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Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Emphasizes Values Of Career And Technical Education School Partnerships During Essex County-Bloomfield Tech's Green Energy Academy Visit

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Innovative Collaborations Empower Students To Focus On Career Interests

Trenton, NJ – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today continued her tour of New Jersey's Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools with a visit to the Essex County-Bloomfield Tech's Green Energy Academy. Essex County's Vocational-Technical School has a collaborative arrangement with Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, allowing students to pursue specific career interests in-depth.

"The field of green energy is a major growth industry focused on creating sustainable energy solutions to address some of our global energy problems," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "These real-world collaborations bringing together business partners, higher education, and career programs in CTE schools present fantastic opportunities for students to pursue a competitive career path following high school."

The Bloomfield Tech Campus of the Essex County Vocational Technical Schools was recognized as a 2009 National Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education. Students attending the school receive a full-service education encompassing the best of the academic and Career and Technical Education components. Skills learned provide the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Students have the opportunity to select an area of concentration from four career clusters, which include Business Technology, Visual Arts & Digital Communication, Building Trades Technology, and the Green Energy Academy. Ninth-grade students rotate through various classes in an exploratory program that provides exposure to several concentrations from different career clusters each marking period.

The four-year *Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics* (STEM) program at the Green Energy Academy is focused on energy generation and distribution, alternative energy, principles of sustainability, design and systems theory. Essex County Vocational-Technical School has a collaborative arrangement with PSE&G, which has provided funding to help launch the Green Energy Academy. Further, the partnership with Richard Stockton College of NJ provides the students with the opportunity to participate in college-level courses in sustainability.

The partnership with PSE&G is in its sixth year and offers the participating students firsthand knowledge of the growing green energy field. The Green Energy Academy has a variety of partnerships and outside learning opportunities for the participating students, in addition to those with PSE&G and Richard Stockton College.

Lt. Governor Guadagno was accompanied on her visit to Essex County Vocational-Technical School's campus by Rochelle Hendricks, Secretary of Higher Education, Marie Barry, director of the state Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education and Dr. Frank Cocchiola, Jr., Interim Superintendent of Essex County Vocational Technical Schools. The state and county officials met with students, educators and representatives of the school and the academy's partners to learn more about the green energy program.

"Clearly our concept of higher education has changed to allow students who have chosen a career path in high school to tap into the expertise of our colleges provided through partnerships such as the one between Richard Stockton College and Essex Vo-Tech," said Higher Education Secretary Rochelle Hendricks. "The business and higher

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education collaboration in the Essex County green energy program will prepare our students well for new twenty-first century technical career fields.”

Additional school representatives who took part in the tour included Eric Love, Principal; Anthony Abbaleo, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; John P. Dolan, Jr., Director of Career and Technical Education; Jeanne Ziobro, Green Energy Instructor; and Michael Maresca, Green Energy Instructor. Representing business partner PSE&G were Sally J. Nadler, Manager Workforce Development and Scott Trapp, Director of Talent Acquisition and Diversity Outreach.

There are career and technical education programs offered throughout New Jersey’s 21 county vocational high schools and in more than 100 traditional high schools. More than 90,000 secondary students participate in CTE programs, with approximately 30,000 of them attending the 21 vocational schools. Approximately 70 percent of the state’s vocational-tech students attend college. Every county features partnerships with business, industry, colleges and universities.

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