Looking to expand your experience outside of the classroom? The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has a number of resources available for undergraduate students, including competitions, internships, and career-planning information to help you navigate the education-to-employment pathway in energy. The following is a partial list of the undergraduate activities and programs that are offered. For a complete listing, visit our Energy Education and Workforce Development website: ***energy.gov/eere/education***

Competitions

Better Buildings Case Competition

Gain practical experience and critical skills while working to solve real-world issues affecting energy efficiency in buildings. In this annual competition, interdisciplinary teams of university students develop creative solutions and showcase their ideas to a panel of judges, allowing the teams to interact directly with industry and government leaders. Become a part of the next generation of engineers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in clean energy.

eere.energy.gov/buildings/betterbuildings/casecompetition

National Clean Energy Business Plan

The National Clean Energy Business Plan Competition is designed to build regional networks of student-focused business creation contests across the country. Six regional organizations were funded under the competition to hold clean energy business plan competitions, which are open to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students. Winners of the regional contests will receive $100,000 to fund their business plans and a chance to compete in the national contest.

eere.energy.gov/commercialization/natlbizplan.html

National Collegiate Wind Competition

The National Collegiate Wind Competition is a forum for undergraduate college students of multiple disciplines to investigate innovative wind energy concepts. Teams must design and construct a lightweight, transportable wind turbine that can be used to power small electronic devices, and are judged on the members' understanding of the issues posed to them, their communication of potential solutions, and their ability to promote constructive dialogue.

eere.energy.gov/wind/windcompetition

National Geothermal Competition

The National Geothermal Student Competition (NGSC) challenges leading research universities to position geothermal energy as a contender in the global race for clean energy. Each year, the NGSC provides students with invaluable experience in the field, while promoting cutting-edge research that can advance the geothermal sector. With the guidance of a faculty mentor, interdisciplinary student teams will focus on developing a geothermal enterprise that could lead to breakthroughs in their home states.

go.usa.gov/WKE5

Solar Decathlon

The Solar Decathlon is a high-profile university competition that promotes public awareness of highly efficient building technologies and zero-energy homes using solar energy. The competition challenges collegiate teams to design, build, and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient, and attractive. (Note: This competition takes place every 2 years, with the next competition occurring in 2015.)

SolarDecathlon.gov

EcoCAR 2 Challenge

This 3-year competition challenges students to re-engineer a crossover vehicle to reduce fuel consumption and lower emissions by using advanced vehicle technologies, such as plug-in hybrid technology and diesel technology. (Note: This challenge is already underway; check out the teams' progress at the link below.)

ecocar2.org

Internships

Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI) Program

Are you interested in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics career? The Office of Science offers research experiences for undergraduate students at the DOE National Laboratories. Interns in the SULI Program will perform research under the guidance of laboratory staff scientists or engineers, assisting on projects related to ongoing programs. There are internship openings at most of the U.S. national laboratories.

science.energy.gov/wdts/suli

DISTANCE-Solar Program

The DISTANCE-Solar Program encourages minority students to pursue careers in science and technology by supporting research associates and professors/principal investigators from selected schools as they perform renewable energy research projects during the academic year. The program is funded by the Solar Energy Technologies Office and has the dual goal of placing underrepresented minorities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics programs, while helping to make solar cost competitive.

go.usa.gov/WKUm

Clean Cities Internships

Each year, students are able to work with the Clean Cities coalitions to increase awareness of alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technologies and their potential for petroleum reduction. Interns work with coordinators and stakeholders in the community to plan events, analyze data, research markets, design websites, and promote initiatives through social media and public relations.

eere.energy.gov/cleancities/toolbox/internship_program.html

EERE Student Internships

EERE offers exciting student volunteer internships throughout the year in its Washington, D.C., headquarters. These volunteer internships provide students with the opportunity to learn through direct experience about the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

eere.energy.gov/office_eere/oe_internships.html

Tribal Energy Program Internships

Looking for a summer internship? The Tribal Energy Program offers technical project internships at Sandia National Laboratories (SNL). There, interns will immerse themselves in collaborative work with SNL's renewable energy staff, Native American tribes interested in renewable systems, and SNL's American Indian Outreach Committee.

eere.energy.gov/tribalenergy/internships.cfm

Industrial Assessment Centers

Engineering students can receive hands-on training and real-world experience in energy engineering and management by participating in DOE's Industrial Assessment Centers. Teams located at 24 universities around the country conduct cost-free energy assessments of small- and medium-sized manufacturers to identify opportunities to reduce waste, improve productivity, and save energy.

eere.energy.gov/manufacturing/tech_assistance/iacs.html

Photos: (front, top to bottom) NREL, energy.gov; (back, top to bottom) energy.gov, DOE Pinterest, NREL.

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For more information, visit:
energy.gov/eere/education

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