



MEDIA RELEASE

Association of Canadian Community Colleges

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Training Programs in Renewable Energy Key to Canada's Energy Future

Ottawa, March 19, 2004: A recent report on the assessment of training needs in the renewable energy sector, found that Canadian colleges and institutes and industry service providers need to continue to offer more skills development programs to support the needs of the wind, biomass, earth and solar energy industries. It also found that significant barriers still remain to produce graduates prepared for skilled jobs in these sectors.

These challenges include accessibility, the equivalency and recognition of qualifications within the industries themselves, certification and accreditation standards for these types of programs and a shortage of skilled workers. ACCC and NRCan have been working in collaboration with Canada's renewable energy industries since September 2002 to address related current and future education and training issues.

To promote the use of renewable energies and to establish strong partnerships with stakeholders, including industry, communities, federal and provincial departments and environmental groups, NRCan developed the 1996 Renewable Energy Strategy as a blueprint for cooperative action to accelerate the development and commercialization of renewable energy technologies.

ACCC brought together representatives from government, industries, colleges and institutes to form a committee advising on best ways to deliver needed training opportunities in renewable energy within the Canadian college and institutes system.

"Canada's colleges and institutes play a critical, pivotal role in providing the skilled human resources needed to support the country's renewable energy goals. But to do so, they must work closely with key members of Canada's socio-economic infrastructure to ensure that post-secondary level training not only supports but furthers the goals of the renewable energy sector. Our collaboration with NRCan is a wonderful example of a partnership that embraces the many elements of Canadian society concerned with the energy sustainability of our country", said Gerald Brown, President, ACCC.

The report, funded by the Renewable Energy Deployment Initiative (REDI) of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), can be obtained at www.accc.ca.

A national Renewable Energy training strategy will be developed based on pilot training projects currently underway or in development at selected colleges and institutes across the country. These pilot projects are designed to meet the unique needs of the renewable energy industries and interested communities, and to increase consumer awareness and understanding of the benefits of renewable energy technologies to Canada's future.

For more information, contact:

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