

'Green' job sector off to good start

June 11 2009, Angela Carter, New Haven Register, Conn.

THE CLEAN TECHNOLOGY SECTOR -- where the "green" jobs are found -- is very much in its infancy, but off to a "strong start," according to a first-of-its-kind report released Wednesday.

PewCharitable Trusts, a nonprofit in Washington, D.C., that aims to improve public policy, took a detailed look at the number of businesses, jobs and patents generated by the clean-energy industry from 1998 to 2007, as well as the amount of venture capital invested from 2006 to 2008.

The research covered all 50 states and the District of Columbia and was the first to produce a "hard count" of green jobs, rather than using estimates or projections.

"Jobs in the clean-energy economy are growing faster than jobs in the overall economy," said Lori Granger, interim deputy director of Pew Center on the States, adding that the sector is poised for "explosive growth."

In Connecticut during the study period, 857 clean-energy businesses emerged as well as 10,147 jobs in the sector. While the number of clean-tech jobs grew by 7 percent over the decade, the state's overall labor market declined by 2.7 percent, the report said.

State-based technology businesses were awarded 404 patents over the 10 years and venture capitalists invested \$30 million from 2006 to 2008.

Kil Huh, project director for Pew Center on the States, said researchers defined a clean-energy economy as one that "generates jobs, businesses and investments while expanding clean-energy production, increasing [energy efficiency](#), reducing [greenhouse gas](#) emissions (believed to warm the Earth), waste and pollution, and conserving water and other natural resources."

The work falls in myriad professions, from construction to manufacturing to science and law.

Data showed that 65 percent of the jobs identified by researchers were in the category of conservation and pollution mitigation.

Three other areas, however, are growing at a faster pace: clean energy, energy efficiency and environmentally friendly production, which involves manufacturing things such as hybrid car batteries and fuel cells.

Connecticut's clean-technology sector shows its greatest strength in the conservation and pollution mitigation, followed by the clean energy and energy efficiency categories.

"There are about 3,000 jobs in Connecticut in clean energy and energy efficiency. That's not huge, but it's important. We have to keep investing in innovation," said Matthew Nemerson, president and chief executive officer of the Connecticut Technology Council.

Nationally, Pew verified 770,385 sector jobs across 68,203 clean-tech businesses. Job growth was 9.1 percent in the industry from 1998 to 2007, yet overall job growth in the U.S. trailed at 3.7 percent.

Venture capitalists across the country pumped \$12.5 million into clean-energy companies between 2006 and 2008.

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Citation: 'Green' job sector off to good start (2009, June 11) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-06-green-job-sector-good.html>

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