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Thursday, October 22, 2009

## Ohio University to host ARC conference on new energy jobs

Thirteen-state conference features Governor Strickland, Senator Voinovich, Duke Energy CEO

Oct 19, 2009

Ohio University and Gov. Ted Strickland will host the multi-state Appalachian Regional Commission conference titled "New Energy. New Jobs. New Opportunities for Appalachia," Oct. 26-28 at Baker University Center.

"It's not every day that we have the governor host a conference here that highlights work that's so important to this university and region," said Scott Miller, director of energy and environmental programs at the Voinovich School for Leadership and Public Affairs. "And this is a national conference. It's a national stage and allows us to trumpet the important work that's going on here."

Specifically, Miller points to Ohio University's role working with traditional energy production -- coal, fuel cell and pipeline corrosion research -- as well as clean energy technologies, including the university's research on biofuels and its work with local solar and wind companies. Miller will moderate one of the panels on best practices in the new energy economy.

This year, Ohio -- one of 13 states with portions designated Appalachian -- was selected to host the conference. The governor chose Athens and Ohio University.

"Ohio University and Athens represent the bridge between Ohio's inventive past and our innovative future, and also illustrate the importance of a quality, affordable education in economic development," said Strickland, "Companies like Diagnostic Hybrids and Dovetail Solar & Wind are demonstrating the good work being done in Athens in high-growth industries like clean energy and biosciences. I am proud to highlight the hard-working and innovative workers in Athens, and I know this community will be warm and welcoming hosts for this conference."

Along with the governor, attendees will include Ohio Sen. George Voinovich, U.S. Representatives from Ohio Zach Space and Charlie Wilson, Ohio State Rep. Debbie Phillips and keynote speaker James Rogers, president and CEO of Duke Energy.

Highlights of the conference will include a welcome and opening remarks from Strickland and Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Co-chair Anne B. Pope and a wide array of panel sessions, including "New Ventures in the New Energy Economy -- Growing Green Entrepreneurs and Jobs," moderated by Ohio University alumnus David Wilhelm, this year's alumnus of the year, founder of Adena Ventures venture capital company and former chair of the Democratic National Committee. Carole Womeldorf, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, will moderate "Wind-Powering Appalachia."

The conference also will include site visits to Ohio University's fuel cell research facility, biomass gasification research facility and electrostatic precipitation research facility, as well as the Innovation Center and Ecohouse.



Gerardine Botte, associate professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering in the Russ College of Engineering and Technology, shows off the fruits of her fuel cell research to Ohio Senator Jimmy Stewart and Gov. Ted Strickland during a previous visit the two made to Ohio University.

Photographer: Rick Fatica

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Off-campus site visits also will take place at local alternative energy businesses Third Sun Solar & Wind Power and Sunpower Inc.

Each year, the Washington, D.C.-based ARC hosts the conference in one of the federally defined Appalachian regions, which includes 32 Ohio counties. The ARC is a federal-state partnership program dating back to the 1960s that works on promoting economic development in Appalachia, a 420-county region in 13 states along the Appalachian Mountain chain.

Cost to attend the conference is \$150. [Click here](#) to view a full agenda. Online registration closes Oct. 16, but on-site registration will be accepted as space permits beginning at 1 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 26.

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