NABCEP News

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Editor: Jane Pulaski

The NABCEP Newsletter highlights activities about its certificants and other stakeholders. There is no fee for this newsletter which is distributed six times/year and published on NABCEP's website.

If you have comments about this newsletter, email Jane Pulaski at janep@irecusa.org.

As always, thanks for your interest in and support of NABCEP.

Jane Pulaski
Editor

From the Executive Director

It's been an enormously busy time at NABCEP. We've moved our office, hired a new operations assistant, welcomed a new board member and a new board chair. I want to make a special note of thanks to Tim and Rex who work in the offices of NABCEP, they handled all the details of our move splendidly and, thanks to their efforts we are now in our new offices.

On the operations side, we had a large number of applications to sit for the September PV and solar thermal certification exams: 426 for PV and 56 for solar thermal. This is indicative of the growth at NABCEP specifically and the solar industry generally. We also announced a new qualification pathway for journeyman electricians that recognized their special expertise as qualified tradespeople. Visit our website for more details and information about the new Alternative Experience Pathway.

In closing I'd also like to thank all those who have sent their good wishes and congratulatory notes to me on my appointment as NABCEP's Executive Director. The support and encouragement that NABCEP receives from the industries we serve is key to our success as an organization.

Special NABCEP Administrative Update: NABCEP Welcomes Don Warfield as its new Chair and Jeff Spies to the Board

The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) is pleased to announce two new appointments.

Don Warfield has been elected to Chair the Board. Don is a long standing NABCEP Board member who joined in 2004. He has worked for BP Solar and predecessor companies for 31 years, and holds the position of Senior Engineer in BP Solar's Global Technology Department. During his tenure at BP, Don has worked in a variety of roles including cell development, operation of the aerospace division, systems engineering manager, product development and management, business development and training. He holds a BS from Mount Saint Mary's College.

In addition to his commitment to NABCEP, Don also serves on DOE's Solar ABCs Advisory Board and is a member of IEC TC82 which is responsible for setting international standards for solar modules and ancillary equipment. He is a long-standing participant in NEC code review activities.

"It's great to have Don on board as Chair," said Ezra Auerbach, NABCEP's Executive Director. "His experience and perspective on the renewable energy business will be hugely valuable as we navigate through this period of industry growth. Don's combination of experience in technology and business development is a huge asset for the organization."

Mr. Warfield says, "I look forward to serving as NABCEP's Chair and working even more closely with NABCEP'S Board and staff. NABCEP's Certification process has a lot to offer our industry as a means of identifying the growing number of experienced and well trained installers, designers and sales personnel who are really making things happen in this rapidly expanding business."

NABCEP is also pleased to announce the appointment of Jeff Spies to its Board of Directors. Jeff replaces Ezra Auerbach, who recently resigned from the Board to take the Executive Director role.

Spies is the Director of Training and Trade Shows for AEE Solar. He has over 20 years experience in sales and marketing, conducting technical training of electro-mechanical technology throughout the US and abroad. He earned a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Michigan State University, and he has appeared as a guest speaker/ panelist at many major solar industry events in the past year including Intersolar and Solar 2009, and will be a panelist at Solar Power International 2009. He also serves as an advisor to solar non-profits including Solar Energy International. His popular "Launch and Grow Your Solar Business" training seminar has been attended by several thousands of solar dealers, prospective dealers, and green job seekers.

"Participating in NABCEP is important," said Spies, "since NABCEP serves a key role in furthering the success of the solar industry. I am honored to assist with the NABCEP mission as I am strongly committed to improving industry practices, maintaining high standards of industry ethics, expanding the availability of quality solar training programs, and helping renewable energy become a mainstream form of power generation."

"We continue to be very fortunate with the caliber of volunteer we attract to the NABCEP Board," said Auerbach. "Jeff's daily experience with people interested in entering the PV industry will bring a unique insight to the organization"

About NABCEP: The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) is a volunteer board of renewable energy stakeholder representatives that includes representatives of the solar industry, NABCEP certificants, renewable energy organizations, state policy makers, educational institutions, and the trades. Each member of the board was chosen because of his or her experience and involvement in the solar energy industry. NABCEP's mission – to support, and work with, the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries, professionals, and stakeholders – is intended to develop and implement quality credentialing and certification programs for practitioners. To learn more, visit www.nabcep.org

About BP Solar: BP Solar is a key business within BP Alternative Energy and a global company with over 2200 employees focused on harnessing the sun's energy to produce solar electricity. This includes the design, manufacture and marketing of quality solar electric systems for a wide range of applications in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors. With over 30 years of experience and installations in over 160 countries, BP Solar is one of the world's largest solar companies and has manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Spain, India, and China. BP Solar is part of BP, one of the world's leading energy companies. To learn more, visit www.bpsolar.us .

