

The Nuclear Power Institute Programs for Human Resource Development for the Nuclear Industry

Monday 12 May 2014 16:30 (20 minutes)

This paper reports on the programs of the Nuclear Power Institute at Texas A&M University. NPI is a unique partnership of universities, community colleges, industry, high schools and junior highs, teachers and students, government agencies, civic and elected leaders, and communities. NPI's goal is capacity building and developing the next generation of the nuclear workforce by informing and preparing individuals for careers in the nuclear industry, reaching out to schools, teachers and students, and fostering public acceptance and support for nuclear energy. At the baccalaureate and Master's levels, NPI offers a distance delivery program providing technical backgrounds in nuclear power plant technology for students in several engineering disciplines. The curriculum has been developed in collaboration with industry. For technicians/technologists, new two-year programs at the community and technical college prepare students for employment at nuclear power plants in the areas of non-licensed operators, electrical technicians, instrumentation and control, and radiation protection. NPI also has very active outreach programs at the high school and junior high levels that utilize nuclear energy as a means to inform and attract students into science and engineering. These outreach programs lead to a greater understanding of the role and benefits of nuclear energy, and an awareness of the career opportunities in nuclear. Finally, NPI reaches out to communities and families through the Science On Saturday (SOS) program that promotes enthusiasm and interest in nuclear technology. The NPI programs represent an integrated "end-to-end" approach that start as young as kindergarten going all the way through graduate studies. Furthermore, utilizing these capabilities, NPI offers training courses and missions to countries with established nuclear programs and nuclear "newcomer" nations. There is much interest internationally to utilize and replicate these activities to support human resource development for the use of nuclear energy.

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Session Classification: Session 1A - Human Resources and Capacity Building