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Labor Department awards RTEC \$100,000 for green jobs training

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded \$100,000 to Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC) in Yankton as part of a green jobs training grant.

The approved RTEC grant proposal creates an Industrial Maintenance Technology diploma program through Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI) unique to South Dakota.

“The purpose of the grant is to teach workers the skills required in emerging energy efficiency and renewable energy industries,” said State Labor Secretary Pam Roberts. “This will increase the opportunities for unemployed and dislocated workers to move into high-wage and high-growth occupations.”

All grant activities must lead to employment and teach competencies demanded by the target sector while supporting participants’ long-term career growth. A survey of businesses in the 60 mile radius of Yankton showed proven demand for sustainability of the program.

“This is an exciting partnership and program for the Yankton community and workforce,” said RTEC General Manager Josh Svatos. “We are recruiting the first class which starts in August 2011. If someone is interested, they need to contact RTEC as soon as possible.”

RTEC and MTI together contributed \$230,000 for startup expenses. MTI instructors will teach the Industrial Maintenance Technology program building upon MTI’s existing Energy Star curriculum. Students will also learn the overall concepts of industrial machinery maintenance.

In addition, the program introduces Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) curriculum to provide students LEED certification. The LEED courses will focus on renewable green energy options for industry including geothermal, photo thermal, photovoltaic and air-to-air exchange.

South Dakota received \$2.5 million for the State Energy Sector Partnerships and Training Grant authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. To learn more about job training opportunities available through DOL, visit www.sdjobs.org.