



Northern Oklahoma College Partners with Enel Green Power for New Wind Technician Program and Scholarship

Tonkawa, Okla., December 10, 2020 – Northern Oklahoma College is partnering with Enel Green Power, Oklahoma’s second-largest wind operator, to establish a new wind turbine technician program, helping to meet the workforce needs of a growing industry in the state. To support students in the program and honor the memory of a colleague, Enel has also established a scholarship to enable students to pursue a wind energy career.

Thirteen students are currently enrolled in an Introduction to Wind Energy course and other process technology courses as part of the program. Pending accreditation from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, anticipated in 2021, students who complete the curriculum will earn an Associate’s Degree in Process Technology with a wind energy concentration. Graduates will be qualified for work as a wind turbine service technician, by far the fastest-growing occupation in Oklahoma with 64.5% projected growth from 2018-28.¹

Dr. Cheryl Evans, President of Northern Oklahoma College stated, *“We are excited to collaborate with Enel Green Power for this partnership in wind energy in hopes to graduate more students and assist Oklahoma’s efforts to build the skilled workforce required to compete in today’s economy.”*

Enel Green Power representatives coordinated with college officials for over two years to re-establish the wind energy program at NOC. The company assisted in curriculum development, recruited and helped fund a program instructor, connected students with mentors and has facilitated instructional activities such as a virtual wind turbine tour.

“Oklahoma is a key state for Enel Green Power. With dozens of employees, ten wind farms and more projects on the way, we’re proud to do our part to help ensure Oklahoma has a strong, resilient workforce for the modern energy economy,” said **Georgios Papadimitriou**, Head of Enel Green Power in the US and Canada. *“We are especially grateful to partner with Northern Oklahoma College in establishing a scholarship in memory of our beloved colleague, Tim Knutson. Tim was dedicated, earned the respect of his peers and had a keen interest in mentoring colleagues who were new to the industry. We hope this scholarship will help preserve his memory and instill his spirit of hard work and generosity in future generations of Oklahoma wind workers.”*

Timothy (“Tim”) Knutson served as the senior manager of wind project integration at Enel Green Power North America at the time of his sudden passing on June 11, 2018. Tim was responsible for overseeing the development, engineering, construction, start-up and commissioning of all new wind projects in the US and Canada. He previously served as a regional operations manager for Enel, supervising a team of operations and maintenance employees for over 3,000 MW of wind assets.

The Timothy Knutson Memorial Scholarship, newly established through the Northern Oklahoma College Foundation, Inc., is intended to provide two outstanding students in the NOC wind energy program with a \$5,000 annual scholarship, which will cover the majority of tuition and fee expenses of one academic year. In its inaugural year, all 13 students in the program will receive a \$2,000 award. Through the partnership

¹ Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (<https://oesc.ok.gov/sites/g/files/gmc821/f/lmiprojchrtbk1828.pdf>)



agreement, Enel will also provide a supplementary stipend for the program's instructor for the 2020-21 school year to ensure students receive high-quality, dedicated instruction.

"We are very excited about working with our wind industry partners," said Dr. Frankie Wood-Black, Division Chair, Engineering, Physical Science, and Process Technology. "This will allow our students to pursue additional process technology options, and continue to improve the critical work skills for those in our area."

The NOC Foundation serves as a private fundraising organization for NOC, as designated by the NOC Board of Regents. Its primary purpose is to enhance the educational opportunities and the overall environment of NOC.

Northern Oklahoma College, the state's first public community college, is a multi-campus, land-grant institution that provides high quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities and services which create life-changing experiences and develop students as effective learners and leaders within their communities in a connected, ever changing world. The college serves nearly 5,000 students annually on the home campus in Tonkawa, branch in Enid, NOC/OSU Gateway Program in Stillwater, online, and the University Center in Ponca City. Of these students about 60% receive financial aid and/or scholarships. Over 80% of NOC students complete their degree with zero debt. NOC is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and offers associate degrees in three general areas: Arts, Science and Applied Science. The associate degree fulfills lower-division course work which is applicable towards a bachelor's degree.

In Oklahoma, Enel Green Power operates ten wind farms across the state including Thunder Ranch (298 MW), Red Dirt (300 MW), Rocky Ridge (150 MW), Chisholm View I & II (300 MW in total), Origin (150 MW), Osage Wind (150 MW), Little Elk (74 MW), Goodwell (200 MW) and Drift Sand (108 MW). The company's overall investment in Oklahoma amounts to more than \$2.7 billion since 2012.

Enel Green Power in North America is a leading developer, long-term owner and operator of renewable energy plants with a presence in 18 US states and one Canadian province. The company operates around 70 plants with a managed capacity of over 6 GW powered by hydro, wind, geothermal and solar energy.