



Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy
"A Centralia College Partnership"

600 Centralia College Blvd., Centralia, WA 98531
<http://cleanenergyexcellence.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 30, 2013

Media Contact: Barbara Hins-Turner, Executive Director
360.736.9391, ext. 477

Monica Brummer, Communications Specialist
360.736.9391, ext. 280

Center of Excellence for Clean Energy/Centralia College Achieves 145 percent hiring target

More than 339 workers found employment as ground crew, substation operator apprentices, plant operator trainees, boiler operators and hydro utility workers within organizations across the region according to the Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy (PNCECE) at Centralia College. This is a record-breaking number set by its three-year \$5-million U.S. Department of Energy Smart Grid Workforce Training grant.

"We achieved nearly 145 percent of our placement goal which was set in 2010," PNCECE Executive Director Barbara Hins-Turner, said. The placement goal was set at 234 workers.

The grant, which was leveraged to \$12-million by matching funds, included the Bonneville Power Administration, Pacific Northwest National Lab, consumer- and investor-owned utilities, and colleges throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Utah. Funds created smart grid training opportunities; online information portal for utilities, students and job seekers; and simulated training labs throughout the region.

"The ability of PNCECE to facilitate the long-standing industry-labor-education-government partnership is the keystone to leveraging the power of collaboration," Troy Nutter, Puget Sound Energy Manager/Operational Training, said. "Regional collaboration is essential to address workforce development concerns in the energy sector now and well in to the future."

More than 6,000 individuals received smart grid energy training through pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and incumbent worker courses, as well as hands-on learning sessions provided to high school students and high school STEM teachers.

"We believe this project has fulfilled the purpose of ARRA (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act) funding to rebuild the economy of our state, the Pacific Northwest region and the nation as a whole," Hins-Turner said.

PNCECE has been the lead or has been involved with state and federal grants since its inception in 2005. It is one of 10 Centers of Excellence in Washington state that represents an industry sector strategy. PNCECE serves as an economic development driver for the energy/power industry. Learn more at <http://cleanenergyexcellence.org>.