

Blue Ridge Community College

Times-News Column

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Blue Ridge Community College is proud to be the host of the upcoming conference Clean Energy Now – an intensive one-day event that will provide North Carolina manufacturers, companies and local governments with an overview of opportunities in energy-efficiency, renewable energy and clean vehicles. In a rapidly changing energy landscape, this event which will take place October 8 in the Blue Ridge Conference Hall at the College will cover the latest in clean energy developments that can reduce costs, improve performance and increase competitiveness today. Registration and additional information is available online at www.cleanenergywnc.org.

Sponsored by the AdvantageGreen program of AdvantageWest, Clean Energy Now is jointly produced by Blue Ridge Community College, the Clean Vehicles Coalition, Land-of-Sky Regional Council, the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium, and the AdvantageGreen program of AdvantageWest. Additionally, the event is made possible by the support of PSNC Energy, FLS Energy, the AB Tech Global Institute for Sustainable Technologies and the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association.

Even throughout the recession, the clean energy industry has remained a bright spot in the economy. The sector continues to be one of the fastest growing industries worldwide and is positioned to do so for decades to come. Like the high-tech boom of the last few decades, the energy sector is experiencing rapid innovation that will have wide ranging impacts on all types of business. Remaining competitive in this changing environment requires continually understanding how new energy developments can impact your business or organization.

Through a strong program ranging from real world case studies to presentations on specific technologies from leading WNC green energy businesses to a large display of clean vehicles, Clean Energy Now will give participants the information and connections they need to benefit from new developments in clean energy. Jennifer Bumgarner, the newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Energy with the North Carolina Department of Commerce, will open the event with a keynote presentation on the need and opportunity for North Carolina to be the leader in clean energy in the Southeast. Following this will be three hour-long segments packed full of concise but informative presentations covering the latest in energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean vehicles. The later part of the afternoon will include concurrent breakout sessions as well as a panel of clean energy project funders that will discuss upcoming funding and resource opportunities. The full Clean Energy Now program is available at www.cleanenergywnc.org.

A special addition to this year's event will be a Clean Vehicles Odyssey showcase. This will include a broad display of alternative vehicles and fuels technologies ranging from electric cars and infrastructure to clean burning natural gas vehicles. The Odyssey showcase will be located outside the conference hall and will run concurrent to the conference program throughout the day.

Finally, the event also features three special workshops to be held the day before on October 7th. These include an Alternative Vehicles training course, and two focused workshops on “How to Start a Green Business” and “How to Grow a Green Business”. Details on these workshops are available on the conference web page.

To learn more about the Clean Energy Now event, visit www.cleanenergynow.org or contact the Small Business Center at Blue Ridge Community College at (828) 694-1779.