About AEE Solar: AEE Solar, founded in 1979 by solar pioneer David Katz, is one of the nation's leading wholesale suppliers of solar power systems and renewable energy equipment. AEE Solar has earned an industry-wide reputation for unsurpassed technical and training support, responsive customer service and the widest product selection in the business. To learn more, visit www.aeesolar.com

Rex Manchester: New NABCEP Operations Associate

Say hello to Rex Manchester, NABCEP's Operations Associate, and the first voice you're likely to hear when you call. He's arrived at NABCEP not a moment too soon.

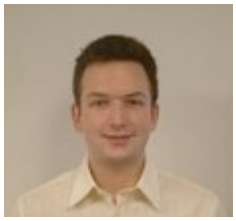
"I respond to voice and email messages," said Manchester.

That's a more than full time job. I know. I spent a few hours at the new NABCEP digs recently, and the phone never stopped ringing.

Manchester graduated from Cornell in 2008 with a B.A. in Economics and with a focus in earth and atmospheric sciences. In fact, Manchester met Timothee Neron-Bancel at Cornell. When Ezra Auerbach, asked Neron-Bancel if he knew anyone for the assistant OM position, he recommended Rex. It's a great fit.

"I have a strong passion for renewable energy and resource conservation efforts and look forward to a career in these fields." In college, I developed a strong interest in climate change caused by carbon emissions and its implications for human health, resources, species extinction, which sparked my interest in renewable energy. My goal is to help promote renewable energy in any way possible and NABCEP has given me the opportunity to do that."

You can reach Rex at rmanchester@nabcep.org, or at 518.899.8186.



Entry Level Certificate of Knowledge Program Update: NABCEP's Entry Level COK Program Continues its Stratospheric Growth

In 2005, NABCEP, sensing that individuals who wanted to get into the solar field needed a new entry pathway, launched its Entry Level Certificate of Knowledge Program (COK). The COK exam is coupled with a course, designed by the providers of the exam, that students must successfully complete before taking the exam. Both NABCEP's COK exam and the course design by providers are based of NABCEP's 10 learning objectives which were developed by subject matter experts.

The certificate demonstrates that the student has passed an industry-designed exam and has achieved basic understanding of photovoltaic (solar electric) system design and installation. Although the Certificate by itself does not qualify an individual to install PV systems or hold any promise of employment, students holding this industry-sponsored Entry Level Certificate may find that their employment opportunities are enhanced by starting the job with an understanding of the basic terms and operational aspects of a PV system.

Timothee Neron-Bancel, who joined NABCEP as Operations Manager in January 2009, administers NABCEP's Entry Level COK program.

In just seven months, the program has experienced stratospheric growth—a 29% increase in the number of providers, and a staggering 144% increase in the number of COK certificate holders. Managing rapid growth like this is a challenge for any emerging industry. How is NABCEP handling it?

"Most of my work is helping prospective COK providers understand the program and how they can become providers," said Mr. Neron-Bancel. "We don't really need to market the program; we're responding to inquiries. It's a lot of one-on-one."
In January, there were 83 providers and 1,227 certificate holders. Today, there are 107 providers and more than 3,000 certificate holders, and it doesn't look like it's slowing down. The number of providers has grown steadily since Fall 2005 when the first exams were administered, but it is really the amount of exams administered that has grown exponentially in 2009 as shown by the increase in new certificate holders since January 2009.

"Right now, there are about 10 applications in the queue, which is a lot," said Neron-Bance. "We've been busy, and we've recently moved the NABCEP office, so things are a bit jammed up for the moment."

"Some applicants do a very thorough job, and submit excellent paperwork," says Neron-Bancel. "For well-prepared applications like those, I can turn them around quickly. Then there are other applications that need more review and help for a variety of reasons. The cleaner the application is, the faster it will get approved."Neron-Bancel recommends that any potential provider should first read the Entry Level Packet.

