



October 12, 2011

NR11106

News Release

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NMCC and County regional development work in alternative energy highlighted by national organization

Aroostook County - The successful efforts of Northern Maine Community College to train a new workforce for jobs in alternative energy and how that work enhances regional economic growth for an emerging industry are featured this month by a national organization.

“Northern Maine Community College: Rural Partnership to Build a Green Economy,” is the “Colleges in Action” story highlighted on the website and in the October newsletter of the Washington D.C. based Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED) Center.

The article, posted on SEED’s website October 11, highlights NMCC’s efforts to develop educational curriculum in alternative energy and specifically focuses on the College’s work as a lead partner in the Mobilize Northern Maine initiative. The comprehensive planning process involves representatives from Northern Maine Development Commission, workforce development, the business community, nonprofits, government, and higher education.

“It is especially rewarding to have the work of our campus community recognized as a success story and featured as such nationally. This speaks volumes for the excellent work of our faculty, students and staff. There has been a great deal of innovation on our campus in developing not only the first wind power technology program but also in introducing solar, biomass and other alternative energy curriculum,” said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. “The article also acknowledges our commitment to supporting and leading economic development efforts in northern Maine.”

SEED is the first national coordinated strategy to support community colleges in building the green economy. It was created by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the primary advocacy organization for the nation’s community colleges, and ecoAmerica, a non-profit that uses consumer research and strategic partnerships to create large-scale engagement programs that build awareness, understanding and action for climate and environmental solutions among mainstream Americans.

AACC first learned of NMCC's efforts in alternative energy education in 2008, when the College announced it would launch New England's first associate degree training program for wind power technicians. After following developments of the program over the past few years and after the College graduated its first 14 technicians this spring, SEED sent a consultant to the campus this past August to research and write about efforts in northern Maine.

In addition to featuring NMCC as one of the "Colleges in Action," SEED has also highlighted the country's most northeastern community college in a report it released last month entitled "Creating an Environment for Growing Green Jobs: Community Colleges Shaping State and Local Energy Policies." The document is the first of the SEED Green Action Plan Series, a set of practical guides and actionable steps that colleges can take to not only prepare a skilled workforce, but also to become change agents in regional efforts to develop a green and sustainable economy.

The section of the report highlighting NMCC's work focuses on the College's role as a policy convener in the multi-stakeholder Mobilize Northern Maine effort. College officials have also been invited to share the formula for their success with their colleagues as featured presenters in a national webinar for community colleges later this month.

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*To read the SEED Center NMCC "Colleges in Action" success story on-line visit:
www.theseedcenter.org
(NMCC story is feature story at bottom right of page)*

*To read the report featuring NMCC entitled "Creating an Environment for Growing Green Jobs: Community Colleges Shaping State and Local Energy Policies," visit:
<http://www.theseedcenter.org/Resources/SEED-Resources/AACC-s-SEED-Green-Action-Plan-Series>*



Candy Center (third from left), a consultant with the Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED) Center visits with NMCC and regional and state economic development leaders in August at NMCC's Northern Maine Center for Excellence in Alternative Energy Training and Education. Center spent a day on and around the campus touring facilities and interviewing several people about NMCC's work in alternative energy.

Among those participating in a roundtable discussion were (left to right) Annette Bossler with the Maine International Trade Center, NMCC President Timothy Crowley, Center, and NMDC Executive Director Robert Clark.