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Two NMCC wind power technology students to take part in Maine Wind Day events at State House

Augusta - Two students enrolled in the wind power technology program at Northern Maine Community College will join with state lawmakers, economic development leaders and officials in the wind industry at a March 3 event at the State House in Augusta designed to present the economic and environmental benefits of wind power in Maine.

Maine Wind Day will take place in the Hall of Flags this Thursday. Matt Melcher of Bingham and Bradley Therrien of New Sweden, a second and first year student enrolled in the NMCC wind power technology program, will take part in the activity. The two will present information on the unique program and speak with those gathered for the event about their educational experience and future plans to work in the industry.

Melcher and Therrien have already had a glimpse into their future profession by experiencing it firsthand as student interns working for Maine-based construction company Cianbro last summer. Both spent the first half of the paid internship in Portland and the other half in Maryland completing pre-construction work for the Roth Rock Wind Power Project. Activities they were engaged in included preparing materials for crews that were responsible for constructing the turbines, namely safety and equipment check lists.

In addition to the NMCC students, College President Timothy Crowley will take part in the day's activities, speaking at an 11:00 a.m. press conference, where he will share the latest developments for New England's first and only wind power technology program. Crowley will talk about the first graduates from the program who will enter the workforce after graduation this May. Melcher is one of those first graduates.

Crowley will also speak about progress on NMCC's efforts to establish the Northern Maine Center for Excellence in Alternative Energy Training and Education. The College announced plans to develop the center in January with a \$1.2 million contribution from a private donor.

Also at the press conference, Charles S. Colgan, former Maine state economist, and professor of economics at the Maine Center for Business and Economic Research, will present the results of his recent study on the development of wind power in Maine and the economic impact of the industry. The basis for Colgan's study was an examination of three major wind projects developed over the last seven years. The projects included Mars Hill, completed in 2006; Stetson Mountain phases I and II, completed during 2008-2010; and the Kibby Project which was built in 2009-2010.

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