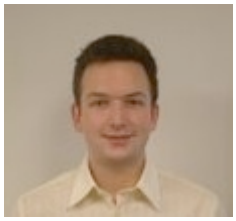
According to Neron-Bancel, there are two main criteria that must be met by an institution wishing to become a COK provider:

1. The institution must be a university, college, community college, or vocational-technical institute accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education ; or offered by any Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee or U.S. Department of Labor approved apprenticeship program; or offered by a training program accredited by the Institute for Sustainable Power or similar accrediting body; and
2. The institution must offer a course, taught by an instructor with at least 40 hours of training in advanced PV, which covers the 10 learning objectives with an

interactive teacher-learner structure to prepare students for the Entry Level Certificate of Knowledge exam.

So what advice does Neron-Bancel offer to prospective COK providers?

"Work with seasoned professionals from the PV and education fields when developing training programs. ," he said. "Offering the COK exam is the icing on the cake. Often providers seem more worried about becoming providers rather than developing a solid program. Develop programs that can meet current and future needs for training and once your program is up-and-running, contact us about becoming a COK provider.



Continuing Education/Recertification Update, *by Timothee Neron-Bancel*

Following Solar Success 2009 held at the ASES 2009 conference, we wish to remind providers and prospective installers that continuing education credits have been registered with NABCEP for current NABCEP Certified Installers to use during their re-certification.

For prospective installers applying to sit for the solar PV or solar thermal certification exam and wishing to fulfill their "board-recognized training" requirement, continuing education credits will be accepted but they are not the only type of board-recognized training available.

According to Section 3.2.3 of the Candidate Information Handbook, some type of training/education is required for achieving this certification. It is recommended that applicants look for training courses with Institute of Sustainable Power (ISP) accreditation (i.e., Midwest Renewable Energy Association), or similar accreditation.

NABCEP will accept training to meet entry requirement option (a, b, c, and d) when the training meets the following outcomes:

- A minimum of 40 hours cumulative (can include product training);
- Have a formal training format, with a teacher-learner structure. This implies a connection between a learner and a learning source. It can include classroom time led by an instructor and/or discussion leader. It can also include activities in which a learner is engaged in a planned learning event in which he/she is separated from faculty and other students but where the learner receives some sort of feedback and the learner's progress is monitored. Examples include computer-assisted instruction, interactive video/CD/DVD and/or web site learning;
- Covers core competencies from the PV Installer Task Analysis, including the National Electrical Code® and OSHA safety standards relevant to PV installation

Types of training programs may include but are not limited to:

1. Offered by any accredited university, college, or community college (i.e., Lane Community College, San Juan College);
2. Dedicated independent training programs (e.g. Florida Solar Energy Center, Solar Energy International, Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association, etc.);
3. Apprenticeship training programs (e.g. National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, Department of Labor approved apprenticeship programs);
4. Those approved by State Contractor Licensing Boards; and
5. Vocational/Technical training programs (e.g. Board of Cooperative Educational Services/New York, British Columbia Institute of Technology.

Other News

NABCEP Relocates

On July 20th, NABCEP moved its offices to Clinton Park, NY. Its new, larger headquarters in Suite 102 at 634 Plank Rd in Clifton Park, NY will accommodate the growth that is taking place at NABCEP, and will serve as the central core of NABCEP's activities.

We're planning an open house in September. Stay tuned for details. With operations being re-centralized in New York, new staff members are being added to the team, like Rex Manchester, NABCEP's new Operations Associate. As always we can be contacted by phone at - 1.800.654.0021, and by email at info@nabcep.org

Where in the world is NABCEP?

If you were at the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair in Custer, Wisconsin, or at PV America 2009 in Philadelphia in June, perhaps you saw NABCEP's booth and staff presenting information at the NABCEP booth. NABCEP's booth will be at Solar Power 2009 in Anaheim, CA from October 27-29, and the board will meet on Wednesday, October 28th. If you will be in Anaheim for Solar Power 2009, and would like to help out with the booth, let Rex know. It's a great way to meet and educate people about the value of NABCEP.

NABCEP is the national certification organization for professional installers in the field of renewable energy.

NABCEP issues voluntary certification credentials to those qualified professionals who satisfy eligibility requirements established by the Board of Directors.

NABCEP certification is not a professional license issued by a government agency, and does not authorize a certificant to practice.

NABCEP certificants must comply with all legal requirements related to practice, including licensing laws.