



Photo by wikimedia commons user lonna22.

A Change in the Wind

Green Energy goals drive economic opportunity

There's a changing landscape for Green Energy. A White House announcement in February committed \$100 million in funding to support low-carbon energy technologies. State and local governments up and down the Eastern Seaboard are committing to clean energy goals, some setting timelines for reaching 100% of energy derived from green sources.

2020 was a banner year for the wind industry. Developers commissioned 16,913 MW, representing an 85 percent increase over 2019, according to American Clean Power's 2020 report.

On March 18, the Chamber will host a Virtual Forum: Offshore Wind Energy. The forum will examine opportunities and impacts for our region. Industry experts will lead discussions on offshore wind energy, including economic development on and off the water, investments in local infrastructure, and workforce expansion and planning.

The forum spans three sessions related to our region. Representatives from Eversource Energy and

Orsted, who are leading the wind project in New London, will provide an overview and updates. Tony Appleton, Director of Offshore Wind for Burns & McDonnell, and Paul Vigeant, CEO of OSW Advisers, will offer economic, engineering, and environmental perspectives. The final session covers State Pier development updates.

"Gaining an understanding of this unique economic driver is essential for eastern Connecticut," said Tony Sheridan, Chamber president and CEO. "Our region has natural assets and a manufacturing base that position us well to benefit from this burgeoning industry. We are pleased to be able to bring together this forum and have conversations exploring this opportunity and the potential long-term impacts."

More details about the event are available at ChamberECT.com/events. Sessions begin at 9:45 a.m. and the forum concludes at 1 p.m. Register to attend individual sessions for \$10 each or for the whole day for \$25.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual Forum: Offshore Wind Energy
Thursday, March 18 | 9:45 AM - 1:00 PM

Young Professionals of Eastern CT Virtual YPsocial: Trivia Night
Thursday, March 18 | 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Virtual Webinar: Access Health CT
Monday, March 22 | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Business After Hours: Virtual Networking
Monday, March 22 | 4:00 - 5:00 PM

Virtual Business Breakfast featuring Governor Ned Lamont
Wednesday, April 7 | 9:00 - 10:00 AM

Tips from the Top: Glendwynn Thames, Deputy Commissioner, DECD
Tuesday, April 20 | 6:00 - 7:00 PM

Virtual Business Breakfast with John Burkhardt, Senior Vice President, Pfizer
Wednesday, May 19 | 8:30 - 9:30 AM

Virtual Business Breakfast featuring Congressman Joe Courtney
Wednesday, June 9 | 8:30 - 9:30 AM

Register for all upcoming events at ChamberECT.com/events.

BELONG

Belong to the region's largest network of professionals representing over a thousand organizations spanning eastern Connecticut and beyond.

Visit ChamberECT.com or call 860-701-9113 to speak to a Membership Manager today.

THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL BENEFACTORS



Young Professionals gather pre-COVID for networking and community service. Connecting socially and professionally has moved online until the Young Professionals of Eastern CT host in-person events again.



Why YP?

Connecting in Young Professionals network offers big benefits

If you are a professional early in your career, or you mentor one, you know there's a lot to navigate. Success in career, community, and life balance requires building a strong foundation of skills and support.

Young Professionals of Eastern CT, a program of the Chamber, has been designed to offer flexible opportunities to engage professionally, connect socially, and build a lasting network.

Targeted to young professionals, 40 or under, who work, live, or serve clients in eastern CT, the group offers networking, volunteer opportunities, seminars with top-level executives, professional development, and some just plain fun social activities.

Meeting people in the same stage of life and career can be limited within a work environment, and especially during the pandemic. The Chamber has found that supporting and retaining talent in eastern CT is best accomplished by having people feel connected to the region and to each other.

Subscribe to the YP newsletter at YPECT.com to keep up-to-date with YP events, news, community events, special offers, and community service.

Mentors and employers, encourage your people to learn more about the Young Professionals network at YPECT.com and help keep them stay connected to the region professionally and personally.

MSMHS Students Gain Career Insights in Conversation with Young Professionals

If you've raised a teenager, or remember being one, you are familiar with the existential dread accompanying career and college planning. Stacy Herr, the Chamber's Program and Event Manager, is helping her high school junior navigate the process, and she brought that perspective to coordinating a conversation on careers with local professionals.

"Kids often think they are locking into a career path for the rest of their lives with the choices they make now," said Herr. "We know that just isn't the case. Most of us look back on our careers with some surprise at all the interesting twists and turns."

Marine Science Magnet High School juniors and seniors heard about career paths traveled by members of the Chamber's Young Professionals and Leadership Eastern CT programs in two sessions February 19 and 23, attended by a total of 70 students.

In the virtual conversation, professionals not only shared their academic choices and first jobs, they shared stories about learning from mistakes and setting new career goals as an ongoing process.

"The panel members opened the students' eyes to different job possibilities, the importance of building relationships and working with others, and the idea that not everyone has to take a traditional path to find the job they really want in life," said MSMHS Assistant Principal Colleen Hardison.

The ten panelists, who joined students for one or both sessions, represented a broad range of careers in eastern Connecticut, or transferable to locations around the globe. General Dynamics Electric Boat's Mike DiFranco was the only professional who said he followed a straight line from his college career planning to his job in engineering.

Highly transferable skills in areas such as effective communication, organization, and relationship building have been key to success across diverse positions. Panelists shared experiences from their different industries that draw on their talents and education in ways they may not have anticipated.

Networking, said these active members of the Chamber groups, is a key component of building a successful and personally enriching professional life. Living that belief, all the panelists provided email addresses so students could reach out with more questions, and further, offered to serve as mentors for students interested in their fields.

The candid conversation opened the door to discussions on financial compensation, the rewards of working in the nonprofit sector, and other questions students don't always get to ask adults. As they engaged with panelists in the 45-minute sessions, students felt fears about making the wrong career choice dissipate, understanding career paths are not set in stone.

Anyone interested in hosting a panel or supporting career education as a volunteer on our Education Council, contact Stacy Herr, sherr@chamberect.com

Our Thanks to Our Panelists

- Jeremy Barstrom**, Design Build Supervisor, General Dynamics Electric Boat
- Emma Bayer**, Supervisor of Visitor Services, Mystic Seaport Museum
- Mike DiFranco**, Design Build Supervisor, General Dynamics Electric Boat
- Julie Gehring**, Director of Mentorship & Student Development, Werth Institute - University of Connecticut
- Kayla Hedman**, Marketing Director, Fishers Island Lemonade
- Alexis Kahn**, Cash Management Sales Manager, Chelsea Groton Bank
- Wilmer Lambert**, Engineering Specialist, General Dynamics Electric Boat
- Kaiser Leuze**, Guest Experience Manager, Mohegan Sun
- Heather-Renae Paul**, Community Support Program & Mental Health Waiver Program Unit Director, Reliance Health Inc.
- Konrad Poznanski**, Draftsman, General Dynamics Electric Boat