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www.westernenergytraining.org

WETC APPOINTS DIRECTOR

Helper, Utah. The Western Energy Training Center (WETC), located in Helper, UT, today announced the selection of Steven Burge as its Executive Director.

Burge assumes his new post immediately, managing the curriculum, faculty and former Willow Creek coal facility in Helper. WETC was created earlier this spring through a \$2.7 million Department of Labor Grant, which was supplemented by an appropriation of \$1.1 million from the Utah legislature. The monies resulted from a collaborative effort between the College of Eastern Utah, Southeast Applied Technology College, Utah Department of Workforce Services, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, the Southeastern Utah Energy Producers Association (SEUEPA) and participants from the energy industry.

“The Western Energy Training Center Board of Directors is pleased that Steve Burge has accepted the Directorship position,” said Sam Quigley, President, WETC Board of Directors. “Steve was instrumental in helping the College of Eastern Utah receive both the Federal Grant and the State appropriation. He brings to this position his personal dedication to education and a commitment to professionalism. He also understands the importance of a cohesive partnership between industry and education that will be necessary to make WETC a world class training facility.”

“I appreciate being given this unique opportunity to be part of a team that is, in essence, building an educational institute from the ground up,” said Burge. “The WETC Board is made up of dedicated individuals from industry, education, and government. We are all committed to creating a top-notch training program that will help satisfy the increasing training needs of the area and help create the well-paying, year-round job opportunities that are needed throughout rural Utah.”

“Energy independence for America will require us to develop every source at our disposal,” said Sam Quigley of SEUEPA, who serves as President of the Board of Directors for the Center. “The role this center can make to that effort was instantly recognized by our federal representatives Senators Orrin Hatch and Robert Bennett and our Congressman Jim Matheson, all of whom helped us navigate the appropriate federal channels for support.” Quigley also cited State Senator Mike Dmitrich, State Representatives Brad King and Patrick Painter and Carbon County Commissioners Bill Krompel, Mike Milovich and Steve Burge as advocated for the effort. “We were able to generate support at every level,” he said. “That sort of federal, state, local and bipartisan support suggests to me that the potential of the Center is great and apparent.”

Burge is a Carbon County Native. He was the valedictorian of his graduating class from both Carbon High School and the College of Eastern Utah. After graduating *summa cum laude* with a BA from the University of Utah, he also received a Juris Doctor from the University of Utah School of Law.

While practicing law in Price, Burge began teaching criminal justice at the College of Eastern Utah and served as the Director of the Criminal Justice program for six years. Burge is currently serving as a Carbon County Commissioner. He and his wife, Denette, have four children.

Q & A for May 11, 2006

The following information will help you better understand where WETC stands today and where it is going in the immediate future. Please contact Steve Burge, Director, at steven.burge@ceu.edu or 435-613-5273.

- 1. What is WETC?** The Western Energy Training Center, located at the Willow Creek Mine site just north of Helper, is an industry-driven, innovative training facility that will cater to the growing needs of industry in the region. It is being funded in part by a \$2.7 million grant to CEU from the Department of Labor as part of the President's High Quality Job Growth Initiative. The Center will offer a wide array of short-term intensive training by industry experts, as well as certificate and eventual degree programs in such areas as Process Technology, for instance. The Board of Directors that is driving the current efforts to develop WETC consists of key figures from local energy sectors, together with a representative from each of the following entities: College Of Eastern Utah, Southeast Applied Technology College, Workforce Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. For more information, please see the WETC press release.
- 2. When Will Courses Begin?** A curriculum committee is presently establishing a slate of courses that will commence as early as June. A full slate of courses will be available by Fall. Once the new staff described below in paragraph 3 is on board, the coursework plan will be finalized and extensive marketing will commence. The purchase contract for the Willow Creek property was just recently executed making it possible to finally move full speed ahead.
- 3. What Types of Courses Will Be Offered Initially?** The Initial focus at WETC will be in the areas of mining, trucking, safety, and specialized programming. Through industry input and support, and the grant funding, the Center promises to enhance existing programs and broaden the course offerings. We are finalizing dates for a five-day Precision Maintenance course that will be taught by a highly touted instructor from Western Wyoming Community College. In addition, yesterday we received a generous offer from a company to offer a three day program consisting of specialized OSHA courses in accident investigation, the control of hazardous energy, and a series of construction industry courses (like excavation, cranes, electrical, tools, etc.). The tentative date for the courses is July 5-7. More information about the courses will be forthcoming as final plans are made. If you have course ideas, are interested in teaching courses, or know someone who wants to teach, please let us know. Don't hesitate to call if you have suggestions, needs, or comments.
- 4. How can you Help?** One of the key benefits of the DOL grant is the requirement that industry participate in the training center. WETC needs industry to take an active role in helping it establish programs. It will need donations of equipment and money to make sure that it can get off the ground with quality programming that will make it self sustaining over time. If you or your company can help support WETC, please contact us. In early June we will have a better grasp of the specific types of equipment we will need to establish high-quality classrooms, shops, and training labs. We will be sending out updated information at that time.

