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White House Announces New Solar Training Network

The Solar Training Network will build a diverse and qualified solar workforce to meet soaring labor demand over the coming decade

WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 20, 2016— The White House today announced a new program, led by The Solar Foundation, with the National Association of Workforce Boards serving as a key partner, to help train more Americans for careers in the rapidly expanding solar workforce. The \$2.1 million Solar Training Network is funded by the [U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative](#) under the [Solar Training and Education for Professionals](#) (STEP) funding program.

The Solar Training Network will help build the infrastructure to meet President Obama’s 2015 commitment to train 75,000 people for careers in solar by 2020. The program will enhance and expand solar training resources and connect employers to qualified applicants.

For solar job seekers, the Solar Training Network will improve access to solar training, resources, and careers. For employers, it will increase the quality and diversity of the solar workforce and establish nationally consistent training standards.

“As the number of solar jobs increases dramatically each year, the Solar Training Network will help give job seekers the training opportunities they need, while helping employers gain access to qualified candidates,” said **Andrea Luecke**, President and Executive Director of The Solar Foundation.

The Solar Training Network will build upon the successes of the Department of Energy’s Solar Instructor Training Network (SITN) program and prepare even more Americans for careers in solar. The Solar Training Network also will facilitate new research to increase understanding of the solar labor market, industry needs, costs, and potential savings associated with training the installation workforce.

The Solar Training Network is led by The Solar Foundation. The team also includes:

- National Association of Workforce Boards
- American Association of Community Colleges
- GRID Alternatives
- Florida Solar Energy Center
- Solar Energy International
- Solar Energy Industries Association



“As the U.S. continues its push for greater energy production domestically, solar will play an important role,” said **Ron Painter**, president and CEO of the National Association of Workforce Boards. “NAWB is pleased that local workforce boards across the U.S. are working with employers to skill their workforce in solar technologies. We look forward to working with The Solar Foundation to expand our knowledge of the field and increase the number of qualified workers available in the industry.”

“As a growing number of students seek careers in the solar industry, AACC is pleased to be a partner in the Solar Training Network, which will support community colleges as they meet workforce demands through high quality training and employer connections,” said **Jen Worth**, Senior Vice President, Workforce and Economic Development at the American Association of Community Colleges.

About the SunShot Initiative

The [U.S. Department of Energy SunShot](#) Initiative is a collaborative national effort that aggressively drives innovation to make solar energy fully cost-competitive with traditional energy sources before the end of the decade. Through SunShot, the Energy Department supports efforts by private companies, universities, and national laboratories to drive down the cost of solar electricity to \$0.06 per kilowatt-hour. Learn more at [energy.gov/sunshot](#).

About the National Association of Workforce Boards

The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is the national voice for Workforce Development Boards, the regional and local business-led organizations that convene and collaborate to reduce unemployment and boost economic development by preparing job seekers and connecting employers with a highly-skilled workforce. NAWB represents approximately 600 business-led Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and 12,000 business and public sector volunteers who sit on those Boards and plan state and local workforce development initiatives and job training programs in their communities.

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