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**Interactive Learning Lab in Downtown Davenport Wins MEEA Education Award for its Energy Education Programs and Community Support**

**CHICAGO** – The Eastern Iowa Community Colleges Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center (ATEEC) in Davenport, Iowa, received the 2012 Inspiring Efficiency Education Award from the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA). The center received the award for its new Interactive Learning Lab – the first of its kind in the nation – which educates visitors regarding sustainable and renewable energy technologies.

The lab, which opened in August 2011, offers a variety of hands-on displays to engage students, including an “Energy Hog” video game and a movie theater built inside the housing of a wind turbine. The lab is a popular destination for field trips from local schools, and its goal is to help educate 200 teachers, 1,000 local area K-12 students and 6,000 people from the general public in its first year of operation.

ATEEC was established in 1994 and is a center of excellence in the National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education program. Its mission is to advance science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills by focusing on environmental technology education through curriculum development, professional development and program improvement in colleges and K-12 schools.

“We hope to create behavior change in visitors by teaching them about energy and demonstrating why efficiency is so important,” said Ellen Kabat-Lensch, ATEEC executive director of resource development and innovation. “We also want to show students that having a strong science background can open doors for you, and lead to rewarding careers in fields like energy.”

“In addition to its educational mission, the new lab is helping to revitalize downtown Davenport and bolster the area’s educational corridor,” said MEEA Executive Director Jay Wrobel. “The new space includes a Local Leaders section where area businesses can highlight green products and services, and the center is assisting area business leaders in attracting new employers to the region.”

Bestowed annually at the Midwest Energy Solutions Conference ([www.meeaconference.org](http://www.meeaconference.org)), MEEA’s Education Award is presented for development and implementation of a local campaign, program, strategy or idea to increase knowledge and action on energy efficiency.

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**About Midwest Energy Solutions Conference**

The Midwest Energy Solutions Conference is the largest event of its kind in the region. Each year it brings together a broad range of private- and public-sector thought leaders from around the nation who share a vested interest in energy efficiency.

The conference is presented by the **Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)**, the region's source on energy efficiency. Formed in 2000, MEEA is committed to advancing sound energy efficiency programs, policies and priorities in the Midwest. MEEA's membership represents a broad consortium of energy stakeholders from across a 13-state area.

Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the conference continues to grow as energy efficiency investment increases in states across the Midwest. Responding to attendees, the conference has expanded to include a formal expo to provide more opportunities to highlight and promote energy efficiency programs, products and companies.