

SUNATION ENERGY AND SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTNER TO BATTLE THE LABOR SHORTAGE

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Through the combined efforts of SUNation CEO and founder Scott Maskin and Suffolk County Community College President Dr. Ed Bonahue, an innovative approach to combat the labor shortage in the renewable energy space has been developed for Long Islanders.



Inaugural 2023 SCCC solar installer class

With its inaugural class in the Fall of 2022, [SCCC's](#) Solar Installer Certificate Program features an entry-level short curriculum coupled with a paid externship and guaranteed job interview upon graduation of the 50-hour class.

"To my knowledge, there are no programs of its kind operating," said Maskin of SUNation, a Pineapple Energy company. "I've become fatigued with the endless discussions surrounding the shortages of labor in our space."

The program was created to better prepare students for the tasks and responsibilities required of today's solar installers. Students who graduate will not only obtain necessary training and certifications for the role, but will have a better understanding of the expectations of this type of career path. Over the course of four weeks, students can then make a more informed decision if working as a solar installer in the renewable energy space is the right fit for them.

The ability to try something new without investing excessive amounts of time and energy is just one of the features that separates this program from the longer and more costly government and trade school options.

The key differentiator for the SCCC certificate program is the 16 hours spent working alongside different levels of field personnel on actual job sites. This includes getting up early, working through all types of weather, working on a roof, and becoming familiar with proper safety procedures. Integrated with OSHA safety training is knowledge of tools, job site protocol, and related products. Following the 16 hours of field work, the student will have experience of a typical work day under their belt and can decide if they choose to move forward, along with receiving feedback from their instructor on their skills and drive.

This innovative approach at educating and preparing new solar installers all started with one discussion with the newly hired president, Dr. Bonahue, and the rest is history.

“Suffolk is in the business of serving business,” said Dr. Bonahue. “When a company like SUNation comes forward with an urgent and significant workforce need, we will find the win-win partnership that provides students with the training that leads to good jobs and companies with the talent they need to grow.”

Within three months a curriculum was developed, training materials were gathered, and with [SUNation Energy](#) Vice President of Special Projects Brian Karp as the course’s instructor, the program was ready to go. The first class’s 15 spots filled quickly and by the end of the 4-week program, all students successfully completed the class.

“Dr. Bonahue’s team really stepped up to the plate and remain highly motivated to continue this public-private partnership,” said Maskin. “It was a simple pitch. The students are the crops, I’m the farmer, and SCCC is the field. Let’s grow a new way of building a workforce.”

Of the 15 graduates, five are now gainfully employed with SUNation and other students have been offered positions elsewhere. All are on their way to bright futures in the highest growth sector globally.

This is a topic front and center in many discussions with the Hauppauge Industrial Association of Long Island (HIA-LI), of which Maskin and Dr. Bonahue are both active board members. The Long Island Innovation Park represents over 55,000 employees in all sectors and drives 13 billion in regional revenue. The HIA-LI continually fosters these types of partnerships.

“The HIA-LI applauds SUNation Energy and Suffolk County Community College for developing this collaborative approach to workforce development specifically focused on augmenting Long Island’s energy sector,” said Terri Alessi-Miceli, president and CEO of the HIA-LI. “By embedding on-site field work into the students’ program, employers will have greater confidence that they’ll be bringing new hires who’ll truly be committed to the job. HIA-LI is pleased to be able to foster cooperative initiatives like this one.”

The goal for the solar installer program moving forward is to offer three to four courses annually.

Enrollment for the spring class, beginning March 28, 2023, is already filling up and registration information can be found on SCCC's website.

"This resource will fill my growth needs for years to come," said Maskin. "Now we have to get the word out there."

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About SUNation Energy

SUNation Energy is the local solar and energy expert trusted by over 7,500 Long Islanders since 2003 for professionally installing the highest quality equipment with an exceptional customer experience. Locally owned and operated in Ronkonkoma, NY, SUNation Energy offers the complete in-house sustainable energy experience including residential and commercial solar installation, community solar, roofing, backup battery storage, EV charging, and more. Their not-for-profit corporation, SUNation Cares, also provides the gift of free electricity for life to Long Island Veterans and their families. Through the company's consistent efforts towards excellence, SUNation has been named Long Island's Best Solar Business 13 years in a row and was named among Long Island's Top Workplaces for 2022.

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