

Careers in Photovoltaics Start with Training by the Solar Program Staff of Colorado Mountain College

Job placement in the solar energy field, particularly in photovoltaics, has become more like "job selection" for graduates of the Colorado Mountain College Solar Program.

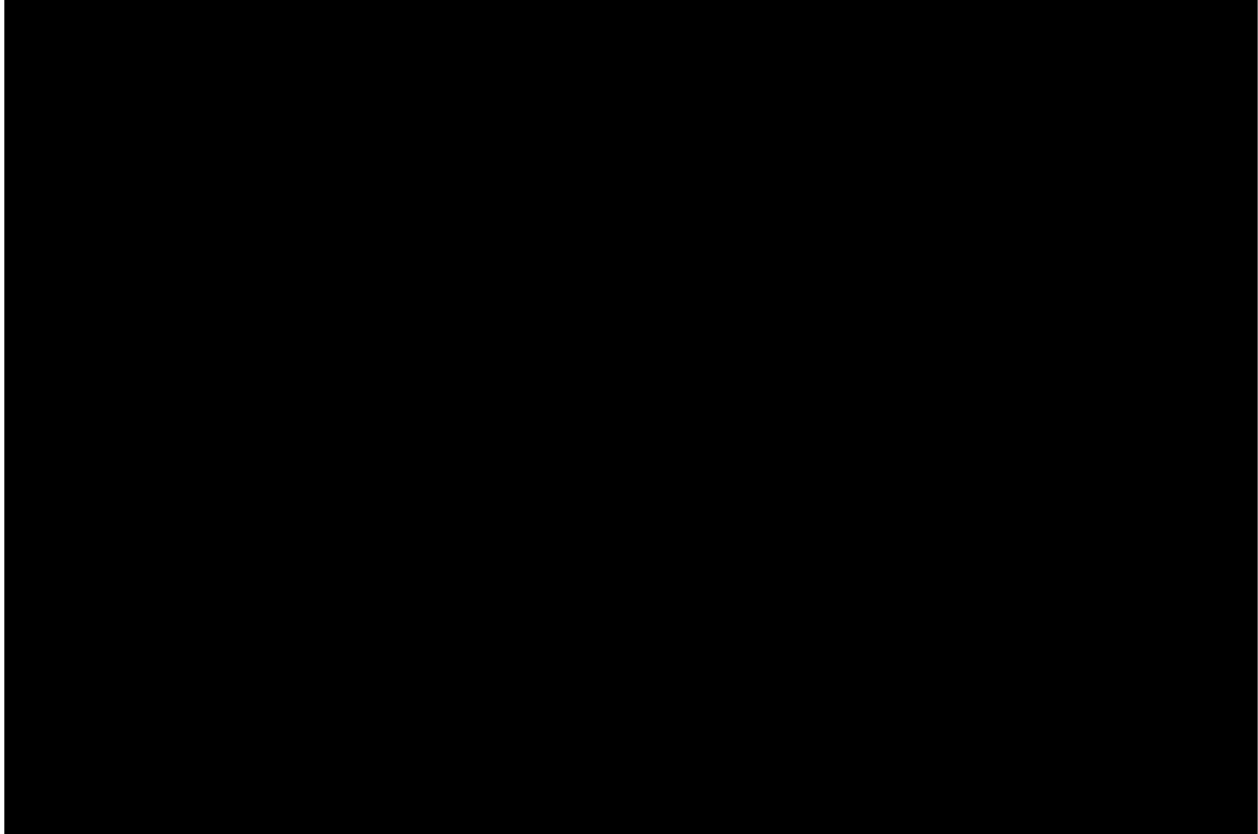
In fact this year, the 1987-88 school year, there are more job opportunities than students. CMC Solar Program graduates have the luxury of "selecting" which solar option to pursue.

And work in the photovoltaics field is leading the charge.

One CMC Solar graduate recently was hired as an assistant manager in a national photovoltaic company's regional office in Denver. Three other CMC Solar graduates were hired by diversified New England solar companies that are designing, installing and selling PV systems. Other CMC graduates have started their own PV businesses,

including catalog sales. This job success trend in photovoltaics supports the national reputation for excellence, earned by the Colorado Mountain College Solar Program. Numerous national and international publications consistently rate the CMC Solar Program and the photovoltaics division as one of the best in the nation.

Since 1981 the Colorado Mountain College Solar Program has offered a unique combination of photovoltaics skills training. The strength of the program lies in combining classroom design experience, hands on installation and on going



maintenance and troubleshooting.

Full time team instructors Steve McCarney, Ken Olson and Johnny Weiss have developed the PV course and co-authored a concise training manual, "Photovoltaics-- A Manual of Design and Installation for Practitioners." Facilities at the Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus, located eight miles south of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, exhibit both solar heating systems and 10 working PV systems.

Short and long term PV courses are offered throughout the year. Customized training also is available on request.

The CMC instructors are certified state vocational educators with varied backgrounds including contracting, architecture, engineering, and adult education.

More than 300 individuals have completed the Colorado Mountain College photovoltaics training courses. Ten design/installation courses consisting of 80 hours of training have been completed in Colorado and Alaska.

As part of course work, more than 40 stand alone PV systems have been installed including generator hybrids, refrigeration, lighting, pumping and home power. Many of these installations have been in remote areas typical of today's stand alone PV market. In some cases travel to these sites has included dogsleds, snow machines, skis, llamas, backpacks and 4WD vehicles.

In addition, day long workshops by the Colorado Mountain College instructors have been well received at the Renewable

Energy Technologies Symposium and International Exposition (RETSIE) and the annual meeting of the American Solar Energy Society (ASES).

Trainees in the Colorado Mountain College program have included licensed electricians, solar technicians, energy efficiency professionals, PV industry trainers and researchers.

Groups and organizations sponsoring CMC trainees include the PV industry, Peace Corps, Department of Defense, World Health Organization, Agency for International Development, state and local governments, university and national solar energy laboratories.

The Colorado Mountain College staff has worked with trainees from Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia, Argentina, Great Britain, Switzerland, Qatar, the Phillipines, Tanzania, Australia and, of course, the United States.

In addition the CMC instructors have authored numerous technical papers published by the International Solar Energy Society and the American Solar Energy Society. Magazine articles on the CMC Solar program have appeared in PV International, Solar Age, Energy Report, Mother Earth News, and Energy Talk.

To supplement the regular school year Solar Program, Colorado Mountain College also will be offering a special two week photovoltaic training class in the summer of 1988.

For Additional information on the Colorado Mountain College Solar Program and photovoltaics training, contact the CMC

Education

Solar staff at 303-945-7481, or write them at 3000 County Road 114, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601.

Editor's Note: I was part of a PV seminar with Steve McCarney and Johnny Weiss at the 1987 American Solar Energy Society's annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. They have comprehensive knowledge and experience in PVs, and more importantly they can TEACH. If you are considering solar or photovoltaics as a career the CMC is one of the best places to start. Thanks to the CMC crew for the wonderful photos.
--Rich

