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## **Candaras Announces Massachusetts Clean Energy Center Grant for Western New England College**

**BOSTON** – Senator Gale D. Candaras today announced that the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) has awarded grants to five organizations, including Western New England College in Springfield, to purchase demonstration and training equipment to prepare students and clients for opportunities in the clean energy sector.

”These grants will help schools and institutions across the Commonwealth prepare Massachusetts residents for rewarding careers while ensuring that our burgeoning clean energy industry has the highly trained workforce it needs to grow and flourish,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles, who chairs the MassCEC board of directors.

“This grant is another example of Western Massachusetts, in this case through our local colleges, leading the way in green technology. These funds will help train young people to hold the good jobs being developed in the green energy sector.” Candaras said, “MassCEC has made an excellent selection with their choice of Western New England College.”

In January 2010, MassCEC solicited proposals from organizations to develop programs that would train individuals for clean energy jobs and create a pipeline of skilled workers in the clean energy sector. Included in the awardees was Western New England College which will receive \$75,000 for a Biomass Demonstration Project. The school will use the

funds to install a demonstration wood pellet burning system that will incorporate testing equipment for measuring system efficiency, emissions, and the effects of pellet material selection on system performance. The equipment will support new courses in bioenergy and complement existing green engineering courses in wind and solar energy.

“These projects will provide essential real-world learning platforms for clean energy training in this potentially high-growth area in the clean energy industry,” said MassCEC Executive Director Pat Cloney.

Through its Workforce Development Program, MassCEC is positioning the Commonwealth as a leader in the clean energy market by developing a well-trained, educated workforce that meets industry needs and provides opportunities for individuals and businesses seeking to enter the industry. The Workforce Development Program supports education and training opportunities that bolster economic growth and align with the Commonwealth’s energy goals.

Created by the Green Jobs Act of 2008, the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) has as its mission to foster the growth of the Massachusetts clean energy industry by providing seed grants to companies, universities, and nonprofit organizations; funding job training and workforce development programs; and, as home of the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, supporting the installation of renewable energy projects throughout the state.