
Community-Based Job Training Grants

Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology

Grantee: Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology

Industry Focus: Energy

Key Partners: Montana State Workforce Investment Board; Montana Department of Labor and Industry Job Service Region 3; One-Stop Centers in Great Falls, Cut Bank, Havre and Shelby; Montana State University (MSU) - Northern; MSU - Billings College of Technology (COT); Montana Tech College of Technology; Centralia (Washington) College; Invenenergy; Western Community Energy; Great Falls Development Authority; Great Falls Public Schools; Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education; MSU Wind Application Center; Energy Systems Technology and Education Training Center (ESTEC); Governor Brian Schweitzer, Cascade County; Opportunity Link; and Rural Dynamics Inc.

Grant Amount: \$1,972,519

Leveraged Amount: \$547,700

Location of Grant Activities: Montana

Challenge: Projections indicate that as many as 1,000 new jobs can be created to support the growing wind energy sector in Montana. At the same time, the state is experiencing population and economic declines in the same areas where wind energy has the greatest potential for success. This industry could provide high paying jobs to support economic development in these depressed areas. To meet this demand the Montana postsecondary education system will need to build its capacity to provide a wind energy workforce to employers.

Addressing the Challenge: Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology (MSU-Great Falls) is leading a consortium entitled Wind Montana: Developing a Wind Energy Workforce. Wind Montana will develop a state-wide curriculum for training programs in Wind Energy Technology. The programs will be established at MSU-Great Falls and the other three partner institutions. Common programs with distributed delivery will allow for multiple entry and exit points for students and graduates. The consortium will also develop and integrate an early college program in wind energy technology with area high schools.

Projected Outcomes:

- 110 participants will enroll in at least one certificate program.
- 40 participants will enroll in Associates of Applied Science Programs.
- 135 participants will complete the training program and enter employment.
- The project's average wage for participants will be \$30,000.

