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UWSP energy education program wins IREC Innovation Award

Wisconsin's K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP) at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) has been recognized by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC).

KEEP received IREC's 13th annual Innovation Award for the creation of its guide and course, "Doable Renewables: An Energy Education Revolution." The council invited state and local governments, K-12 schools, nonprofit organizations and community groups to submit entries. All winners were recognized at IREC's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. IREC is a nonprofit organization located in Latham, New York, whose mission is to accelerate the sustainable utilization of energy sources and technologies.

KEEP staff developed the activity guide to include lessons that address key concepts in renewable energy education while promoting renewable energy literacy and further ensuring that students receive a thorough and productive energy education.

"For over ten years, KEEP has been working with teachers, administrators and energy resource managers to increase and improve energy education in Wisconsin schools," said Jennie Lane, director of KEEP. "Renewable energy education is a major part of our work and with the energy climate the way it is in Wisconsin right now, the more people we can influence, the better off we will all be."

According to Lane, each teacher that goes through the course has the ability to reach an additional 20 to 200 students per year. Because Wisconsin does not have fossil fuel resources, coal, oil and natural gas are shipped in from other states. KEEP addresses this concept to teachers throughout the state and allows teachers to demonstrate to their students why renewable energy resources are a viable option for generating energy in the future.

Many of the activities in the Doable Renewables Activity Guide are applicable not only in Wisconsin but nationwide, according to Lane. KEEP also has a multitude of services and support materials beyond the guide for students of every grade level (K-12). Other states often use the guide as a model for their renewable energy education programs.

For more information about KEEP and its Doable Renewables curriculum, visit www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/keep or call (715) 346-4770.