clean energy partnership sparks growth

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Center of Excellence brings states together

The Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy at Centralia College is linking clean energy training programs to growing demand for skilled workers familiar with the latest technology.

The center received a \$5 million grant, leveraged to \$12 million from the U.S. Department of Energy, to help replicate Washington state's clean energy model in a five-state region, that also includes Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Utah.

The center has brought together electric utilities, the Bonneville Power Administration, organized labor, a national laboratory and colleges and universities throughout the region.

The Center is leading an approach that:

- Defines energy efficiency jobs.
- Establishes skill standards and identifies job classifications.
- Creates a regional clearinghouse for energy efficiency job openings.

"Each time our colleagues meet and interact we learn from each other and inspire each other."

Robin Podmore, Incremental Systems

A history of skill-building innovation

The Center has brought together labor, business and educators. It's a coalition that has built trust between employers and employees, and led to new jobs, enhanced skill standards and ongoing improvement. In the last five years alone, the Center of Excellence has trained and placed hundreds of workers in the energy industry, including Smart Grid, which uses modern technology to track energy use, improve distribution and integrate alternative energy sources.



The Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy at Centralia College is leading the way to a smarter use of electricity and a highly skilled workforce across five states.

Solving a "human energy crisis"

About 40 percent of the current energy workforce is expected to retire in the next five years in an industry that faces a shrinking pool of qualified applicants. At the same time, jobs now require more advanced training.

Simulators and real-time computer decision-making tools are being used to train new and existing electrical utility workers. This cutting-edge training is helping workers prepare for high-wage, high-demand career pathways, using the latest technology that is powering homes and businesses.

Workers have been hired by a variety of Northwest utilities such as Bonneville Power Administration, Puget Sound Energy, Portland General Electric, Douglas Co. PUD and more.

Local jobs, local workers

- Instrument control/Relay specialist
- Substation wireman/Mechanics
- Line worker
- Meter technicians
- Resource conservation managers
- Energy advisors

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