

Meeting Minutes: Energy Webinar September 15, 2010

Purpose: The purpose of the webinar was to share the best practices and opportunities available across the state related to activities surrounding Energy. Online resources are listed at the bottom of these minutes.

In attendance:

Tony Glenn, Nebraska Dept of Education; Matt Kreifels, Nebraska Dept of Education and UNL; Donna Vrbka, Nebraska Dept of Education; Erika Volker, Partnerships for Innovation; Matt Hastings, Nebraska Dept of Education: SyNErgy grant member; Holly Carr, ESU 4; Michela Strom, Northeast Community College; Lyle Kathol, Northeast Community College; Scott Samuelson, Southeast CC; John Corum, Western Nebraska Community College; Sherry Kvasnicka, NPPD; Al Chytka, Alliance High School; Rich Katt, Nebraska Dept of Education; and John Pierce, Southeast CC

Sharing

- I. *Matt Hastings started the sharing of resources below are bullet points surrounding the conversation.*
 - NE DOL Synergy Grant: \$4.8 Million grant with 3 regions based on community colleges: Metropolitan CC, Northeast CC and Western Nebraska CC.
 - Each group requested to submit proposals to a statewide Charter Group made of business and industry and appropriate governmental entities
 - The different regions have been allocated funds for renewable energy areas
 - \$600,000 for training in Western NE
 - \$800,000 for training in Northeast region
 - \$1.2 million for training in the Omaha Metro area
 - Training dollars are to be used for both incumbent workers, unemployed workers

Each region of Nebraska will have a specific focus:

- Western – Wind Energy
- Northeast - Wind and bio-fuels
- Metro – Green construction and efficiency

Meanwhile the University of Nebraska Lincoln Engineering Department has received a grant of which \$1.2 M is to be used for curriculum development, used to support the training across Nebraska

UNL will keep \$500,000 internally, with the remainder for granting out process, Dr. Kevin Grosskopf, engineering department is the main contact to learn how to access those funds.

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has received \$200,000 to enhance the career awareness and exploration of Green Jobs. The purpose is threefold:

1. Enhancement to the Nebraska Career Education (NCE) Model to highlight “Green” careers as an overlay to the model

2. Make changes reflected in Nebraska Career Connections.org; the state's online career exploration tool for students grades 7 – 14, college and adult job seekers
3. Develop curriculum that highlights Green careers and provide professional development around the model

The Department of Labor Study will determine which are “Green” for Nebraska while NDE in partnership with postsecondary institutions will work on developing Program of Study (sequence of three or more classes which culminate in a “Value Add”) which connects high school students to postsecondary options, both continued education and direct employment.

II. Southeast Community College reported on their program and regional collaboration

Southeast CC business partners found there are commonalities in operations as related to careers and employment needs in the energy field. So SCC crafted an 18 month program focused as an operator program, not a technical program. This coming quarter, January: the first class is full, and they will have a new group in July. Please visit webpage for more information, brochures and handout.

Questions asked:

- What skills do high school students need to be prepared for program?
 - General entrance requirements measured by ACT/Asset/Compass Scores
 - SCC has some high school students who are still enrolled in HS in the dual credit courses
 - ESU 6 - Energy Career Academy
 - ENER 1100 – 7 students, research projects and field trips, dual credit class
- What courses are the high school students taking?
 - CHEM 1090 – Fossil Fuels and Algebra II
- Does SCC require drug screening/pre-requisites/back-ground checks?
 - Not required to enter program, but students are communicated that it is a part of employment within the field. OSHA Training is also included.

NPPD provided statement: employment is dependent on passing background checks and drug screening

III. ESU 4: Outlined career pathway, in attachment.

IV. Alliance High School

In the fall 2011 WNCC will have wind and energy modules available to Alliance High School students as an offshoot from house wiring, building construction program. WNCC will move more toward solar energy and wind. The high school purchased two mock-up units to show students how they work, focus on the technician rather than the manager. Alliance High School is hoping to hand-off a portion of students to WNCC – and Sidney programs; also to programs in Eastern WY and Western NE. There is a huge pathway for high school students to look at; combining “green” construction

program, energy saving, product and building. Jack Daniels at MidPlains CC has been helping with the construction program. Students will be able to take Principles of Construction, which has already started. In the fall 2011 students will have the opportunity to take Applications in Construction, an onsite building experience partnering with Habitat for Humanity; for example. From a high school perspective; since students don't have access to power stations, the program is looking at technician positions who will build and maintain the equipment for wind and solar.

