

# COE FOR ENERGY TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD JOINT UETA BOARD MEETING NOTES

January 25, 2008

Center of Excellence for Energy Technology, Centralia Campus

9AM to 12PM – Health and Science Annex

## COE Advisory Committee Members-Present

### **Industry**

Sarah Ainsworth, Grays Harbor PUD  
Lorelee Bauer, PSE  
Kurt Dobin, BPA  
Nettie Dokes, Seattle City Light  
Brad Folden, BPA  
Malcolm Kiner, Seattle City Light  
Angela Mallow, TransAlta  
Pat McCarty, (Chair) Tacoma Power  
Troy Nutter, PSE  
Stan Ratcliff, GHPDA  
Linda Trygstad, Grays Harbor PUD

### **Labor**

Bob Guenther,  
IBEW Local 77  
Kairie Pierce,  
Washington State Labor Council

### **College**

Alan Hardcastle, WSU  
Mike Kelly, Grays Harbor College  
Theresa Kimball, Clover Park Technical College  
James Malinowski, Clark College  
John McKee, Portland Community College  
Sandra Williams, Portland Community College

### **Centralia College**

Jose Diaz  
Stephanie Grove  
Barbara Hins-Turner  
Cindy Mann  
Jay Pickett  
Durelle Sullivan

### **Workforce & Economic Development**

Mary Dotter, Lewis County Economic Development Council  
Jamie Krause, Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board  
John Loyle, Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council  
Anne Wetmore, Department of Labor Apprenticeship

### **ITV-Spokane**

Mike Hanson, Avista  
Carol Hicks, Avista

### **ITV-Wenatchee**

Arlene Abbott, Polar Star Consulting  
Ruth Erwert, Chelan County PUD  
University  
Kairie Grant, Grant County PUD  
Shannon Lowry, Grant County PUD

### **ITV-Wilsonville**

Pat Hatleli, PGE  
Steve Maser, Willamette  
Ralph Gibbs, OIT  
Mark Lewis, PGE  
Maureen Shaw, PGE

### **ITV- Wenatchee Valley (continued)**

Riva Morgan, Wenatchee Valley College

Roberta Noga, Grant County PUD

Andra Stredwick, Grant County PUD

Jennifer Taylor, Chelan County PUD

Hugh Vibbert, Wenatchee Valley College

### **Committee Notes**

1. Pat McCarty, Chair, called the meeting to order. Member and guest introductions.
2. Barbara Hins-Turner, presented Center of Excellence (COE) Director's Report
  - Welcomed the Utility Education and Training Alliance, Industry Human Resource Representatives and Gary Franklin, TransAlta, new advisory board member and 2006 Centralia College AAS Energy Technology graduate.
  - COE Purpose
    - 12 Centers of Excellence in 34 community and technical college system
    - CoE's are colleges designated by the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges as statewide leaders in specialized workforce education and training for industries that help the state's economy grow
    - Serve energy industry and labor workforce and training needs across the state and region in the case of energy – because of the interdependence the region includes the BPA grid region
    - Develop partnerships with K-20 academic institutions, industry, labor, workforce and economic development councils
  - Fall Events/Presentations
    - American Boiler Manufacturers Assoc, Abilene, TX
      - Randy Rawson, President
    - LAMPAC, Monterey, CA
      - IBEW Regional Training Centers
    - Eastern Washington
      - WVC, Columbia Basin, Chelan PUD, Grant PUD, Grand Coulee
    - Center for Energy Workforce Development, Kansas City, MO
    - WIRED Academy, Seattle
    - National Renewable Energy Laboratories, Denver, CO
    - Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Tacoma
      - Governor's Best Practice Award
  - Visits to COE
    - Senator Maria Cantwell
    - Idaho State/Idaho Natl Lab
      - Summit Sponsorship resulted
  - Grant Projects Funded
    - WIRED – Department of Labor (DoL)

- Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development
      - Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council Fiscal Agent
      - WIRED Map relative to energy regions (Attached)
      - Cluster concept includes Energy, Construction, Manufacturing Industries
    - Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
      - Skill Panel Funding for development of Electrician Skill Standards
  - Grant Projects in Application Stage
    - DoL Community Based Job Training Grant – thank you to Arlene Abbott for grant writing
    - Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board Model Skill Panel
    - Thank you to partners for letters of support
  - Summit Hold the Date
    - June 26/27
    - Randy Rawson – **Keynote, President, American Boiler Manufacturers Assc.**
3. Dr Alan Hardcastle, Senior Researcher WSU Energy Program presented initial findings of the Energy Industry Labor Market Study. To date all data forms and interviews have been completed. The report focuses on replacing retirees and new hiring for the following occupations:
- Operator (system and plant operators, all levels)
  - Mechanic (plant and system mechanics, all levels)
  - Electrician (plant, “wiremen” and substation electricians)
  - Technician: Instrument/Control/Relay/Meter (all levels of technicians; does not include drafting or other non-energy system technicians)
  - Line Worker (all levels of line workers, excluding communications/fiber line workers).

