

2010 National Forum of State Energy Consortia

August 10, 2010

Columbus, OH

States Represented

New Jersey
North Carolina
Georgia
Florida
Ohio
Minnesota
Washington
California
Kentucky
Maryland
Michigan
Indiana
Missouri
Tennessee

CEWD Staff/Guests

Ann Randazzo, CEWD
Valerie Taylor, CEWD
Carren Spencer, CEWD
Parminder Jassal, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Jan Morrison, TIES

Bob Powers from AEP opened the meeting welcoming everyone to Ohio and stressing the importance of the state energy consortia.

Ann Randazzo welcomed everyone on behalf of CEWD and had everyone introduce themselves. She asked the group for the most pressing issues and challenges for their companies and state consortia. Responses included:

- More demands in “real” jobs and less time for the consortia.
- More concentration on operations then on strategic planning, which tends to in turn, add more to each employee plate.
- Internal company programs are being squeezed which trigger the need to find funding for such things as internships.
- The investment in green: there really isn’t anything there such as job descriptions and credentials. Basic skills are still needed, which makes the model adaptable to what CEWD is doing.
- Kentucky received a \$4.7 million Smart Grid grant as well as a \$2.5 million labor market grant.
- Michigan received a \$4.7 million Smart Grid grant and commented that it takes time to get things moving.

- For the Smart Grid grants, it is important to share information. DOE has asked CEWD to disseminate what various groups are doing.
- Georgia: Needs to earn money that can go directly to the consortium to do things like banners.
- SECTORS Act: there is a separate bill in Congress that will make it easier for sectors to directly access workforce development funds, however, it leaves out national coordination.
- We as an industry need to help ensure a coordinated effort among states and what is happening nationally. An example of this is the Energy Industry Fundamentals Certificate program that is being developed nationally based on the curriculum framework being used in Florida.
- Technical colleges typically are veering away from what is intended from various grants that have been awarded. Georgia is seeing this with the DOE grant.
- Kentucky: Folded the Energy Career Pathways into their consortium to secure a DOE grant. They were able to bring all of the key players to the table.
- States should encourage the use of CEWD supply and demand reports for labor market information. Some of the Labor Market Information grants are trying to recreate what has already been done.
- Some funding that can be researched includes the Trade Adjustment Assistance Funds for industries that have declined as well as the Social Innovation Fund for low-skilled workers. We need to research which geographic areas are the focus of this fund.

Next, Ann Randazzo asked the consortia to share their successes. Responses included:

- Georgia: Was able to get their proclamation for Get Into Energy Careers week approved and were invited to the Lt. Governor's office. In addition, the industry testified at the state level for a bill to keep work readiness funding. Members of the consortia stressed the importance of having a legislative voice. Consortia can keep up to date with what is happening at a policy level through the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE) and the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) websites.
- Florida: Worked with the Department of Education to add an Energy Career Cluster. CEWD is trying to do this nationally with Kim Greene.
- Linda Fowler shared that various departments in the Federal government are coming together for innovation. A new grant will soon be coming out focused on regional innovation centers. State energy consortia are positioned to be competitive since they are already collaborating with education and workforce.
- Some small states are considering combining state energy consortia, such as the Mid-Atlantic States. If your consortium is struggling, please call Ann.
- A new Executive Action Council has been formed at EEI. Chief HR officers are involved in this effort.

Ann Randazzo then presented on the Get Into Energy Career Pathways model. A PPT of the presentation is available on the CEWD website.

Next, Parminder Jassal spoke to the group about The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

- The Foundation has three divisions—Global Health, Global Development and U.S. Programs. U.S. Programs focuses on both high school and post-secondary reform, with STEM being the connection between the two. There is some spillover between the two, but what is most important is that the systems work well and link education to careers. The Gates Learn and Earn Model is designed to help students get through the post-secondary education system.
- \$50 million has been dedicated to STEM initiatives at the high school level. The Foundation wants to see the connection to sectors and industry.
- There continues to be a national discussion on the importance of students graduating high school, both college AND work ready, not either or. Unfortunately, the education system as it is now does not support this philosophy.
- The Gates Foundation focuses on bringing the key players in the STEM community to drive changes in public education. Players include K-12 education systems, industry, non-profits, community colleges, four-year colleges and state and local governments.
- The Foundation has made STEM investments in CA, NY, OH, TX, NC and WA. Texas is the first of the states to start a STEM network that developed a blueprint for the schools supported by seven STEM centers throughout the state. This model was then duplicated in OH, the Ohio STEM Learning Network, through a \$200 million investment. The model will continue to be duplicated with its impressive results for kids with stronger math skills and the movement to a higher level, yet fewer, state standards and the transition to performance-based assessments.
- Other successful STEM models include San Diego’s High Tech High School, Cleveland’s partnership with GE and New Jersey’s Citizens schools.
- The Gates Foundation has found that the use of career coaches rather than traditional guidance counselors is much more effective with students.
- The Foundation is not adding other focus states at this point in time.
- Some action items Parminder Jassal mentioned for the states include:
 - 1) Connect with other STEM networks represented at the Forum.
 - 2) Assist with enabling the STEM schools connect to business.
 - 3) STEM Challenge: This initiative is in the works and goes beyond the Gates states to transcend the traditional boundaries of high school and community colleges, instead of focusing on the fact that industry wants qualified workers for good jobs.
 - 4) Attend the STEM Tech conference October 29-November 3.

Barbara Hins-Turner presented Washington State’s best practice—a career resource guide. In the state of Washington, a college can specialize in offering a specific type of program, but other colleges can offer that same program if they sign an articulation agreement. The guide shows the specialties of the community colleges that are part of the network who offer energy programs. Washington also got a DOE Smart Grid grant as part of a five state initiative where they formed the Pacific Northwest Center for Excellence in Clean Energy.

Debra Howell from Georgia shared how their state was able to proclaim Careers in Energy Week October 18-25. Valerie Taylor went over the toolkit that has been created so any state can host Careers in Energy Week, with a proclamation template, coloring pages, an essay contest and bill stuffers.

Ray Kelly from the Michigan consortium shared how they were able to get their pre-employment test scores up through comparing the EEI test to the competency model and providing this information to their education partner, Mott Community College, who teaches the needed knowledge and skills. A PPT presentation is posted on the CEWD website.

Next, Carol Higley from the Florida Energy Workforce Consortium talked about some of the recent successes in Florida, including the use of their curriculum framework for the national energy industry fundamentals certificate program that is being developed. Her PPT presentation is posted on the CEWD website.

Linda Fowler did a Funding 101 presentation touching on the many different sources of funding available at local, state and national levels. She mentioned that she is building on her contacts she has with some of the national foundations to help fund the GEICP initiative. Linda's PPT is posted on the CEWD website.

Ann Randazzo and Liz McAndrews-Beneviedes asked for feedback on the involvement of nuclear in the states. They would like for every state energy consortia to have nuclear representation.

Finally, there were several breakout sessions where consortia could talk in small groups about topics such as summer camps, bridge training for Veterans, energy certificate programs, state policy and funding and the Smart Grid grants.