

Good News for Green Workforce Development at Palm Beach State College

There are good things happening at Palm Beach State College. The *College* has established an energy and environmental institute to meet the community's need for a highly-trained workforce in emerging Green Industry sectors (e.g., Renewable Energy, Hybrid Electric Power, Energy Efficiency management). Officially named the Institute for Energy & Environmental Sustainability (IEES), its new director, Jay Matteson



explains that in accordance with President Gallon's Sustainability initiative, "the college is committed to the practice of sustainability in all areas and in becoming a leader in energy education in Florida. This means providing academic and career technical programs that meet guidelines and recommendations from National Science Board to support education and workforce development for *Building a Sustainable Energy Future* (NSB-09-35, April 10, 2009). "

To fulfill its mission, IEES is focusing on accomplishing three fundamental objectives: (1) Retrofitting of existing courses and development of new courses of study and curriculum that enables students to earn multiple-certificates and advanced degrees for modern energy industry employability; (2) establishing Renewable & Alternative Energy and Energy Efficiency learning laboratories tasked to train a Green workforce capable of performing critical thinking and problem solving tasks at a high cognitive-level; and (3) building collaborative partnerships with business & industry, Florida and national colleges, and the Banner Center for Energy to establish pathways leading to creation and preservation of sustainable New Green Economy jobs.

IEES' project plan is guided by seven instructional design principles essential to development and assessment of institutional effectiveness in higher education. They are:

- 1.) **Curriculum & Instructional Design:** development of course learning competencies and skills that build depth of knowledge for Extended and Strategic Thinking (e.g. Analysis, design, problem-solving, critique)
- 2.) **Curriculum Mapping:** retrofitting existing courses with accompanying development of new courses that provides students with a clearly defined academic path for earning multiple-certificates and advanced college degrees in Green Industry sectors
- 3.) **Deployment of Applied Learning Laboratories:** providing students with authentic learning experiences that tests students' knowledge of learning-by-doing
- 4.) **Accountability & Assessment:** developing reliable & valid test item banks to assess students' competencies and skills
- 5.) **Business & Industry Partnerships:** building partnerships with industry to establish connections between "ready workers" and "ready jobs" thereby creating powerful links for creation of sustainable green jobs
- 6.) **Dissemination of Curriculum Resources and Materials:** developing library of instructional materials that enables learners and stakeholder partners to gain access to information and materials to support and reinforce learning overtime
- 7.) **Methods of Instructional Delivery:** creating and testing novel methods of teaching & learning using integrated "Cyberlearning" models

Dr. Matteson shared with us that "overall when everything is said and done, we as a people must remember our history; that is to say, we have always accomplished great feats by working together as cooperative neighbors. It is in the truest sense, the root meaning of Charity. Remember the old African proverb: If you want to go fast then go alone, but if you want to go far then go together."

For more information about the Institute for Energy & Environmental Sustainability please contact: Jay Matteson, Ph.D., M.S., Director of IEES; phone: 561-207-5302; Email: matteso@PalmBeachState.edu.