

Willems, Bonnie M.

Subject: FW: Latest Updates from UECN – April 2023

[View this email as a web page.](#)



Building a Skilled Energy Workforce Together

April 2023 E-Newsletter

Official newsletter of the
Utilities and Energy
Coordination Network –
[join UECN now!](#)

In this issue:

- [Grant Updates](#)
- [This and That](#)
- [Upcoming Trainings and Seminars](#)
- [Contact Information](#)

Grant Updates

UECN sponsorships available to attend MREA Energy Fair – June 23-25, 2023

Have you wanted to attend the Midwest Renewable Energy Association Energy Fair in Custer, WI, but didn't because you don't have the funds to cover expenses? Through the NSF's Utilities and Energy Coordination Network (UECN) grant, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College can help with the entrance fee, mileage to and from the event, and possibly an overnight stay for you to attend a second day. On Friday, June 23, we ask that you attend the Advancing Energy Industry Coordination Workshop, presented by Jenny Brinker and John Hippensteel, to learn how the UECN and Smart Start for Building Automation Systems grants are working with industry and schools to address energy sector workforce shortages. Email bonnie.willems@nwtc.edu for details.

NWTC celebrating increase in Trades & Engineering Students

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College is celebrating an increase in the number of students in Trades & Engineering Technology programs. The pandemic brought a significant decline in the number of students participating in programs in Trades and Engineering Technologies. Those declines have been reversed with increases seen across all disciplines. The number of full-time equivalent students has increased 18% over last year and the unduplicated head count has increased 25%.

NWTC Does More to Address Workforce Shortages

The purpose of NWTC's Utilities and Energy Coordination Network is for industry, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders to share resources and collaborate to expand training opportunities, create new programs, and develop curriculum for high-demand energy-related roles across the nation. As we move forward with the UECN, program specific initiatives to further address energy workforce shortages are taking place.

- **Smart Start to Skilled Technical Careers in Energy Management Technology** is a collaboration with industry and secondary education to introduce more high school students to a career in building controls through entry-level credentials. The program includes needs assessment, career exploration, and development of an Energy Controls Career Pathway Certificate to open an energy world driven by smart technology. It impacts industry partners, educational staff, and students by offering dual credit courses in local high schools.
- **Solar Energy Storage:** This award will allow NWTC to implement on-site energy storage at the Great Lakes Energy Education Center expanding microgrid training opportunities. Program curriculum will be enhanced to include course activities based on the enhancements installed serving as a model for others considering similar projects.
- **Telecommunications Engineering Technician Associate Degree:** To support the evolution and expansion of the existing telecom infrastructure, NWTC launched the Telecommunications Engineering Technician Associate Degree Program. Proposed nationwide broadband infrastructure enhancements will create unprecedented job demand for skilled technicians. A full-time instructor was hired to develop coursework and to launch the second year of the Associate Degree Program.
- Additional efforts in the Trades area include:
 - EARTH (Environmental and Natural Resources Technology) Center
 - Solar Ready Wisconsin
 - New Approach to Building a Workforce Pipeline
 - Industry 4.0 Seminar Series
 - USDA: Farm Business Management and Benchmarking Grants Program
 - WTCS: Apprenticeship Expansion

- Manufacturing Pathways for Adults
- Manufacturing Month Project

These are only NWTC's efforts to address utilities and energy workforce shortages. How are you addressing these challenges? [Share your stories for the next newsletter](#). To learn more about NWTC's initiatives and how you can be involved, contact [Amy Kox](#) or [Howard Herrild](#).

This and That

Telecommunications

- Outreach continues for the program, including demonstrations and attending career fairs at area High Schools. Creating awareness of the telecommunications Industry and the associated occupations has been a major focus.
- A Telecommunications Program Advisory committee meeting is scheduled for March 31, 2023. Curriculum development and workforce needs will be a main topic for discussion. NWTC is investigating class offerings that align with both current employees looking to add skills and those students looking for an associate degree. We appreciate our advisory committee members' support and their valuable input to help NWTC bolster our Telecommunications Program.
- NWTC's Telecommunications instructors attended the NATE Unite Conference in Orlando, FL, to showcase the program, make connections with industry experts, and to further the UECN Network. Attendees were given numerous flyers regarding the UECN Network to add members and increase participation in the Telecommunications field. Discussions with attendees at the NATE conference seemed very well received and supported.



Solar Energy Technology

- First year students are assisting the City of Green Bay with PV Site Assessments starting with the GB Transit.
- Second year students are in their final Advanced Design class and getting ready for the ever-increasing job market. Several are working part time for solar contractors, while others are exploring options for installation, design & technical sales. Their last hands-on experience will be the installation of a roof mount PV array and PV driven solar thermal in-floor heating system in the substation control house.
- All are involved with the Battery Energy Storage systems in progress at the Great Lakes Energy Education Center.

