

Laney College



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Laney College First In The Nation With Training Program To Support Energy Sustainability Goals

(OAKLAND, CA) – As California prepares to meet its 2020 Zero Net Energy (ZNE) goals, Laney College and a consortium of utility and industry partners are leading the state and nation in preparing a skilled workforce of High Performance Building Operations Professionals (HPBOP) capable of enabling commercial buildings to produce as much energy as they consume.

Laney College recently launched the first training program in the nation for achieving zero-net-energy in commercial buildings with an initial student cohort completing a 96-hour pilot course to significantly reduce energy consumption and minimize greenhouse gas emissions by generating as much energy as they receive from the grid over the period of a year.

Commercial buildings are responsible for 20 percent of California's electricity usage. SB350, the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2016, doubles previous energy efficiency requirements for commercial buildings, a mandate that requires ZNE in 50 percent of California's nine billion square feet of commercial floor space by 2030. A highly qualified building operator workforce, such as HPBOP, is integral to achieving this mandate.

"This public and private partnership between Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas & Electric, and San Diego Gas & Electric, leverages the capabilities of Laney's new Building Efficiency for a Sustainable Tomorrow (BEST) Center," said Peter Crabtree, Laney's Dean of Career and Technical Education. "Through the BEST Center, we're developing energy efficiency and building science education and training curricula for adoption by community colleges nationwide."

"We are proud to illustrate our stewardship in workforce development and training in an area that is critical to help California meet statewide requirements for building efficiency," said Laney College President Tammieil Gilkerson. "This is yet another example of how Laney students and faculty are making an impact in the community, state, and nationwide."

Laney's comprehensive curriculum was endorsed statewide by stakeholders from academia, the investor-owned utilities, and industry leaders in the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and building automation system sector. One of those endorsements comes from the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) California.

"BOMA California endorses Laney College's innovative HPBOP training program because it responds to our objectives and mission for addressing advanced industry-recognized workforce credentials in the renewable energy, energy efficiency, construction, and utilities sectors," said BOMA Chair of the California's Energy Committee, Carlos Santamaria. "It is only through the training of both new and incumbent workers that we will be able to transfer this much-needed skill set to others in the building operations workforce."

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Jim Caldwell, statewide sector navigator for the Energy, Construction and Utilities industry sector of the California Community Colleges' Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy initiative, emphasized the need for this program.

"Evolving high performance buildings to ZNE is a high-growth area for strategic middle-skills jobs throughout California and the nation," Caldwell said. "Programs like HPBOP are a win-win-win; the state will be better positioned to meet its ZNE goals, employers get the skilled workers they need, and workers are able to increase their skills and earning power."

Pamela Wallace, director of the BEST Center at Laney College, reported that pilot participant feedback was positive.

"All participants who supervise employees said they would recommend them to take the training, and 100 percent of participants said they would refer colleagues to the training as well," said Wallace.

Short-range plans call for additional HPBOP incumbent-worker training programs at Laney College, Sacramento City College, Mt. San Antonio College, and at various state buildings in Sacramento. Caldwell said that by the end of the 2017-2018 academic year, the team anticipates having a national HPBOP certification that also serves new workers.

"Our long-range goals are to expand the current training to a comprehensive two-year degree program with which other colleges can align or adopt," Caldwell said.

Located in the heart of Oakland, Laney is one of four colleges in the Peralta Community College District. Laney offers over 100 high-quality academic and career technical education programs to an estimated 13,000 students. To learn more about Laney College visit, www.laney.edu.

The BEST Center (Building Efficiency for a Sustainable Tomorrow) at Laney College supports faculty & staff of public, post-secondary career & technical education programs in HVAC, building automation, building performance and facilities/energy management. It receives base funding from the National Science Foundation. For more information, go to: www.bestctr.org.

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