Question and Answer session following presentation.

#### Question and Answer Session

- Question: “How did you extrapolate the information into larger regions? Did they say here say here is x number of employers, we looked at with so many employees, but when you look at the entire region, you have y and that means?”
- Answer: “Part of the difficulty was that we had a larger number of employers from Washington participate than in Oregon, so it really wasn’t possible for Oregon. When you look at the data, it was not all the consistent, often not being comparable. For instance when I spoke with the PUD, we didn’t ask about all employers, we asked about employees that happen to be with electricity, so to compare it is hard. I will say that some of the parallels made sense to me, but again because of the comparability issues they were hard to gauge.
- Question: “In the research of the number of enrollments in energy programs in Oregon, did you get the sense of what was happening in Oregon, with regards to

what type of infrastructure, or processes, might be in place, where they are enjoying a higher enrollment in engineering programs than in Washington?”

- Answer: “I would be interested to have anyone from Oregon answer that, but the important piece here is that those are all engineering programs, so it could be that there is more engineering going on or it could be that there is more construction going on.”
- Question: “Do you have an explanation for the variance in the peaking of line apprenticeship and apprenticeship incompletions?”
- Answer: “When I spoke with labor and industry, they were quick to point out that this is a self report so the data that says incomplete has to come from the company or the individual. There are lots of people that start apprenticeship programs and took longer than three years to complete them for lots of different reasons.”
- Question: “What value does this have as far as your report?”
- Answer: “Keep in mind that the line is for both states, not the programs, just line.
- Question “When you talked about using the Labor and Industries data, did you use any federal information?”
- Response: “I don’t think that it is included and the addition of this slide was developed in a recent opportunity. I think that we need to take a closer look at this issue.”
- Comment – “I urge you to get this report out to the utility people and tell them that if they really want to address the problem, one way is to go to community colleges and tell the students that they are interested. The other issue that I have is that I have been trying to get the IBEW Local in our area interested in our program. I think that on a national level it is really important that the union is interested in expanding that workforce, and supporting the community college programs instead of seeing them as competition.”
- Question: “How can I locate the skill standards for the electrician technician?”
- Response: “Those are all online through the Washington systems and they are linked to the Center of Excellence website. There is also a website that shows all skill standards in this state and energy has its own link.”
- Question: “Would companies allow for co-op experience?”
- Answer: “You have to realize that the number of companies that do have co-op education is small, because there are big concerns about safety and hazardous conditions. Some companies do offer job shadow as a conversation with an experienced journey level worker, which by the way is a very good strategy.”
- Comment: “The challenge with that is that they are mostly all union positions, so by virtue of the bargaining agreement, we can’t put students in there. We called it job shadow in some cases.

- Comment: “On co-op, they have been supportive providing us with several lineworkers. Nowadays, they’ve changed the policy, as they are being treated like helpers and both the students and linemen seem to appreciate that. The PUD seems to recognize that problem and addresses it.”
- Question: “Is there an opportunity for companies who have the stronger workforce and succession planning to share that plan with others who need more development?”
- Answer: “The companies that are doing something, are carefully planning and willing to share those plans, I would contact several of them myself and see if they’re open to that, but it would have to be their choice.”
- Comment: “I was hoping we could create a subcommittee of people that would work together on those kinds of strategies. If you are interested call Barbara Hins-Turner, Alan Hardcastle, or Arlene Abbott, in Chelan to help define next steps in sharing succession planning models.”
- Comment: “I think this group should show that working with apprenticeship programs and the colleges are not exclusive of each other. It would be great if we could get with the college and develop skill standards through the industry, and have apprenticeship people take a look at the apprenticeship standards and skill standards to see if we can put together a model. If we could just do that, with the apprenticeship thing, you update them as you go along with management at the table there, and so it is updated training.
- Comment: “Coming from the pulp and paper industry, there is a gap with the baby boomers that are retiring, and there is not enough workforce to be filling a lot of these positions. So there is a big move for modernizing and automating a lot of the processes, but you still need to have good operators that have solid fundamental knowledge and know how things work as well as electricians, techs, and mechanics. I think that applies to a lot of other industries where they have our generation.”
- Response “The population is getting older and the population numbers are shrinking, so these issues are going to be the same throughout the workforce. There is a lot of competition between employers about how they train, it is going to be even harder and the outreach is really important for the long term. There are a lot of strategies that the companies are already exploring, but there’s got to be more done, it seems to me to make sure that we have that foundation of skill trained workers.”
- Question: “I had a question on the research on apprenticeship testing that we are requiring before they even get considered. The reason that I asked that is because they are actually hard, rigid and all that it tests is whether or not you are a good test taker or not. A lot of good people are getting overlooked.”
- Response: “I didn’t really look at any depth at testing procedures required for apprenticeships. The selection process for apprenticeship did come up, but I didn’t

