



HCC, EcoEnergy Break Ground On Renewable Energy Training Facility

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Officials from Highland Community College (HCC) and EcoEnergy officially broke ground for a facility to house the HCC Wind Turbine Technology Program, the first associate's degree program of its kind offered in Illinois.

The event also included the donation of the facility's first dedicated tool from Greenlee-Textron, a Rockford, Ill.-based manufacturer of tools for the electrical industry that will supply tools to the program.

The wind tech program, which opened with a full class of 16 students this fall, is expected to move into the new facility in the first quarter of 2009. The new 5,500 square-foot facility will feature a training area where students can work on the components and subassemblies of a turbine nacelle without needing to climb a 300-foot tower for class. The facility will also house a hydraulics lab, classroom space, shop area, mechanical room and storage.

"EcoEnergy develops alternative energy projects using wind power, solar power, biofuels and cogeneration, and as we grow, we see the need for highly trained people to maintain all of this high-tech machinery," says Shawn Gaffney, president of EcoEnergy. "We see alternative energy not only as an important power source for our nation's future, but as an equally important source of good, steady jobs."

SOURCE: EcoEnergy

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