V. *Western Nebraska Community College provided review*

WNCC is building their wind technician program from the Power Line technician program. The new program will begin in the fall 2011. It will have a practical application as more of a certificate or diploma while not an associate's degree. WNCC has a good partnership between secondary and postsecondary; however they see challenges ahead. The College will work on communicating and marketing to high school students to build talent pipeline, encouraging students that Energy is a good, viable career option. WNCC suggests that this group look at Research and Development in alternative energy to increase funding opportunities and how to collectively stay on top.

Southeast Community College suggests marketing Energy careers and educational pathways as this career field is about as recession proof as possible. Energy can never be outsourced, it enhances rural revitalization, and it's good for small town Nebraska. With an aging workforce in all economic sectors there is a need for a well prepared younger workforce, but the most effected is in the energy sector.

VI. *Northeast Community College provided an overview*

Northeast Community College is working in partnership with the Petersburg Windfarm. NCC created a one year diploma program which focuses on a Technician Program involving mechanical, wiring jobs, blue print reading, fluid fundamentals, and electrical mechanical controls. In partnership with the Wal-Mart and Innovation Grant, NCC will grow the current program into Two-Year Applied Science Associate Degree programs. The program will include OSHA training, better technician, climbing certification, wind energy. In partnership with Petersburg/Boone Central High School the College will provide dual credit to spur economic development. Students will have access to Wind Energy Fundamentals. Next steps will include solar and geo-thermal possibilities.

NPPD hosted three interns

VII. *Comments and Questions*

- From a secondary perspective, as CC's create programs, make sure they have jobs available.
- Are you directly marketing to females to recruit them into your programs?
 - (Post note: according to 2008 Civil Rights Initiative 424 (passed law), the state of Nebraska cannot spend state or federal dollars on recruiting females or minorities into college programs)

- Are the community colleges working to align curriculum among to increase transferability for students?
 - Ethanol program work on CC articulation across state
 - Waiting from common skill sets among Wind Energy folks.

Online Resources

Nebraska Department of Labor: SyNErgy Grant Information
<http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/nwd/center.cfm?PRICAT=3&SUBCAT=3W>

Nebraska Department of Education: Innovation Grants
<http://www.education.ne.gov/nce/InnovationGrants.htm>

UNL Engineering Grant for Energy Curriculum Development: Dr. Kevin Grosskopf
<http://engineering.unl.edu/academicunits/architectural-engineering/faculty/KevinGrosskopf.shtml>

Southeast Community College Energy Program
<http://www.southeast.edu/programs/EnGen/default.aspx>

Western Nebraska Community College: Utility Line Program
<http://www.wncc.net/programs/majors/UTIL.html>

Northeast Community College: Renewable Fuels Program
<http://www.northeast.edu/Degrees-and-Programs/Renewable-Fuels-Technology/>

Partnerships for Innovation: Repository of information
www.partnershipsforinnovation.org

Webinar Participant Contact Information

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Email Address</i>
Matt Hastings	Nebraska Dept of Education	Matt.hastings@nebraska.gov
Tony Glenn	Nebraska Dept of Education	Tony.glenn@nebraska.gov
Rich Katt	Nebraska Dept of Education	Rich.katt@nebraska.gov
Matt Kreifels	Nebraska Dept of Education and UNL Ag	mattkreifels@unl.edu
Donna Vrbka	Nebraska Dept of Education	Donna.vrbka@nebraska.gov
Michela Strom	Northeast CC	michela@northeast.edu
Lyle Kathol	Northeast CC	lylek@northeast.edu
Holly Carr	Educational Service Unit 4	hcarr@esu4.org

Al Chytka	Alliance High School	achytka@aps.k12.ne.us
John Corum	Western Nebraska CC	corumj@wncc.edu
Sherry Kvasnicka	Nebraska Public Power District	sakvasn@nppd.com
Scott Samuelson	Southeast CC	ssamuelson@southeast.edu
John Pierce	Southeast CC	jpierce@southeast.edu