

Step into alternative energy and the emerging green economy

News Summary: Henry Ford Community College's (HFCC) Fourth Annual Alternative Energy Summit titled "Green Entrepreneurship" Feb. 25 offers attendees a chance to learn from industry experts about how to create a start-up company in the emerging green economy.

Dearborn, Mich.--It's inevitable: footprints along a beach wash away at high tide, an episodic part of Mother Nature's daily environmental ritual that keeps our shores clean. Unfortunately, the environmental footprint of humankind is not so easy to eradicate.

That's why Henry Ford Community College's (HFCC) Fourth Annual Alternative Energy Summit Feb. 25 is important to the state and indeed the nation.

HFCC's Alternative Energy Summit "Green Entrepreneurship: Create a Start-Up Company in the Emerging Green Economy" offers attendees a chance to learn from industry experts about how to create a start-up company in the emerging green economy. In this high growth sector, green entrepreneurship will be a leading source of jobs and economic growth. And unlike conferences of a similar nature offered by colleges and universities throughout the state, the HFCC Summit is the only free conference open to the public.

The event runs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and there are a limited number of vendor tables available. For more information about participating in the Henry Ford Community College Fourth Annual Alternative Energy Summit, please call 313.845.9601 or email glaskowsky@hfcc.edu.

For Greg Laskowsky, HFCC's lead instructor for HFCC's Energy Technology Dept., the Alternative Energy Program has remained one of those rare, hidden gems for this region of the state, but the time has come to put the program on the map through the fourth annual HFCC Alternative Energy Summit.

"The Summit gives the College an additional avenue through which to promote Alternative Energy studies at the community college level and to show how the HFCC program is efficiently and rapidly responded to new trends in alternative energy in the automotive field among others," he explained. "This is critical, since SE Michigan is the home of the Big Three automotive giants, their new suppliers and the many new entrepreneur alternative energy companies starting up or moving to Michigan. Many of these companies are deeply engaged in the use of alternative power and energy in their products. Most importantly, SE Michigan and the state in general are viewed as economic proving grounds for much of the

nation: if new industry and new innovations can flourish in Michigan, the example set by the HFCC Alternative Energy Program can serve as a replicable model for other organizations throughout the country,” he concluded.

Additionally, the Summit will welcome a number of industry experts to campus to speak on a variety of alternative energy topics. Keynote speakers include

- Chuck Conlen, director of Renewable Energy, Detroit Edison;
- Scott Minos, senior Policy and Communications specialist, U.S. Department of Energy; and
- Matt Roush, editor, *Great Lakes IT Report*, WWJ News Radio.

Some of the breakout sessions planned for the Summit includes the following:

- Create a Green Start Up Company;
- Get Energy Efficiency in Your Business or Home;
- Electric Cars—what’s the Technology?
- Go Green in Your Business; and
- Cities Go Green—Learn How.

Attendees will also have the chance to examine and watch state-of-the-art companies demonstrate products that utilize alternative energy resources.

HFCC Alternative Energy Program: One of the best in SE Michigan

Although companies and organizations may not be in a position to reverse the impact that carbon monoxide and other green house gases have had on our environment, making people more aware of the role technology and education can play in reducing our environmental footprint is critically important in our emerging green economy now and in the years ahead. And for those interested in creating a new business, now might be a great time to step into the alternative energy field and other high growth sectors.

Laskowsky said that HFCC’s Alternative Energy program is one of the best in Southeast Michigan and provides a comprehensive foundation for those interested in gaining an education related to new jobs in the green emerging economy. Since 2007, when enrollment was at 300 students, the program has tripled in the number of those studying Alternative Energy at the College. Today, more than 1,000 students are enrolled in the program.

“Our job is to get students ready for the new, emerging industries in Michigan and we’ve been doing this for a number of years. HFCC graduates become candidates for emerging jobs or become entrepreneurs in the emerging green economy,” Laskowsky said, adding that during the program, “students receive an overview of Alternative/Renewable Energies and from this they can concentrate on a great many different kinds of specialties.”

Some of these specialties include:

- Electrical,
- Heating and cooling,
- Solar,
- Wind,
- Batteries,
- Environmental impacts,
- Energy auditing/weatherization,
- Energy efficiency and planning,
- Architecture,
- Deconstruction,
- Automotive and
- Business.

According to Laskowsky, there are three primary reasons why HFCC has realized an increase in the number of students in the program since 2007:

- Students and professionals realize that the alternative energy sector will be a critical area in the near future for the country in terms of potential careers and economic impact;
- The No Worker Left Behind initiative has provided students an opportunity to obtain additional education and training in an emerging field; and
- Degreed engineers realize that to take advantage of new career opportunities and to remain an important cog in their organizations, they must have education and training in this field to continue their career movement. In a sense, they are making sure they have a solid plan B in place.

The program blends theory with hands-on exposure. New emerging jobs require a minimum of an associate's degree. However, with HFCC's new 3 for 1 articulation agreements with Eastern Michigan University and Siena Heights University, students can complete their junior year at HFCC, graduate with 94 or 90 credit hours, attend one of the articulated universities, complete their senior year and graduate with a bachelor's in Technical Education or a bachelor's of Science Degree. HFCC's unique articulation partners accept 100 percent the credits earned at HFCC as transfer credit.

For more information on the HFCC Alternative Energy Program, please call 313.845.9601 or email glaskowsky@hfcc.edu.

SIDEBAR

HFCC to begin renovation on the new Science Building

In March, HFCC will break ground on the new green Science Building, which will use many green principles and strategies necessary to earn LEED and Green Globes certification. This is critical to the HFCC environment for several reasons:

the science division offers in-depth Environmental Sciences courses and supporting Physical Science classes, which provide the foundation for required courses for the Alternative Energy Degree program on campus.

Cutline: An artistic rendition of the proposed new Science Building on the HFCC campus.

Cutline: The HFCC Technology Building is home to a series of solar panels that provide energy to the College.