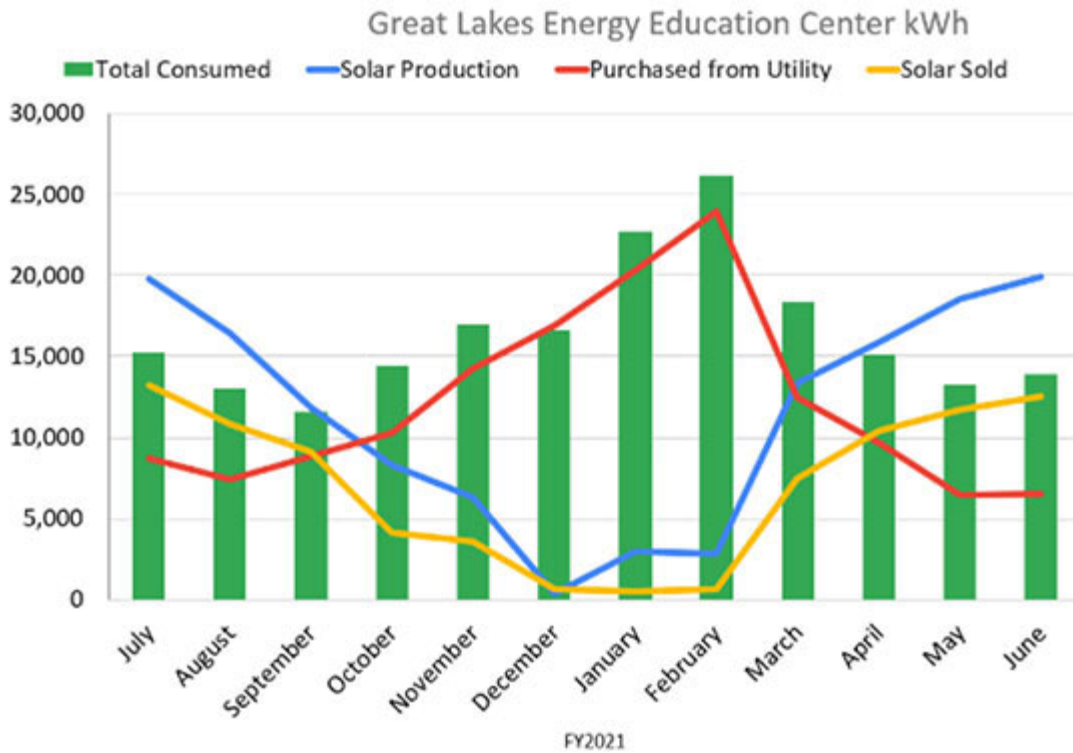


Gas Utility Construction and Electrical Power Distribution

New cohorts of Gas and EPD students will attend mandatory program orientations on April 21 on the NWTC Green Bay Campus. The number of students ready to start classes is promising; the Gas program is nearly full and the EPD program has a waitlist. At orientation, students meet with program instructors and learn what is needed to get started. Drug testing occurs during orientation as do random drug tests throughout the program. Classes for the March 2024 graduates start June 5.

Energy Management

Two dedicated Energy Management students, Joe Sargeant and Alexander Lange, presented at the 2023 Wisconsin Public Service Energy Forum. The Forum audience was made up of WPS's large service customers including industrial facility and commercial building operators. Joe and Alex presented about the NWTC Great Lakes Energy Education Center building's path to Net Zero Energy. A poll during the event revealed 65% of the audience had renewable energy or carbon reduction goals, and Joe and Alexander provided an example of how to meet these goals. The presentation showed how the Energy Center was designed to use less energy than the average education building. Since opening in 2018, the building has 148 kW-DC of solar installed – which meets about 69% of the electrical requirements and 51% of all energy (electric and natural gas) requirements of the Center.



Upcoming Trainings and Seminars

For the latest in training and seminars, visit:

- **NWTC Corporate Training and Economic Development (CTED):** Training and services tailored to individual company needs.
- **Center for Renewable Energy Advanced Technological Education (CREATE):** Creating a skilled technical workforce to implement the transformation of the world's energy industries.
- **Slipstream:** Discovers, tests, and scales climate solutions in buildings and communities.
- **Midwest Energy Association (MEA):** Empowering the energy industry through education, leadership development, and industry connections.
- **Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA):** Promotes renewable energy and sustainable living through education and demonstration.
- **Environmental and Natural Resources Technology (EARTH) – formerly Advanced Technology Environmental Education Center (ATTEC):** Advances environmental and natural resources education through curriculum, professional, and program development.

To have your training opportunities listed, email bonnie.willems@nwtc.edu.

Connect With Us

Visit our website: nwtc.edu/EnergyNetwork

Email Bonnie Willems: bonnie.willems@nwtc.edu

Grant Contacts

Amy Kox, Dean: amy.kox@nwtc.edu

Howard Herrild, Assoc. Dean: howard.herrild@nwtc.edu

Jenny Brinker, Energy Mgmt. Instructor: jenny.brinker@nwtc.edu

Tom Hebert, Gas Utility Instructor: tom.hebert@nwtc.edu

Partial support for this work was provided by the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program under Award No. 2000519. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.



This email was sent by:

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

2740 W Mason St

Green Bay, WI, 54303, US

920-498-5444 | 1-800-422-NWTC

[Unsubscribe](#)