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'Green economy' career fair on tap in Northampton

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NORTHAMPTON — A number of job, internship and education opportunities will be showcased in the city Wednesday night for those seeking to break into the "green economy."

The Green Jobs and Internships Career Fair will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Union Station Ballroom, at 125A Pleasant St., in downtown Northampton.

Meanwhile, a single-focus job fair held by Innovative Care Partners, a collaborative organization created by the Center for Human Development, Gandara Mental Health Center and ServiceNet, will also take place in Northampton Wednesday.

Innovative Care Partners is seeking to hire 15 additional care coordinators who will be tasked with assisting individuals with complex behavioral and health issues in getting the resources they need.

The fair will run from 3 to 6 p.m. at 131 King St. A bachelor's degree or certified alcoholism and drug abuse counselor is required for the position and candidates who are bilingual in English and Spanish are preferred. Interested candidates are encouraged to bring their resume.

The Green Jobs event is being hosted by the Western Mass Green Consortium and is sponsored by the Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board. Admission is free and open to the public, and free parking is available in the vicinity of the venue after 5 p.m.

"The green economy is very healthy in the Pioneer Valley, in part because of a very strong sustainability ethos that exists here," said Andrew Baker, a board member of the green consortium and special projects coordinator at Franklin employment board. "This is our first attempt at showcasing some of those opportunities."

Jobs and internships in the fields of sustainable building, solar energy and heating, ventilation and air conditioning will be showcased at the fair. Available job postings in the Valley include project managers, administrative assistants, solar electricians, carpenters, construction apprentices and insulation technicians, among others, a press release from employment board said.

Six area colleges and universities will also be showcasing sustainability education and training programs at the fair. Programs range from community college certificates to graduate degrees.

Representatives from Greenfield, Holyoke and Springfield Technical community colleges will be on hand to discuss their renewable energy, sustainability and building technology programs.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst building technology program will be represented, as will Keene State College's Green Building Summer Leadership Institute and the Conway School of Landscape Design.

Baker said he hopes the turnout will be a mix of college-aged students and older job seekers looking for new opportunities.

In addition to the job fair, the green consortium holds "green nights" every Wednesday at the Platform Sports Bar. The organization started holding these informal gatherings in 2008 and are meant to be a casual way to bring together a cross section of people interested in networking with professionals in the field of sustainability.