

# NGRREC Faculty Fellows Continue to Focus on Research and Education

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**GODFREY** – With support from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) and the leadership at Lewis and Clark Community College, Illinois is closer to reaching its goal of producing 25 percent of the state's total energy from renewable sources by the year 2025.

IGEN awarded L&C grant funding for the newly installed solar array at L&C's Godfrey campus. The array is a 54 kW system that is expected to provide an estimated 70,000

kWh annually, which is nearly the amount of energy consumed by seven average households in one year. It includes 310 thin-film solar panel adhesive strips on the roof of Trimpe and two “trackable” solar panels on the lawn next to the building.

“We were honored to have earned this grant from IGEN to increase renewable energy on our campus,” said L&C Director of Sustainability Nate Keener. “L&C has a goal of campus carbon neutrality by 2058, and this will certainly help us continue to make progress toward that goal.”

Thin-film solar panels are a lightweight alternative that allows solar to be installed on roofs that otherwise might not be able to withstand additional weight, while “trackable” solar panels mechanically follow the sun’s daily path across the sky to capture the most light possible. Wegman Electric Company installed both systems this year.

“Wegman Electric Company is proud to have been selected as the electrical contractor for the Lewis and Clark Community College Solar Panel project,” Wegman President Terry M. Buhs said. “It is important to be on the forefront of developing energy options. L&C is a leader in implementing new energy technology in our region, and Wegman is an important partner in assuring that L&C maintains that leadership role.”



L&C also received funding from IGEN and DCEO to purchase a fuel cell trainer, which is an educational piece of equipment that actually shows how a fuel cell converts natural gas into electricity. The fuel cell trainer complements the 5kW fuel cell donated to L&C by Ameren in April 2014. The Fuel Cell Trainer was purchased from JBH Technologies, and will be utilized in pre-engineering, smart grid, physics and other courses.

“JBH Technologies has been involved in helping schools throughout Illinois establish alternative energy training,” said JBH President John Heitman. “We recently provided Lewis and Clark with a Fuel Cell Trainer. We also provided six Illinois community colleges with training equipment for the new smart grid power distribution system currently being installed in Illinois. All this came through the IGEN program. At JBH Technologies, we try to stay at the forefront of technology with regard to training at community colleges.”

IGEN is a president-led consortium of all 39 Illinois community college districts. IGEN was formed in 2008 with support from the Illinois Governor’s Office and Illinois DCEO. Its mission is to provide a platform for collaboration among 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 how much power this system is producing, visit the [www.lc.edu/green](http://www.lc.edu/green), or the Illinois Green Economy Network website at [www.igence.org](http://www.igence.org).