

**College of Lake County
Grayslake, Illinois
Green Jobs**

SCHOOL

College of Lake County, Public, 2-year, 15,759 students, Grayslake, Illinois.

ABSTRACT

The goal of the Green Economy Center (GEC) of Northeastern Illinois is to streamline access to information and facilitate the merging of existing skills into green jobs, which results in a more robust economy. The GEC contracted an Intern to research educational programs and create an easily navigable database, supporting the development of a green economy and green collar jobs. Programs included degree granting, workforce training, certification, financial incentives, and continuing education programs in Lake County and Northeastern Illinois. In addition, a regionalized group of Northeastern Illinois Colleges (NEIL) has formed to identify a comprehensive list of pertinent educational and job training programs for inclusion on the GEC website. NEIL consists of seven Illinois Community Colleges with ten participants in the network. Information is continuously being collected from the NEIL community colleges to create an up to date directory of programs, a synopsis for each program, and links to individual sites.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goals

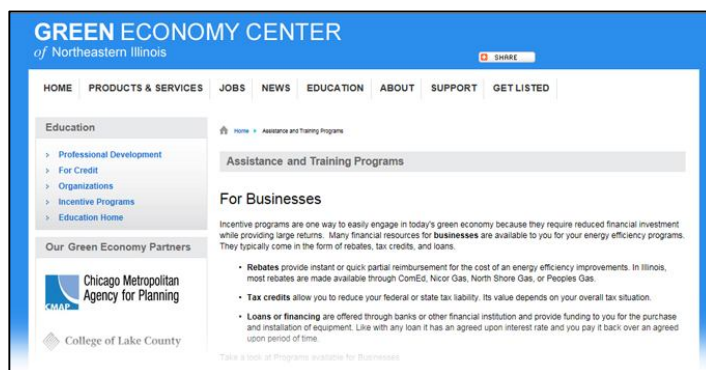
- Create a comprehensive listing of Educational programs and informational resources for job seekers in Lake County/ Northeastern Illinois;
- Research and compile data on projected Green Jobs for Northeastern Illinois;
- Identify the demand and skills needed for projected Green Jobs;
- Create a database of current websites dedicated to Green Jobs/ Create Links to Partner Organizations;
- Improve the navigational structure for the Education and Jobs section of the Green Economy Center site;
- Solicit constructive feedback from the community as well as regional and state groups and organizations

Accomplishments and Outcomes

The project has resulted in the successful compilation of educational programs including degree granting, workforce training, certification, financial incentives, and continuing education programs in Lake County and Northeastern Illinois. The initial updates to the online database have resulted in an increase to website traffic connecting various information seekers with resources. The site is serving as a resource for job-seekers and the general public as it identifies not only jobs in the region but also publicly available reports produced by the state. We have used the site to provide up to date regional

“green” news as well as relevant national headlines. This aspect of the site garners considerable attention as it creates an avenue for tying in local initiatives with broader efforts.

State and Industry reports are also included to provide information to the public identifying trends and employment projections throughout the region and state. Due to the overall nature of the site, it is projected that the site will continue to evolve and expand as additional opportunities are created within the region; therefore, additional goals and objectives grow organically from progressive project development.



Challenges and Responses

The diverse nature of the Green Economy itself creates a challenge due to the time that is dedicated to research. In response to this challenge, staff focused on the seminal organizations and sources of information for each sector. Additionally, staff reached out to partnering organizations, which included partner colleges, non-profit organizations, and state agencies, to further identify relevant information applicable to the goals of the project. The site was also presented to participants at the College’s County Green Conference in an effort to garner additional feedback ultimately used to improve the navigational and organizational structure of the site.

Also, technical problems with the site server were a major factor in overall progress. The server was continuously failing, which caused several delays. In the future, a more reliable server will be sought out to improve the capacity of the site and eliminate delays.

Commentary and Reflection

It is important for everyone involved on the project to understand the final scope of work, so as to avoid straying from initial goals and objectives. If not, the amount of work being performed may grow due to peripheral efforts garnering more attention than was originally intended, draining resources.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

Illinois Green Economy Network and the Green Economy Center- Stephen Bell, GEC Director/Director of College Partnerships

Sustainability Center- Dara Reiff, Coordinator

Funding and Resources

IGEN GEC Funding

Employer and Other School Partnerships

North Eastern IL Colleges – CLC, MCC, Harper, Elgin, Wabauunsee, Rock Valley CC, Kishwaukee
Illinois State University’s Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development

Education and Community Outreach

The Community Partners for Sustainability in Lake County is a network of community members from across sectors, convened by the college to collaborate and share best practices to accelerate sustainability efforts in Lake County. Made up of over 200 members, the CPS represents Lake County's local businesses, municipal offices, educational institutions, and other community organizations.

Staff presented the project to the CPS to garner feedback and guidance from the Lake County community in this process.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contacts

Stephen Bell- former: GEC Director; Current: IGEN Director of College Partnerships; 847-543-2238; sbell1@clcollinois.edu

Dara Reiff- CLC Sustainability Coordinator; 847-543-2643; dreiff@clcollinois.edu

MORE ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Campus Sustainability History

The College of Lake County is committed to playing a leadership role within our community and across the State of Illinois to advance sustainability and green jobs training. As a founding member and Administrative Agent for the Illinois Green Economy Network (www.igenc.org), we established our CLC Sustainability Center in 2009 (www.clcollinois.edu/gogreen) and the Green Economy Center of Northeastern Illinois in 2010 (www.thegreeneconomycenter.com). CLC's sustainability efforts are focused in three major realms: greening our campus, greening our curriculum, and greening our community. We seek ways to overlap these efforts through hands-on opportunities for student engagement in campus sustainability. Currently, we have four credit programs targeted toward green jobs training: Alternative Energy Technologies, Sustainable Design and Construction, Horticulture (Natural Areas Management and Sustainable Agriculture) and Heating and Air Conditioning Technology. We're a signatory of the American Colleges and Universities President's Climate Commitment, having completed our Climate Action Plan in January 2012, and served as a pilot institution in the AASHE STARS program, receiving a Silver rating. Our sustainability programs involve dedicated groups of faculty, staff, students and community members working to create a more sustainable campus and district.