

You may not know it, but you have another partner.



Workforce Investment Boards & IREC *Partners for the Clean Energy Future*

If you've been at a clean energy industry gathering or a NAWB conference in the last year, chances are you've heard staff of the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) talking about WIBs. And soon you'll hear them talking about WIOA.

What exactly is the connection to clean energy?
And why is IREC talking about WIBS and WIOA?

Since WIBs play the role of connector, linking prospective employees to jobs, when they notice a trend, such as an increase in demand for skilled clean energy workers, they are charged with making sure that demand is met by well-trained, qualified workers.

Not a small task – being on the front lines actually deciding which training programs are best to equip workers for the new, high tech global economy.

You Know this:

WIBs were established and funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIA was reauthorized in July 2014, as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

But Did You Know this: Over the next year or so, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment & Training Administration (ETA) will be developing regulations that are likely to require WIBs to have a much stronger focus on postsecondary credentialing, along with new related performance standards, accountability criteria and an emphasis on building robust industry partnerships.

There's a unique window of opportunity here.

ENTER IREC

The IREC Credentialing Program accredits clean energy training programs and certifies clean energy instructors to the highest industry standards. As an American National Standards Developing Organization, IREC's industry partnerships are an important element of our credentials. IREC-accredited clean energy training organizations know how to build competency-based, quality training programs that match skills with today's and tomorrow's jobs.

Exponential job growth in Clean Energy

- The solar industry employs 173,807 solar workers, representing a growth rate of 21.8% since November 2013, and this number is expected to swell to 210,060 within the coming year.*

- One out of every 78 new jobs created in the U.S. since Census 2013 was created by the solar industry – representing 1.3% of all new jobs.
- There are more than 830,000 jobs related to energy and resource efficiency.
- There are 450,000 jobs in energy efficiency work in the building sector.

We're Working on the Same Issues

Many of the issues in the forefront of discussions at the NAWB Forum are the same issues IREC addresses every day: training so skills match jobs; developing career pathways; and providing education and training programs that enable people to build, stack and move with their credentials. IREC exhibits at the NAWB Forum to showcase the importance of credentials in the exploding clean energy arena, and to strengthen our links to WIBs.

Some WIBs are Already Ahead of the Curve

As managers of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), connecting WIBs with quality credentialed training programs and ultimately their graduates is a win/win for communities, industry and the growing clean energy economy.

Fortunately, state and local WIBs are starting to recognize the value of IREC's strong credentialing programs. Both the states of California and Colorado refer job seekers and training organizations to IREC as a voluntary educational service. They each do this on their website by recommending that clean energy training organizations be accredited by IREC. This voluntary step is an important one we expect other states to emulate as they foster the continued growth of clean energy and its economic impact in their states.

These states are acknowledging the value of a credible credential like IREC, even to stakeholders beyond our industries.

We'd like to see more of this type of partnering. Because everyone wins!

Find out more about how WIBs can work together with IREC and the clean energy industries to protect our communities and consumers.

After all, our mutual goal is to be sure employers and consumers receive the benefits of quality workforce training. And the best way to ensure that is to produce workers trained to the highest standards for quality and safety.

There is nothing that a committed clean energy training industry and a hard working group of WIB professionals cannot do *together.*