"Renewable Energy Careers Project"

Task 1 - Employment Demand and Potential

The national, regional, and Kansas demand, both current and projected, for employment in the renewable energy industry for all resources - wind, solar, and biomass was assessed. The feasibility study included actual and projected needs for the operations maintenance, construction, and manufacturing sectors. David McGee, Kansas Department of Human Resources – Labor Market Information Systems, conducted the study. Click on link.

Task 2 –Identify Existing and Planned Training Programs

The existence of postsecondary educational programs that provided specific career and technical skills training for renewable energy occupations or comparable training and curricula that could be applied to meet industry needs were identified and documented.

One component focused on programs for those interested in site development, construction and installation, maintenance and repair careers. A second component focused on job skills and training programs required versus enhancing existing Kansas postsecondary programs to meet the needs of firms that build turbines or manufacture products unique to renewable energy. The Kansas Board of Regents Career & Technical Education staff researched and prepared reports that identified programs currently in existence nationally and the potential for Kansas institutions to create both two-year and four-year academic programs.

Task 3 – Sponsored "A First Step, Renewable Energy Careers Summit," January 30, 2004 at the Kansas Corporation Commission, Meeting Room, Topeka, Kansas

The Agenda focused on the demand, service supply, and mix of skills required for renewable energy jobs. Panel presenters included a mix of energy, economic development, human resources, and education professionals. **The Renewable Energy Careers Summit** showcased the education and training necessary to meet the rapidly growing energy industry. Attendees included wind developers, postsecondary educators, representatives from the Kansas Corporation Commission, Kansas Energy Working Group, Kansas Utilities, Electric Cooperatives, Kansas Association of Counties, League of Kansas Municipalities, Kansas Municipal Utilities and Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing and other interested stakeholders.

Task 4 - Assess the In-state Potential for the Education System to Provide Comparable or Expanded Postsecondary Education and Technical Training

The Kansas Board of Regents approved on March 22, 2004, the new Associate Degree Wind Power Technology Program developed in partnership between Manhattan Area Technical College, Manhattan, Kansas, and Cloud County Community College, Concordia, Kansas.

Task 5 - Conduct a Cost/Benefit Analysis for a Kansas Renewable Energy Training System

Upon completion of Task 4, the cost of new or modified education and career and technical training programs was developed and compared to benefits to the state that would accrue from making these programs available as part of the Kansas education system. Donna Johnson, President of Pinnacle Technology Inc., Lawrence, Kansas, developed the Cost/Benefit Analysis. Click this link to see Cost/Benefit Analysis.

Task 6 - Effective Communication of Research Results

During preliminary collection of information for this project, it became quite apparent that currently no study had been conducted to measure the skill needs, career potentials, or qualified renewable energy education programs in existence.

The results of this project have been summarized at this website for Kansans interested in pursuing employment in this emerging area. The following websites will provide a database of information for people to learn about the renewable energy industry at the state and national level.