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Highlights of KREC's Economic Development Forum

On November 17, KREC held its *Economic Development Forum on Renewable Energy in Kentucky* on the campus of Berea College. A total of 68 speakers and attendees from a variety of backgrounds brought their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges of building a renewable energy economy in Kentucky. The forum was co-sponsored by the Tennessee Valley & Eastern Kentucky Wind Working Group, the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, the Kentucky Department for Energy Development and Independence and Energizing Kentucky.



Berea President Dr. Larry Shinn.

Berea College President Dr. Larry Shinn welcomed attendees to the forum and spoke about the importance of developing a clean energy economy and Berea's efforts to promote sustainability and environmental stewardship. Cam Metcalf, Executive Director of KPPC, then introduced Dr. Len Peters, Kentucky Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Environment, who spoke about Governor Beshear's strategic energy plan and the opportunities for developing biomass industries in the Commonwealth.

A total of 15 forum speakers covered a variety of topics. Dr. Kimberly Jensen and Dr. Chad Hellwinkle from the University of Tennessee and the national 25x'25 Alliance presented an overview of energy policy and climate change scenarios that might impact the agricultural sectors and economies of the U.S. They also presented key findings from a recently published study titled *Implications of Energy and Carbon Policies for Agriculture and Forestry Sectors*, including results for Kentucky. The full study and Kentucky data sheets can be found on the [25x'25 website](#).

Kate Shanks from Kentucky's Department for Energy Development and Independence, Division of Renewable Energy, presented a study that examined the factors that are driving the renewable energy industry. Her presentation took a close look at Kentucky's energy policies and the potential for expanding biomass production and creating local jobs.

Danny Isaacs from the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), discussed the organization's efforts to expand economic opportunities for Kentucky's 54 Appalachian counties. The organization

provides training, funding and research to help develop a strong and diverse economy for the region while promoting environmental sustainability.

Greg Faulkner from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), presented an overview of the organization's mission to be a strategic partner for sustainable economic development in Appalachia. ARC provides services to 13 states and 420 counties in the region. A major part of ARC's focus is to develop the Appalachian region's energy potential to increase the supply of locally-produced, clean energy, and to create and retain jobs.



Attendees took advantage of several opportunities to share information and discuss ideas during the forum.



Andy McDonald, Director of the KY Solar Partnership, discussed workforce development at the forum.

Eastern Kentucky University's Center for Renewable and Alternative Fuel Technologies Director Dr. Bruce Pratt, and George Campbell from General Atomics, presented an overview of their partnership to develop a commercial biomass to biofuel industry in Kentucky. From the center's estimates, Kentucky could realize economic benefits of 1.4 billion dollars and more than 4,500 new jobs by establishing commercially-viable production, harvest and transportation infrastructures.

The forum successfully presented an informative and comprehensive look at how renewable energy policies, business and research partnerships, funding opportunities and workforce development could benefit the Commonwealth by attracting investments and creating "green jobs" as we make the transition to a clean energy economy.

Attendee evaluations from the forum included some excellent suggestions and observations, as well as positive feedback...

"All in all, one of the most interesting conferences I have been to. Very nice mix of topics & well organized."

"The workforce development information was very useful and exciting to hear. KPPC reps were very nice and welcoming."

"Forum nicely complements work my own agency is trying to promote."

The forum was a carbon-neutral event. Carbon offsets were purchased from the [Appalachian Carbon Partnership](#).

Kentucky Company to Launch Solar Panel Manufacturing Plant

From amnews.com

Alternative Energies Kentucky LLC, will start manufacturing solar panels in Danville soon after the assembly line is installed in mid-December. The owners of the Boyle County startup business say that getting in on the ground floor of green energy will help make their unique operation a success in Kentucky.

Company owner and founder Troy Lay of Harrodsburg said the company, which will assemble and install the panels, already has nine employees and will expand to about 25 total jobs to start. The line will produce about 75 panels per day, seven days a week once it gets started.

Lay said the company will be the only manufacturer of photovoltaic panels in Kentucky and one of only a handful in this part of the country. "What we're doing is really unique to the entire United States," Lay said. "What we've already achieved in getting a line in place is something a lot of people have wanted to do or tried to do."

Read the [amnews article](#) online.

MACED Releases Report on Clean Energy Jobs in Kentucky



The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) has released its latest published report, *Building Clean Energy Careers in Kentucky*.

The comprehensive report surveys recent studies about the job opportunities in renewable energy and energy efficiency in Kentucky and focuses on the role of workforce development as part of an overall approach to a clean energy economy. It also highlights the importance of a coordinated workforce development strategy built on solid information that maps emerging career pathways in the sector, and underscores the importance of policies that build bridges to new training opportunities for low-income, low-skilled Kentuckians. The [full report](#) is available on MACED's website.

Kentucky New Energy Venture Fund - *Start-Up Kentucky*

Through the [Kentucky New Energy Venture Fund](#) (KNEV), Kentucky is making an effort to grow alternative fuel and renewable energy companies in the Commonwealth. The fund supports the development and commercialization of alternative fuel and renewable energy products, processes and services across the state.

Funding for this program is provided through the Kentucky Department of Commercialization and Innovation (DCI), a branch of the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development.

KNEV will provide support for companies developing and commercializing products in the following areas:

- Alternative transportation fuels produced from coal, waste coal, biomass or extract oil from oil shale
- Synthetic natural gas
- Ethanol produced from food crops or cellulosic ethanol
- Any other fuel that is produced from a renewable or sustainable source



Eligible companies must be Kentucky-based and have 150 or fewer employees and must be developing/commercializing alternative fuel and renewable energy products, processes and services.

Renewable Energy Technologies - Closer Than We Think?

The future for some forms of renewable energy is closer than many think, says the Boston Consulting Group (BCG). Advanced biofuels, concentrated solar power and solar photovoltaic power are on track to change the global energy landscape far earlier than many assume, the firm says in a report released in November.

The report says advanced biofuels, CSP and solar PV will see accelerating adoption and growth and are on track to change the global energy mix far earlier than is often assumed. Their costs are falling rapidly, and they are on the path to becoming cost competitive within the next five to ten years, if not sooner.

"For skeptics, alternative energy has long been more hype than genuine promise. Yet several alternative-energy technologies are approaching inflection points in their development, and the day when they could have a profound impact on the global energy landscape could come far sooner than is commonly assumed," the report states.

The full [BCG report](#) is available online.



Join KREC on Facebook

Please join KREC members and friends at www.facebook.com/KyKREC to share information, discuss ideas, ask questions or post items of interest to the renewable energy community and help get the word out about what's happening in renewable energy and energy efficiency in Kentucky!

Contribute an Article to REnews!

KREC would like to publish your thoughts on renewable energy and energy efficiency in Kentucky in the "Members' Forum". Please send your opinions, articles or news about RE happenings in the Commonwealth to KREC@kppc.org. A short piece is preferable (300 or fewer words work best).

Make your voice heard – we want to give KREC members a forum to spread the word about renewable energy efforts and issues.

KPPC is Kentucky's primary resource to help businesses, industries and other organizations develop environmentally sustainable, cost-saving solutions for improved efficiency. Based at the University of Louisville J.B. Speed School of Engineering, KPPC provides technical information and assistance that is free, confidential and non-regulatory.

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