

PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Spotlight On Brevard Workforce



Working side-by-side with the state's local workforce boards is vital to the success of all Banner Centers. The Alternative Energy Banner Center has the good fortune of partnering with Brevard Workforce and Hampton Smith, its Program and Policy Officer.

Brevard Workforce provides job seekers with a wealth of tools

and services to find employment, stay competitive and advance in their careers. Brevard Workforce is a not-for-profit regional workforce board which serves Brevard County, Florida, including the Kennedy Space Center and Patrick Air Force Base. Brevard Workforce's role is to administer workforce development programs throughout Brevard County.

The vision set by the Board of Directors of Brevard Workforce is "A highly competitive Workforce for Brevard County." Furthermore, the mission is "to facilitate and be the catalyst for workforce development services that are responsive to the employment needs of Brevard County." As Brevard County shapes its future, Brevard Workforce is aligning its efforts with economic development strategy in an effort to make certain that the workforce community has the skills and types of employment opportunities required to prosper. To achieve success, it is important for Brevard Workforce to work with a variety of partners and to harness a number of resources to make the strategic plan, and the goals outlined within it, a reality. There has never been a better opportunity or greater need to focus on the one community dynamic that drives economic growth and the community's resultant quality of life. Brevard Workforce achieves its goals through its work. That work impacts local and regional workforce issues, and ensures that the county has an educated and skilled workforce to draw upon.

Brevard Workforce's premier product is the Brevard Workforce Career Centers. They serve as the front

Spotlight, continued on page 2

PROGRAM UPDATE

Banner Center Announced

Workforce Florida awarded the Banner Center for Alternative Energy to the Florida Solar Energy Center at the University of Central Florida for the second consecutive year. The Employ Florida Banner Centers are developed to enhance Florida's economic development efforts by providing training for workers in high-value industries caused by changes in markets or technologies. The Banner Center for Alternative Energy is one of 10 Banner Centers located throughout the state focused on developing training for targeted industries, based on statewide partnerships and industry feedback. The Alternative Energy Banner Center was launched in 2008 to serve as a statewide, industry-driven **Banner Center, continued on page 3.**

INDUSTRY NEWS

Legislature Enacts Innovative Energy Financing Bill

The Florida Legislature enacted a bill this session that has the potential to boost the solar and energy efficiency industries like no previous initiative. With the uncertainty of the state rebate program bringing the growth of the solar energy industry to an abrupt halt, House Bill HB 7179 provides a funding mechanism for solar customers to make a long-term investment with a short-term return. Known as PACE, or Property Assessed Clean Energy, property owners can finance the purchase of a solar energy system, as well as building energy efficiency improvements, through a loan program that is repaid through a special property tax.

"I think this is going to attract capital to the state of Florida and I think it will create jobs in the energy efficiencies and solar technology industries," said the bill's co-sponsor and House majority leader, Rep. Adam Hasner (R-Delray Beach).

Solar Industry Response to PACE

The Florida Solar Energy Industries Association (FlaSEIA) actively supported the bill and immediately created an ad-hoc committee to oversee its implementation. Committee Chairman Reed Wilson filed his initial report after participating in

Florida Legislature, continued on page 4

Alternative Energy Banner Center Newsletter

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PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Alternative Energy Training Providers

As a result of the tremendous interest from local community colleges and vocational schools, the Alternative Energy Banner Center has expanded its network of training providers. In an effort to assure uniformity of curriculum and access to instructor training workshops, the Banner Center has invited every institution in the state that is offering solar training opportunities to join the Banner Center as an Alternative Energy Training Provider. Agreements have been executed or are pending with more than 20 training providers, and more than 30 regular and adjunct faculty from those institutions have received instructor training. Check our Web site often for an updated list of training providers: <http://www.fsec.ucf.edu/en/education/banner/partners.htm>.

Alternative Energy Training Providers — as of May 2010

Miami Dade College	www.mdc.edu
Brevard Community College	www.brevardcc.edu
Tallahassee Community College	www.tcc.fl.edu
Broward College	www.broward.edu
Santa Fe College	www.sfcollege.edu
Westside Tech	www.westside.ocps.net
Florida Keys Community College	www.fkcc.edu
Northwest Support Services	www.northwestss.com
Broward Schools	www.browardschools.com
Pinellas Technical Education Centers	www.pcsb.org
Lely High School	www.collier.k12.fl.us/lhs/
College of Central Florida	www.cf.edu
The Contractor's Institute	www.contractorsinstitute.com
Building Officials Assoc. of Florida	www.boaf.net
Island Coast High School	http://ich.leeschools.net
Withlacoochee Technical Institute	www.wtionline.cc
Central Florida Electrical JATC	www.cfelectricaljtc.org/

Spotlight, continued from front page

line point of contact for both job seekers and employers. More than 100,000 individuals pass through the doors of the three Career Centers during the course of the program year.

Those who visit the Career Resource Centers will find a wide variety of tools and support services to help in their job search. Before visiting a Career Center, job seekers should first register at Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) at www.employflorida.com. This statewide database is frequently used by employers to find qualified candidates for available positions. Brevard Workforce staff also utilizes this system to help employers look for potential employees.

Anybody – whether unemployed or employed – is welcome to take advantage of services offered by Brevard Workforce. There are no fees for services, and use of the Career Resource Center is free (there may be fees for particular programs and training). Financial support may also be available. Many resources are available online or in the Brevard Workforce library; some resources must be arranged by appointment. A few of our job search assistance services include:

- Job listings
- Resume assistance
- Career planning resources
- Labor market information
- Veterans' employment assistance
- Individualized career assistance and training scholarships for youth and dislocated workers
- Adult education and GED classes

Hampton Smith currently serves as program and policy officer for Brevard Workforce. Prior to joining Brevard Workforce, Mr. Smith served 22 years in the United States Air Force with extensive experience in training and human resources education. Mr. Smith serves as a member on the United Way's Grants/Contract Oversight Committee.

