Almost half of today’s energy workforce will be retiring in the next decade. As technology within the industry quickly increases, so does the need for a tech-savvy workforce to support high-skill, high-wage jobs. The right education and training will provide men and women a rewarding, well-paying career that benefits millions of people every day.

The Washington State Labor Council and the Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy (PNCECE)/A Centralia College Partnership are organizing statewide events for a national initiative that will engage students of all ages, teachers and school counselors in activities to support Careers in Energy Week (October 15 – 19).

We’ve recruited Governor Gregoire and Washington mayors to sign proclamations to support the awareness of energy careers. Events for the week include:

Oct. 15: Newport School District and dam tour. High school students, parents and teachers will attend an energizing assembly and will tour the Box Canyon Dam – to celebrate National Public Power Week (Oct. 8 – 12, 2012) and Careers in Energy.

Oct. 16: Avista Line School High school counselors and teachers will experience life as an apprentice at the Jack Stewart Training Center in Spokane, Wash. Credit hours will be available.

Oct. 16, 17 & 18: Mobius Science Center, Spokane: Showcasing a new hydropower exhibit, the science center will partner with Avista and other energy professionals to offer activities and ‘meet the professional’ discussions around energy and careers. Included with general science center admission.

Oct. 17: Spokane CC and Gonzaga University This afterschool event will invite 60 6th – 8th grade Girl and Boy Scouts to participate in hands-on activities that will include hydro-fueled cars, windmills and a tour of the new fluid power lab. The event will be held in building #28 at SCC.

Oct. 18: Spokane Regional Solid Waste System Steam Plant Tours. Beginning at 1 pm, 90-minute tours will show how 800 tons of trash are burned daily to generate electricity. Open to the general public (wear closed-toed shoes and dress for weather). Registration is required: Seth Dyson, Spokane Area Workforce Development Council, sdyson@wdcspeokane.com (509.533.8472)

Oct. 18: Regional Education and Training Center, Satsop Campus in Elma, WA Up to 100 high school students and teachers will skip a day of school to learn about energy audits, energy efficiency demonstrations and industrial controls. They’ll even tour a never-fueled nuclear reactor building.

Oct. 19: Tacoma Power fish hatchery and dam tour Teachers will be invited to tour the new Cowlitz Salmon Fish Hatchery (they may even hold a big fish) and Mossyrock Dam. Their day will include lunch and a discussion about statewide and national jobs in energy. Credit hours will be available.

Oct. 20: TRiO @ Centralia College Expand Your Horizons 7th – 9th grade girls will participate in STEM and energy workshops. PNCECE will offer Energize YOUR Future which will include a special guest and an interactive energy activity.
Oct. 20: Gonzaga University and Avista Veterans’ Outreach/ZagOps: Gonzaga University’s T&D Engineering instructors will lead a free power grid simulator training course for veterans. Avista representatives will talk about training paths for veterans to transition into the power industry. 9 – 11 am at Herak 105 (ZagOps) on Gonzaga Spokane Campus; Reservations required: jennifer.boettcher@avistacorp.com.

Nov. 10: Expand Your Horizons in Spokane 125 6th – 9th grade Girl Scout and non-Girl Scout girls will explore the world of energy through hands-on science and technology (STEM) projects at Gonzaga University’s School of Engineering and Applied Science.

For more information:
Kairie Pierce, K-12 Apprenticeship Director at the Washington State Labor Council, will provide K-12 student and counselor outreach to demystify pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, kpierce@wslc.org

For other events, contact Monica Brummer, PNCECE Communications/Project Specialist, mbrummer@centralia.edu, 360-736-9391, ext. 280