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### **Solar Heating and Cooling Instructor Training Project begins accepting applications as KVCC's unique Solar Lab nears completion**

**FAIRFIELD** - Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) in Fairfield, Maine has begun accepting applications for the first round of classes it will offer as part of a regional "train the trainers" initiative in solar heating and cooling system design and installation.

The first training session for the Northeast Solar Heating and Cooling (SHC) Instructor Training (NSHCIT) Project will be held Feb. 21-25 in the College's unique new SHC Lab within the Energy Services and Technology Center, now under construction in KVCC's Muriel P. Frye Building.

Applications for the first training session must be received by January 21. A second round of training has been scheduled for April 18-22 at the College. A third round is planned in June, with the location to be announced.

"The NSHCIT Project provides a unique opportunity for instructors in Maine and the Northeast to be trained on the latest techniques with respect to Solar Heating and Cooling installation and design. Further, not only will it provide training opportunities which will expand the reach of SHC technology, but it will do it in a state-of-the-art laboratory which is cutting edge and the first of its kind on the east coast," stated Dana Doran, Director of Energy Programs at KVCC.

The Center is being built in space formerly occupied by a carpentry lab. The design incorporates unique infrastructure and training capability. The live solar thermal system in the lab will provide domestic hot water, space heating, and air-conditioning for KVCC students and faculty with the use of 14 solar collectors on the roof and a two-ton adsorption chiller. The SHC lab is considered to be the only facility of its kind on the east coast to use this type of technology for both training opportunities as well as energy consumption.

Classroom space and hands-on training areas equipped with a variety of rooftop mock-ups for installation instruction are part of the Lab's design. Once fully completed over the next year, the Center will incorporate other energy training capability, including geothermal and other renewable energy technologies such as small wind and photovoltaic electric generation.

A mobile training lab will eventually bring solar heating and cooling classes to locations across the Northeast.

Vaughan Woodruff, an engineer and educator who has operated his own solar thermal design and installation company in Montana and Maine, will be the instructor for the project.

Though less familiar to the general public than photovoltaic energy systems, which convert sunlight to electricity, solar heating and cooling systems - commonly known as solar thermal systems - are rapidly growing in popularity. This is due in part to their shorter "payback" time on investment compared to other renewable energy systems.

Conventional solar heating systems in the Northeast indirectly heat water using solar collectors. This heat can then be used for domestic hot water needs, assisting with space heating, or process heating in industrial and commercial applications. In less conventional applications, the heat is used to produce electricity or to drive air conditioning systems.

"What KVCC is putting together is unparalleled in New England," Woodruff said. "There aren't many colleges in the U.S. that have such a comprehensive renewable energy program in development."

KVCC will provide solar heating and cooling training to instructors at high schools, colleges, businesses, and other partners across the region beginning in early 2011 to introduce the latest solar heating and cooling system design and installation techniques to those best-equipped to pass the knowledge on to a wider audience through a top-down approach.

The goal is to increase the quality and availability of instruction related to the installation of these solar systems in the following states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Instructor Training Network was created in 2009 to improve the quality and accessibility of solar installation training and expand the nation's trained solar workforce. DOE funded a National Administrator and nine Regional Training Providers to train instructors, develop curricula, and standardize local training efforts.

KVCC was selected by DOE as one of the Regional Training Providers, winning a five-year, \$3.3 million grant from DOE to support the effort.

KVCC will be collaborating with the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC), which became the National Administrator of the Solar Instructor Training Network on August 25, 2010.

KVCC began incorporating elements of renewable energy education in its Electrical Technology program in 1995 and has expanded its role in such education steadily over the years through both credit and non-credit courses and training programs.

The teaching of small wind turbine and solar-electric system design and installation in its Electrical Technology program coupled with the College's many "green" Professional Development courses and training programs has put KVCC in the center of Maine and national efforts to expand education in this growing sector of the economy.

The KVCC campus itself is steadily being developed as a model of energy efficiency and renewable energy production. Over the past two years major energy efficiency upgrades to campus buildings have been made and additional upgrades are planned.

In the 15 years since becoming a renewable energy education pioneer in Maine, KVCC has maintained its success in the arena by focusing on delivering high-quality programs that respond to the needs of industries on the front lines of green efforts in the state. The surge in demand for such education is now allowing the College to capitalize on this early experience and emerge as a regional leader in the field.

For more information on the KVCC Northeast Solar Heating and Cooling Instructor Training Project and/or to apply, go to <http://www.kvcc.me.edu/NESolar/> or contact Dana Doran at [ddoran@kvcc.me.edu](mailto:ddoran@kvcc.me.edu) or 207-453-5157.

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