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## North Dakota Petroleum Council's Oil & Gas Education Program

Contract number: G-019-A

Phase II Report: July 19, 2010

Applicant: North Dakota Petroleum Council

Principal Investigator: Mr. Ron Ness, President

## **Program overview**

The objective of the North Dakota Petroleum Council's Oil & Gas Education Program is to increase North Dakotans' understanding of the oil and gas industry. This program has three primary components which provide targeted education to students, teachers, parents, policy makers and the general public: Energy Career Awareness Partnership (ECAP), Teacher Education Seminar, and Oil & Gas *Tidbits*. The following includes a brief explanation of program component activities from January 1 – June 30, 2010.

### **ECAP**

ECAP activities during the second semester of the academic year tend to focus on career and development fairs and working with school counselors to prepare juniors and seniors for post-secondary training. ECAP serves as a means to distribute materials about careers, post-secondary training, safety programs, and general energy information through school activities. Approximately 2,600 students in grades 9 – 12 had some level of contact with ECAP during the last six months. Our materials were also visible to approximately 500 school teachers and administrators. The program is coordinated by Kent Ellis, owner of Aurora Energy Solutions, school-to-work coordinator for Bismarck Public Schools, and former teacher.

ECAP was involved in 35 events in various locations across North Dakota between the months of January and June 2010, including: local energy information, school career fairs, community education, adult career education, career/training fairs, business development, youth workforce, advisory groups, and career expos. Additionally, an ECAP booth was part of the Boy Scouts of America Northern Lights Council centennial celebration held in June. Boy Scouts had an opportunity to learn about the oil industry and play a game that simulated drilling for oil in the Bakken region.

ECAP has been an important tool in helping foster better energy education outreach and bringing the information directly to students. ECAP is effective in demonstrating the value of North Dakota's energy industry and the career opportunities that exist.

### **Teacher Education Seminar**

Held in June, the four-day Teacher Education Seminar expands participating teachers' knowledge of the North Dakota oil and gas industry, from its prehistoric beginnings to the final product. The seminar covers various aspects of the industry including history, geology, physics, engineering, production issues, refining and marketing, employment needs, and the impact of oil tax on state tax revenues, policy

decisions and the state's budget surplus. Educators had numerous hands-on activities which included touring an oil rig and a refinery.

Based on feedback and course evaluations, participating educators gained a better understanding of the North Dakota oil and gas industry components. Teachers better understood all of the stages of oil exploration, production and refining, and gained an awareness of the many industry professionals that play a part in moving oil from the ground to the consumer. They developed a factual basis/background of the substantial cost and risk required to explore, produce and refine a barrel of oil. Their gained understanding of the industry's impact on North Dakota, paired with the knowledge of what skills companies are looking for in employees, allows them to educate students on the possibility of a career in the oil and gas industry. The educators' hands-on experiences and completed activities provided them a foundation for integrating similar activities into their classrooms based on understanding how subject areas such as geology, science, math and history are applied daily in North Dakota's oil and gas industry.

This year's seminar was completed by 40 educators. They were given a pop quiz on industry facts the first and final days of the seminar. Comparing the quiz results showed a substantial increase in knowledge of the oil industry. Participants also evaluated the seminar and were asked to submit a lesson plan detailing how they will implement what they learned into their classrooms. Comments on the event were very positive and complementary of the presenters and the information provided.

## **Oil & Gas *Tidbits***

The third element of the Oil & Gas Education Program is our quarterly newsletter titled Oil & Gas *Tidbits*. This publication is designed to provide short articles on the use of new technology and other items of interest to North Dakota policy makers, educators and industry members to educate them about the oil and gas industry. *Tidbits* is distributed to more than 1,375 individuals and is also available online. Two issues have been published during the first six months of 2010.

## **Looking ahead**

As the third phase of this project gets underway, several new goals are at the forefront of plans for the Oil & Gas Education Program including:

- increasing outreach to educate the general public on our oil industry's benefits and importance,
- evaluating the need for additional education and outreach for students and teachers to use in the classroom, and
- engaging industry members in building partnerships to increase oil and gas industry presence and educational efforts within the state.

With the completion of phase two, the Oil & Gas Education Program has proven to be a valuable tool for educating teachers, students, industry members, key stakeholders, policy makers and the general public. This program has reached more than 60,000 teachers, students, school administrators and parents since its inception in 2002. Financial support from the Oil and Gas Research Council has been instrumental in the development and implementation of the Oil & Gas Education Program. In addition, there have been many partners, along with Petroleum Council members, who have played important roles in sharing our message and educational efforts during the first phase.

Education is critical to the future success of the energy industry in North Dakota. The growing demand for workers makes programs such as ECAP and the Teacher Education Seminar even more important as we educate students about the wide variety of job opportunities in North Dakota's energy industry.

## **Oil & Gas Education Program Budget**

*Phase II: January – June 2010*

### ECAP Expenses

Salary/benefits (6 months)	\$ 11,825	
Travel	\$ 1,200	
Lodging	\$ 60	
Food	\$ 615	
Conference fees	\$ 200	
Printing	\$ 100	
<b>Total ECAP Expenses</b>		<b><u>\$ 14,000</u></b>

### Teacher Seminar Expenses

Printing/postage/material production	\$ 2,195	
Facilities/food/lodging	\$ 4,282	
Transportation	\$ 1,475	
Energy education materials/handouts/kits	\$ 475	
Facts & Figures	\$ 834	
Prizes/honorariums	\$ 250	
Administrative costs (10 days staff time)	\$ 6,000	
<b>Total Seminar Expenses</b>		<b><u>\$ 15,511</u></b>

### Oil & Gas Tidbits Expenses

Printing/postage/mailling	\$ 2,103	
Administrative costs (two days per issue staff time)	\$ 800	
<b>Total Tidbits Expenses</b>		<b><u>\$ 2,903</u></b>

<b>TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES</b>		<b><u>\$ 32,414</u></b>
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*Respectfully submitted by Mr. Ron Ness, North Dakota Petroleum Council President*