



### Faculty Interview Iowa Lakes Community College



**Daniel Lutat**

According to Dan Lutat, renewables are "the bridge in technology to get us to a better energy future." He says he's most passionate about wind. It creates jobs in rural areas, "lifts them up," is great for the economy, and it's good for the environment – just to name a few reasons.

When Dan retired in 2010 from 28 years in the Air Force, he found a new home in the Sustainable Energy Resources and Technologies program at Iowa Lakes Community College. He's been teaching there ever since.

But it's not all easy. The program's biggest challenge doesn't have anything to do with the curriculum itself, Dan says. It's that renewable energy programs across the country have trouble recruiting women to the field.

"The reason that's a challenge for us is because like other industries, the wind industry is really a male dominated career field on the technician side. So what that does is it gives you lopsided problem solving," he says. "It's not just a gender thing. It's really a problem solving issue. So young ladies who have a desire to go into something technical and use their problem solving and creativity skills can literally write their own ticket in the industry."

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Dan and the rest of the faculty strive to ensure their students get advanced training quickly to learn the skills they need to make it in the industry. Ultimately, it's their goal to place as many people in the field as they can – Where they'd be happiest, of course.

"The most rewarding thing for sure is when the students come back to us – many of them after their internships have paid for their college already – and they have a smile from ear to ear because it was better than they expected."

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