



News Release

Community College Faculty Nationwide Attend the BEST Center Building Automation Workshop hosted at Siemens and Funded by the National Science Foundation

Oakland, California, November 19, 2015 – Siemens and the BEST Center (Building Efficiency for a Sustainable Tomorrow) located at Laney College and funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) are bringing together community college faculty from 18 different states around the U.S. to attend a Building Automation Workshop at the North American headquarters of Siemens' Building Technologies Division, located in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. These faculty members will learn about Siemens' latest building automation control systems so they may better instruct students seeking to learn how to improve building efficiency and make a contribution to the fight against climate change.

Participants in this professional development workshop will tour a teaching lab at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Instructors will examine the types of HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) and automation control system labs and equipment that best facilitate delivering building science curriculum. The skills required by modern building technicians have evolved to include computer proficiency, analytical thinking and the ability to understand the interrelationships between building systems to manage high performance buildings.

Peter Crabtree, Dean of Career Technical Education at Laney College and Principal Investigator for the BEST Center had this to say regarding the workshop, "We are pleased to assemble this group of instructors who can teach technicians not only how to manage high performance buildings but ensure that the buildings are safe and healthy environments that also maximize occupant comfort and employee productivity."

It is estimated that up to 50% of the current skilled workforce is nearing retirement age. This creates a more urgent need to fill the impending gap of technicians qualified to manage over 6 million commercial buildings in the U.S. Dr. Elnora Webb, President of Laney College stated, "Collaborating with corporate partners like Siemens is a very effective way of leveraging funding by the National Science Foundation to expand the capacity of community colleges nationwide that are offering this type of vital training to help grow the nation's building technician workforce."

Steve Hoiberg, Global Education Market Manager for Siemens' Building Technologies Division commented, "We are excited to share the latest innovations in building automation technology with community colleges so they, in turn, can train their students to apply these systems' capabilities to the buildings they will soon manage. As buildings represent about 40% of this country's total energy consumption, this is extremely important to mitigating the nation's environmental impact."

The BEST Center is helping community colleges nationwide build and expand building technician education in HVAC and building automation control as their primary objective. Engaging industry furthers this goal by keeping educators apprised of cutting edge technology in their field. BEST Center also works actively to increase the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) pipeline of high school students coming into this field.

For more information go to: www.BESTCtr.org; www.Siemens.com/buildingtechnologies; www.Laney.edu

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