

UMass Dartmouth awarded \$748,000 for learning experiences in hands-on offshore wind internships

Funding from industry partners and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center will allow students to expand their skills in the growing offshore wind sector.

UMass Dartmouth was recently awarded \$373,048 by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and \$375,000 in matching dollars from partners BankFive, BayCoast Bank, and Bristol County Savings Bank, to offer career-relevant paid internship and experiential learning opportunities to students in offshore wind through a program entitled Closing the Experience Gap.

UMass Dartmouth and Bristol Community College students will gain hands on experience through paid internships and project-based learning experiences with offshore wind developers and supply chain partners. The program aims to offer opportunities to more than 120 students from UMass Dartmouth and Bristol Community College to help accelerate talent pipeline development for the fast-growing offshore wind industry. The funding will also provide financial support for senior capstone and other project-based learning opportunities informed by the pressing technical problems confronted by offshore wind and related firms.

“There are very significant, experienced players in the deep-water offshore wind industry spending a lot of money on infrastructure here in the Commonwealth,” Governor Charlie Baker said today in his opening remarks. “In addition to continuing to make infrastructure investments, we also need to

be making investments in our people. This grant is part of a series of proposals to continue putting resources into our very robust educational community so that we can create the talent, skill base, and workforce we need to maintain our leadership position in clean energy and offshore wind.”

“We work best when the private sector, government, and academia work together,” Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito added in her remarks. “Our partners in education are essential to this whole process. It is the people who are our incredible assets, with talents and skills that nowhere else in the country has really developed yet. It is critically important that students can see themselves in this industry.”

“We can be confident that our workforce will be well-equipped with knowledge, safety, and certifications needed to work in this specialized field,” said MassCEC CEO Jen Daloisio. “Investments like this have made Massachusetts a leader in offshore wind. With industry commitments and funds provided through the FORWARD (Future Opportunities for Resiliency, Workforce, and Revitalized Downtowns) act, we can expand this workforce development role and ensure that more valuable opportunities meet more of our residents.”

“Given UMass Dartmouth’s distinctive capabilities and research accomplishments in marine science and technology and engineering, we are uniquely positioned to support the Commonwealth’s offshore wind initiatives,” said UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Mark A. Fuller, PhD. “I want to thank the Baker-Polito Administration for their continued support of public higher education and attention to the evolving needs of workforce development in our region.”

“Bristol Community College is grateful for the Baker-Polito Administration and MassCEC’s support of innovative student opportunities within the growing offshore wind industry. In line with the mission of the college’s National Offshore Wind Institute (NOWI) and offshore wind technology degree program,

Bristol and UMass Dartmouth will further our region's expertly trained workforce," said Dr. Laura L. Douglas, President, Bristol Community College.

The \$375,000 in commitments from three area community banks reflects their forward-looking perspective on the regional economy, and the need to build awareness among students about the jobs of tomorrow. BankFive, BayCoast Bank, Bristol County Savings Bank, area offshore wind companies, and workforce development organizations will be involved in an advisory council for Closing the Experience Gap.

The initiative, led by UMassD Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering and Estuarine & Ocean Sciences Dan Macdonald, is designed to supplement existing workforce training and degree and certificate options at both UMass Dartmouth and Bristol Community College. The only research university on the SouthCoast,

UMass Dartmouth is a national leader in launching first-generation college students and those from modest backgrounds into successful, highly paid careers—ranking #2 in Massachusetts and #59 nationally for social mobility, according to US News and World Report. The university is home to nearly a dozen existing degree and certificate programs that help meet offshore wind workforce needs in Mechanical Engineering, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Operations Management, Marine Science and Technology, Environmental Policy, Engineering and Applied Science, Supply Chain Management and Information Systems, and Industrial and Systems Engineering.

Bristol is a national leader in offshore wind relevant workforce development and academic programming through its two-year business and engineering programs and the National Offshore Wind Institute (NOWI).