



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Date: April 1, 2025

Contact: Amy Salamon, Technical Writer

Email: asalamon@r1planning.org | **Phone:** 815-319-4184

Clean Energy Job Fair Discover Info and Connections to FREE Career Training

ROCKFORD, IL – Looking for a career in a growing industry? Come see the training and job opportunities available in the clean energy sector at a job fair hosted by the Northern Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs (CEJA) Hub.

What: Clean Energy Industry Job Fair

When: Thursday, April 17 1:00-4:00 pm

Where: UW Health Sports Factory, 305 S. Madison St., Rockford

Who: Anyone interested in starting a clean energy career

Attendees can explore activities in construction, CNC machining, and solar installation, led by CEJA Hub program partners. They can also learn about program eligibility, financial and academic support, and enroll on the spot.

Employers offering clean energy jobs will be in attendance to provide information on open positions and their requirements, as well as networking opportunities.

CEJA provides free job training in solar panel installation, CNC advanced machinery operations, and weatherization for residents of Stephenson, Winnebago, and Boone counties. Participants receive stipends as they complete training milestones and assistance for barriers such as transportation, childcare, lack of GED, and others.

ABOUT CEJA – Northern Illinois is the recipient of multiple workforce and economic development grants outlined in the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) and administered by the state of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). These programs will train regional residents for jobs in the clean energy industry and help clean energy businesses grow, with a particular focus on communities facing economic barriers and environmental damage. All training is free to participants, includes completion stipends and barrier reduction supports, and assists with job placement. Included in the training is a bridge program designed to develop general employment skills.

The Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program trains people for enrollment in clean energy-related construction and building trades apprenticeship programs. Partners are Hire 360 and Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois. The

Workforce Hubs Program offers training and skill development for entry-level jobs in clean energy-related fields such as solar, energy efficiency, and CNC machining. Partners are The Workforce Connection, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois, Rock Valley College, Awaken Foundation, Zion West Enterprises, and Region 1 Planning Council. The Contractor Incubator Program (expected to launch later in 2025) provides start-up contractors with access to low-cost capital, training and mentoring to build their business, and connections with clean energy-related project contracts. Partners are The Workforce Connection, Think Big!, The Small Business Development Center at Rock Valley College, and Region 1 Planning Council.

#