



[Solar, Wind Latest Additions to Green Education](#)

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There's an old saying that goes, If you think education is expensive, try ignorance. While it might be true that college does cost, there are some cheaper options out there. And more of those options are including solar and wind degrees from the less expensive community college route. This article from CNN Money says that more of the more-affordable two-year schools are offering degrees in the ever-growing renewable energy sector: In part the increase in demand at junior colleges is due to the recession: Many students can no longer afford pricey four-year colleges and are opting to attend two-year programs instead. And the schools are about to receive a surge of funding thanks to the Obama administration, which has placed the country's 1,200 two-year institutions at the heart of its recovery strategy, allocating \$12 billion over the next decade to help modernize the system.

Already green partnerships between big industry and junior colleges are popping up around the country: GE has donated a small wind turbine to Mesalands Community College in Tucumcari, N.M., and has plans to hire graduates of the school's new wind energy technician program. And at Milwaukee Area Technical College, local industrial giant Johnson Controls (JCI, Fortune 500) is building a 2,500-panel solar education farm where students can learn to become photovoltaic installers and designers. In helping put together the programs, companies are also building a pipeline of potential employees. Johnson Controls' headquarters is nearby, and it's looking for thousands of people, says Joseph Jacobsen, Milwaukee Area Technical's associate dean of environmental studies. The baby boomers are retiring, and it's going to need new employees. The article goes on to say that the increase in people getting the green technical degrees is also building a demand for instructors with practical experience who can teach what this next generation of workers needs to know. Of course, these programs join some of the biodiesel and ethanol degrees already out there (see my post about the masters degree in bioenergy at the University of Illinois from March 23, 2009).