

Center of Excellence receives governor's award

BY GEAH BETTS

The college's Center of Excellence for Energy Technology recently received a 2007 Governor's Award for Best Practices in Workforce Development.

"It was both a thrill and an honor to receive the award which means that the Center of Excellence is recognized as a Best Practices partnership," said Barbara Hins-Turner, the executive director of the center.

The state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board announced the winners in November at a leadership conference in Tacoma.

The winners were selected for a variety of reasons.

According to a release from the WTECB, awards were given out for innovation in problem solving, collaboration with other partners and for their results in improving lives and businesses of

participants.

Centralia College was chosen as a location for the Center of Excellence for Energy Technology in 2004.

It was a clear choice, said Hins-Turner.

About 10 percent of the state's electrical power is generated in Lewis County through coal, gas and hydro projects.

The purpose of a Center of Excellence is to build a competitive workforce, said Hins-Turner.

Each center is responsible for training students in its designated field. The college is currently using the Satsop Development Park in Elma to do just this.

The center is currently working in partnership with the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council to turn the plant at Satsop into a regional training center.

The never-fueled nuclear-power plant was abandoned in the 1980s, leaving behind a 40,000 square foot turnkey building, 800 acres of property and millions of

dollars in equipment.

There are 12 Centers of Excellence in the state, all hosted by community and technical colleges.

They range from the Center of Excellence in homeland security at Pierce College to the agricultural Center of Excellence in Walla Walla.



Hins-Turner