Mr. Smith responsibilities include researching and developing strategies in response to identified board of directors or other customer needs. He recommends policy guidelines that respond to local conditions, while ensuring compliance with state, federal, and local laws, regulations and policies funding source requirements.

Mr. Smith and his wife, Karen, have lived in Brevard County for 13 years and currently resides in Rockledge.

TRAINING & CURRICULUM

Train-the-Trainer Workshops

The Banner Center for Alternative Energy has conducted four Train-the-Trainer workshops for the instructors in the training provider network. Two separate courses are offered, one for Photovoltaic Systems and one for Solar Thermal Systems. Each course provided instructors with both classroom and laboratory experiences, as well as with a copy of text books and resource



Banner Center, *continued from front page*

resource for solar energy workforce education and training to ensure the competitiveness of Florida's solar energy businesses. This year, the focus will be on industry involvement in on-the-job training, as well as curriculum review, and to expand the network of training providers throughout the state.

Colleen McCann Kettles was named Director of the Alternative Energy Banner Center and joins Susan Schleith, Banner Center Coordinator and JoAnn Stirling, Assistant Coordinator.

materials for classroom teaching. The evaluations and feedback provided by the instructors trained demonstrated both the need for and the superior quality of the workshop and educational materials provided.



INDUSTRY NEWS

Advisory Council Appointment and Chairs

The Alternative Energy Banner Center Industry Advisory Council members have been nominated and approved by Workforce Florida. The Advisory Council consists of solar industry business representatives, as well as local workforce board representatives and strategic Banner Center partners. David Bessette, president of Allsolar Service Company, Inc. was elected chairman of the Advisory Council and Paul Farren, president of The Energy Store was elected vice-chairman. A complete list of advisory council members can be found at the Banner Center's Web site.

Florida Legislature, continued from front page

a Webinar on the subject.

Named one of the “Breakthrough Ideas for 2010” by Harvard Business Review and a “World Changing Idea” by Scientific American, PACE bonds offer real estate owners upfront financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy systems, which the owner pays back through property taxes over a 5- to 20-year time period. In the past 18 months, PACE-enabling legislation has been adopted in 18 states.

Members FlaSEIA have tremendous interest in PACE. The State Solar Rebate Program expires June 30, 2010 and is currently oversubscribed by approximately \$30,000,000. As a result, solar energy contractors are facing massive layoffs in one of the only bright spots in the construction related field in Florida.

PACE legislation in Florida was the last bill to pass in this last session and it awaits the governor’s signature. As there is little reason to doubt he will sign PACE into law, there is substantial interest throughout the state from county commissioners, town mayors, state representatives, as well as solar energy contractors, air-conditioning companies, banks and many more. House majority leader Adam Hasner has suggested a PACE Summit where representatives from all counties can learn how to best implement the program in their area. FlaSEIA has already been in touch with Representative Hasner’s office to convey their interest in assisting in organizing a PACE Summit. The faster the summit happens, the sooner jobs will be created, precious resources conserved, renewable energy promoted, and carbon footprint reduced — all with no impact on the pocketbooks of the citizens of Florida.

While moving quickly is important, setting up a poorly planned program must be avoided. In the best interest of all parties, a cohesive program that includes as many counties as possible is desirable. There are a lot of details that need to be considered, and having a well-thought-out, streamlined process – that is consistent from one area to the next – is extremely important.

The following information was developed by the North Carolina State University Solar Energy Center for the DSIRE Web site and is used with permission. This information was accessed May 2010.

The Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency (DSIRE) is a comprehensive source of information on state, local, utility, and federal incentives and policies that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. Established in 1995 and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, DSIRE is an ongoing project of the N.C. Solar Center and the Interstate Renewable Energy Council.

PACE financing may be used to encourage the installation of renewable energy technologies by helping customers overcome the financial barrier associated with high, up-front equipment costs. PACE financing effectively allows property owners to borrow money from the local government to pay for renewable energy and/or energy-efficiency improvements. The amount borrowed is typically repaid via a special assessment on property taxes, or another locally-collected tax or bill, such as utility bills, or water or sewer bills. Only the property owners within the local jurisdiction that opt into the PACE program will be subject to this special assessment. In addition to reducing the upfront costs of renewable energy and/or energy efficiency improvements, PACE financing allows the cost of home improvements to be linked to the property. If a property owner participating in a PACE program sells the property, then the repayment obligation will transfer with the property.

A recent trend on the local level is to create a property tax financing district to help consumers pay for solar energy systems through a long-term assessment on the customer’s property tax bill or another local bill. Nearly 20 states have authorized local governments to create PACE financing programs, and around half a dozen local governments have created these programs.

Berkeley, California was the first city in the U.S. to implement PACE. The city approved a financing program in September 2008 to allow residential and commercial property owners to pay for energy efficiency improvements and solar installations in the form of a voluntary, long-term assessment on their individual property tax bills. Under this “Financing Initiative for Renewable and Solar Technology” (FIRST) program, the city would provide the funding for the project from a bond or loan fund that it repays through assessments on participating property owners’ tax bills for 20 years. Berkeley contracted with Renewable Funding LLC to provide turn-key program administration. Dozens of other cities around the U.S. have expressed interest in emulating this model. Berkeley is a charter city. Consequently, the city was able to implement a PACE financing program without state authorization, but other cities in California required state authorization to create these programs. In July 2008, California amended its state law to enable cities and counties to offer PACE financing programs to property owners.

A complete summary of PACE along with references to each state’s programs can be found at:

<http://www.dsireusa.org/solar/solarpolicyguide/?id=26>