collect a lot of data on that. I think that we need to look at the kind of people that we allow into the apprenticeship programs and what are the standards being used, is there a better criteria for taking those programs?

- Comment: “I recently spoke with a utility employee who told me they had ten lineman openings. They interviewed seven hundred people and only hired three. The quality of applicants was so low, that they were interested in starting a community college program to try and produce qualified applicants.
  - Answer: “When we have a shrinking market and lots of competition, it is harder to find the kind of people needed. My concern is that we don’t want companies to lower their standards because they do need highly qualified people, and they need to stay around, not jump from one job to another.”
5. Barbara Hins-Turner and Alan Hardcastle presented information on the Electrician Skill Standards Project. Pat McCarty offered Mayfield Dam as the location for the two day session. Employers and Human Resource departments were encouraged to think about sending a couple of people who they feel are subject matter expert power generation electricians. Barbara Hins-Turner concluded by encouraging the electrician selection within the companies. An email will be sent out within the next few weeks with the confirmed dates for the session.
  6. Troy Nutter, PSE presented the concept of developing a curriculum review subcommittee to ensure the program and graduates meet industry needs.
  7. Sharing for the good of the order:
    - Mark Lewis, Chair, UETA stated that they are going through a process that began in the late summer to determine the most productive niche for UETA. It appears that the central piece of UETA is being the disseminator of information. They would welcome any recommendations.
    - Ralph Gibbs, OIT presented the OIT B.S. Operations Management degree articulation recently completed with Centralia College AAS Energy Technology degree. The agreement accepts 70 of the 91 credits earned at Centralia College. Centralia students can take an additional 40 credits required for the degree at the community college level. The final 67 credits are then taken at OIT for a total of 183 credits. Most courses are offered online and any graduates next year can begin the bachelors program in the fall of 2008 entirely online. Also a class title Women in Business will be offered to any college that wants to encourage women to seek out skilled jobs in industry.
    - Steve Maser, Willamette University, presented the history of Utility Management Certificate program. The third cohort delivered fall, 2007 had 28 managers, directors and supervisors from 9 different utilities. The cohort included the first participant from BPA, first group from Tacoma Power, PSE and Avista. Willamette is looking forward to expanding the program to the east coast by the spring of 2009.
    - Barbara Hins-Turner, Student Success, reported that Dale Singer negotiated with labor to advanced step an apprentice operator to fourth step because the college program is based on the skills standards. An additional recent success is Ryan

Aignar's placement as an assistant operator with Seattle Steam. Seattle Steam requires employees to pass the Seattle Boiler Certification which Ryan successfully passed on the first attempt.

- Jim Malinowski, Clark College reported there are 13 students in the energy program this year. Most of the students have industrial experience and one is a high school senior in the running start program. The opportunity to tour industry facilities is the most valuable part of the program and the support of the companies is a major value of the program.
- Riva Morgan, Wenatchee Valley College reported on its 2<sup>nd</sup> year of delivering an energy technology certificate program using the ITV broadcast classes in partnership with Centralia. There are 23/ 24 students enrolled in the program this year. A blueprint reading class was added to the schedule this year with ITV broadcast to Centralia. One 2007 graduate was placed in the Douglas County PUD as a power plant apprentice operator.
- Barbara Hins-Turner, COE, reported the best learning for the students is to tour facilities and the Seattle Steam hire was a direct result of the summer plant tour class. The second year class will be touring the Vestas Wind Training Center on February 1 in Portland to integrate a renewable energy focus into the program.
- Alan Hardcastle reported WSU energy program hired a female graduate from Centralia College Energy program as a research intern. She is also the first transfer to the Evergreen State Environmental program.

## **Adjournment**