Thanks for your support. The Board and staff of WETC look forward to working with each of you.

PRICE CONSORTIUM LANDS FEDERAL, STATE MONIES TO LAUNCH WESTERN ENERGY TRAINING CENTER

- College of Eastern Utah, Southeast Utah Energy Producers Combine Efforts
- Consortium Attracts \$4 million in State, Federal Funds, Purchases Facility

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Price, Utah- March 28, 2006- Culminating two years' dealings with the Department of Labor, a consortium of local business and education interests today announced the establishment of the Western Energy Training Center in Price. The efforts of the group, directed through the College of Eastern Utah and Southeast Energy Producers Association, have led to the purchase of the Willow Creek coal mine site in Helper as the main campus for programming focused on improving the labor supply and technical expertise needed by the energy industry.

"There is a labor shortage in the energy industry that is projected to only deepen as the current employee base moves into retirement and demand continues to grow," noted Dr. Ryan Thomas, President of the College of Eastern Utah (CEU). "Our mission as an educational institution, coupled with the region's history and future prospects for energy development of virtually every type, led us to pursue this opportunity. Our goal at the Center is to help create the good-paying, year-round energy jobs so badly needed throughout rural areas of the West," he said.

Thomas said the Southeast Utah Energy Producers Association (SEUEPA) was an early force in pursuing the concept, noting that the initial Board of Directors for the Western Energy Training Center has strong SEUEPA representation. "The public-private representation by the College and SEUEPA was, I feel, critical to our ability to attract these start-up monies. SEUEPA will assure that industry's needs are foremost at the Center." Thomas said that several sub-committees have been formed to begin work on curriculum, faculty and operations for the facility, with hopes of accepting the first applicants sometime mid-summer 2006, noting that several companies have already expressed interest in offerings at the Center.

In addition to the \$2.75 million in Department of Labor funds, the group was also successful in garnering \$1.1 million in State of Utah funds during Utah's 2006 legislative session. The state funds went toward the purchase of the facility.

"The key ingredient that fell into place for us was Foundation Coal's donation of what is essentially a turn-key facility," said Steve Burge, Interim Director of the Center. "Though we were fortunate to see the incredible responsiveness of our elected officials, the donation of three modern, working buildings of a combined 38,000 feet on 270 acres for literally pennies on the dollar of appraised value for Foundation Coal's facility is the linchpin of the entire concept. We intend to make this a community asset for generations here." Burge said initial course offerings currently being considered include skill certification, safety awareness and regulatory compliance, equipment operation and repair, emergency response and business and management. "We also intend to bring in specialists that can focus on the increasingly specialization required by emerging technologies," he said. "The curriculum must be market driven if it's to be relevant to industry."

Officials point out that the Center will extend beyond the extraction industries to include renewables, transmission and delivery components to the energy industry.

"Energy independence for America will require us to develop every source at our disposal," said Sam Quigley of SUEPA, who serves as President of the Board of Directors for the Center. "The role this center can make to that effort was instantly recognized by our federal representatives Senators Orrin Hatch and Robert Bennett and our Congressman Jim Matheson, all of whom helped us navigate the appropriate federal channels for support." Quigley also cited State Senator Mike Dmitrich, State Representatives Brad King and Patrick Painter and Carbon County Commissioners Bill Krompel, Mike Milovich and Steve Burge as advocates for the effort. "We were able to generate support at every level," he said. "That sort of federal, state, local and bi-partisan support suggests to me that the potential of the Center is great and apparent."

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