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## OIT Offers Renewable Energy Systems Degree

Oregon, United States [RenewableEnergyWorld.com]

In June of this year, the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) graduated its first student with a Bachelor of Science in Renewable Energy Systems, the first such degree in North America. The school set up the program to keep up with the industry's growth in the state.

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-- Lita Colligan, Associate VP for Strategic Partnerships, OIT Portland

Currently, there are 55 students enrolled in the Renewable Energy Systems Degree Program, which is located on the university's East Portland campus and also in Klamath Falls. Graduates of the program will be prepared to enter fields including solar photovoltaics, wind, biomass, hydropower and geothermal energy, the school said.

"The technology needed to harness natural energy resources is continually improving," said Lita Colligan, associate vice president for strategic partnerships at OIT in Portland. "We now need to keep up with the demand for highly skilled workers who can lead the state, and the entire country, toward a sustainable energy future. OIT is obviously leading the charge in workforce education and training in this highly technical field."

In the past 18 months, six solar energy companies have announced the decision to locate major manufacturing facilities in Oregon. These include Peak Sun, Solaicx, Germany-based SolarWorld Group, SpectraWatt, a new company funded in part by Intel Capital and XsunX. Additionally, Oregon is home to other renewable energy companies such as Vestas Wind Systems, wave energy developer Finavera, and PV Powered.