

CCRI and Rhode Island Energy partner to launch free utilities career exploration program

WARWICK, RI (*April 17, 2025*) – The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) and Rhode Island Energy are teaming up to offer a free exploratory program designed to give participants a window into the growing utilities industry.

Introduction to Utilities – free to anyone who meets eligibility requirements through funding from Rhode Island Energy – is a seven-hour introductory course that provides participants with foundational skills and knowledge to explore career pathways within the utilities sector, specifically with Rhode Island Energy.

The program begins in May at the Woonsocket Education Center, and no experience in the utilities industry is necessary to enroll. Those interested in Introduction to Utilities should fill out CCRI's online inquiry form at ccri.edu/workforce and complete the interview and screening process before being admitted into the program. Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED, have a driver's license, be authorized to work in the U.S., and be able to pass a drug test. The program is free, but space is limited.

"This partnership underscores CCRI's commitment to supporting workforce development across Rhode Island," CCRI Interim President Rosemary A. Costigan said. "By working with Rhode Island Energy, we are creating opportunities for individuals to explore careers in utilities, a sector essential to the growth and stability of our communities."

"The future of Rhode Island lies in our youth, and we're excited to take part in this effort to arm CCRI students with skills and curriculum that they can then turn into a career," said Rhode Island Energy President Greg Cornett. "We look forward to seeing this program succeed as the students take an interest in a career in utilities, and we work together to shape the next generation of utility professionals."

The utilities sector offers diverse careers, encompassing roles like meter readers, line workers, customer service associates, and engineers (electrical, water, wastewater), among others.

With the utilities sector playing a critical role in powering communities and supporting infrastructure, the partnership between CCRI and Rhode Island Energy aligns with the college's broader commitment to workforce partnerships that support healthcare, education, business, manufacturing, and skilled trades. Through such innovative training programs, CCRI continues to meet the evolving needs of Rhode Island's economy while providing accessible opportunities for residents to build meaningful careers.

In addition to the Introduction to Utilities program, CCRI and Rhode Island Energy are collaborating on a hands-on community project that will provide students in CCRI's Apprenticeship Readiness Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) program with the materials needed to build six [Little Free Libraries](#), three to be made in April and three in May. RIE will work with community partners to identify locations and stewards for the little libraries.

Little Free Library is a nonprofit organization fueled by volunteers who build book-sharing boxes – particularly in underserved urban, suburban, rural, and Indigenous communities – designed to encourage youth to donate books that can be picked up by others in addition to developing better reading habits of their own by exploring new books added to the library. The organization recently celebrated a milestone by launching its 200,000th Little Free Library.

Rhode Island Energy will supply the materials to CCRI students, who will build the libraries, before returning them to Rhode Island Energy to install them in various communities, and work with local organizations to oversee their long-term maintenance, thereby strengthening community engagement and access to literacy resources.

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About CCRI

The Community College of Rhode Island enrolls nearly 18,000 students in credit-bearing degree and certificate programs and an additional 8,500 individuals in workforce development programs and adult education courses annually. With a passionate commitment to students, CCRI provides Rhode Islanders with an outstanding college education that leads to strong learning outcomes, successful postsecondary credential attainment, and robust labor market outcomes. With four campuses across Rhode Island, CCRI offers online, hybrid, and in-person options for students, meeting them where they are and helping them

achieve their educational and career goals. CCRI is a Hispanic-Serving Institution and was named the 2019 Two-Year College of the Year by Education Dive magazine.

About Rhode Island Energy

Rhode Island Energy provides essential energy services to over 770,000 customers across Rhode Island through the delivery of electricity or natural gas. Our team of more than 1,300 employees is dedicated to helping Rhode Island customers and communities thrive, while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future. Rhode Island Energy is part of the PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL) family of companies addressing energy challenges head-on by building smarter, more resilient, and more dynamic power grids and advancing sustainable energy solutions. For more information visit www.RIEnergy.com and stay connected on [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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<https://news.pplweb.com/CCRI-and-Rhode-Island-Energy-partner-to-launch-free-utilities-career-exploration-program>