

IGEN Electric Vehicle Road Trip Creates Partnerships and Advances EV Deployment in Illinois

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ILLINOIS – The Illinois Green Economy Network, alongside the Office of Governor Pat Quinn, recently completed a more than 500-mile journey to advocate electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and raise range awareness.



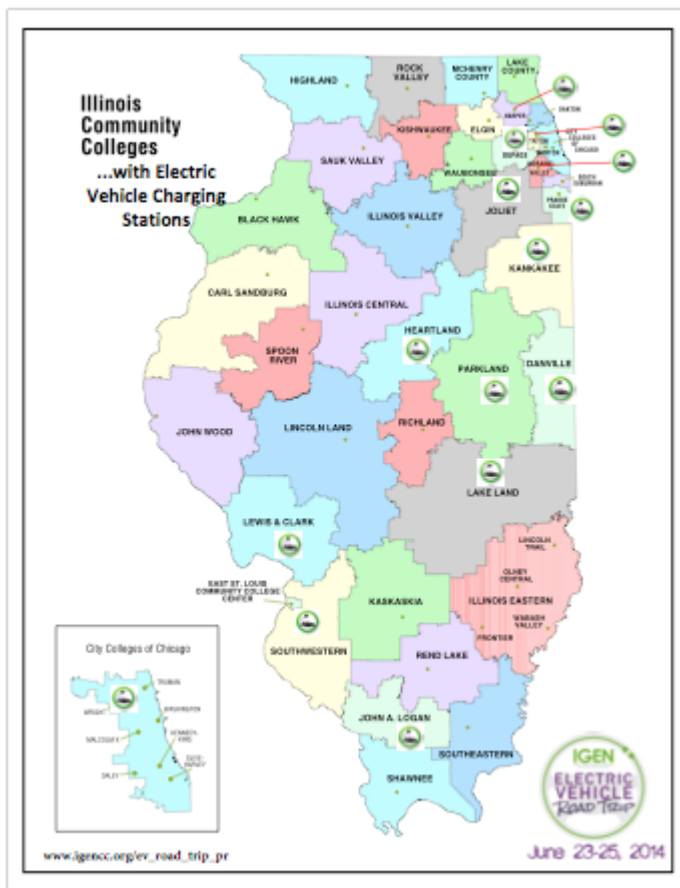
The IGEN EV Road Trip kicked off at John A. Logan College in southern Illinois on June 23 and ended at College of Lake County at the northern extent of the state in Grayslake on June 25. Along the way, the rally-style event utilized 38 electric vehicles and involved approximately 500 people at 11 Illinois community colleges and the Executive Mansion in Springfield.

Representatives of each participating college took turns driving electric vehicles from one community college electric charger to another, showing the public that electric vehicles have advanced rapidly in recent years and Illinois community colleges are leading the way.

Event organizer and Lewis and Clark Community College Director of Sustainability Nate Keener said the group was raising range awareness.

“I often hear people say that EVs aren’t ready yet, but we wanted to show that electric vehicles are great for local and workplace charging, as well as potential long journeys,” Keener said.

Those involved with the road trip also secured commitments from a number of partners



to

advance Illinois EV infrastructure even further. Eaton, an electric vehicle charging station and equipment company, announced plans to donate and install an EV Charge Station in Lincoln, Illinois, strategically placed between Bloomington and Springfield along I-55 and historic Route 66.

Green Wheels USA donated a level two charger at College of Lake County in Grayslake

that helped the EV Road Trip complete the chain from south to north. Eight community colleges signed the Department of Energy's Workplace Charging Challenge Pledge, which seeks to make it easier for people to charge at work.

"Aside from our homes, we spend the most time at work," Keener said. "Why not allow your car to use some of that time productively? You can drive to work and use your battery, plug in when you get to work, and, by the time you're done, your battery is charged again. Home you go, and you don't even use a drop of gas."

The three-day event featured opening remarks from Lt. Governor Sheila Simon in Carterville, Illinois, 13 media events and receptions, unexpected caravans and one special guest passenger from the Illinois Office of Tourism: Mini Abe. An icon used to help promote Illinois tourism, Mini Abe joined the Road Trip to show that electric vehicles and Illinois tourism are a win-win for the local economy.

"We envision an EV highway that extends from Chicago to St. Louis," Keener said. "A big part of that vision includes charging stations in towns like Atlanta and Lincoln on Route 66. With an EV, you can pull into town when you need a charge, and, since you're not spending money on foreign oil, you can support the local economy by spending it in any of the shops along your way."



Event organizers also had important information to share with potential EV Customers. "With a combination of state and federal incentives, consumers can drive the price of electric vehicles down to compare with gas powered cars," said Eric Heineman, Governor's Office Director of Sustainability.

The federal government offers a tax credit up to \$7,500 off the purchase of an EV. Add on the State of Illinois' rebate worth up to \$4,000, and consumers can save up to

\$11,500 off the manufacturer suggested retail price of an EV. There are even incentives from Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to purchase a charge station that will cover up to half of the cost of purchasing and installing a station.

The EV Road Trip received support from local dealers who donated the temporary use of their vehicles for the journey. Monken Nissan, Auffenberg Nissan, Roberts Ford, Mitsubishi, Hove Nissan, Rosen Nissan and Green Wheels USA all provided vehicles for use and even public test-drives at some of the colleges during the road trip.

Chargepoint, an electric vehicle charging station and equipment company, provided free access to several of their charge stations. The event was also coordinated by the Green Governments Coordinating Council and received support from the U.S. Department of Energy, Nissan and the Illinois Office of Tourism.

IGEN is a consortium of all 39 Illinois community college districts across the state working to grow the green economy of Illinois. Its mission is to provide a platform for collaboration among all Illinois community colleges and their partners to drive growth of the green economy.

IGEN's unique statewide cooperative approach leverages the power of a sustainability network with the deep community connections of individual colleges to expand deployment of clean energy technologies, increase employment opportunities, improve environmental and human health, foster community engagement, and accelerate market competitiveness.

For more information about IGEN, visit www.igencec.org. To learn more about L&C's sustainability efforts, visit www.lc.edu/green. For more information, please contact Keener at (618) 468-2782 or nkeener@lc.edu.

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