Jamie Cross

Like many GCC students, when Jamie Cross started at GCC in the spring of 2008, he wasn’t sure where he was headed. GCC was the best choice for Jamie to find the way. This fall, Jamie is studying at Illinois State University toward a master’s degree in Project Management focused in the Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency (RE/EE) field.

Jamie grew up in Buckland, graduated from Mohawk Trail Regional High School, and studied at Bridgewater State College for a year and a half. As Jamie admits, his first attempt at college didn’t go well. He worked for a year after having Bridgewater, then decided to give GCC a try.

One of Jamie’s GCC classes in Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency sparked his interest, so he took more. Then, Jamie spent a summer as an intern at Sandri, a large energy company in Greenfield, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC). He dealt with customer rebates, visited job sites, and interacted with businesses in the field.

Jamie was awed by the advanced level of renewable energy production. “This fall of 2009, he wasn’t sure where he was going to school. Illinois State was one of his options that also made a positive contribution to the community. Jamie graduated from GCC with an Associate in Arts, Option in Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency in January, 2012. At that point, there were very few RE/EE bachelor’s degree programs, but Jamie found one at Illinois State University. Interested in a focus on business rather than technical aspects, Jamie transferred to Illinois State in the economics track of the Renewable Energy Program.

Jamie did well in Illinois, saying, “The classes at GCC were more rigorous than those at Illinois State. GCC provided me with business knowledge and field experience compared to BSU students who had only taken survey courses of the various technologies. I know a lot more about solar and building sciences.” Jamie served as vice president of the Renewable Energy Society student group and as a teaching assistant for a class on Energy Management.

Jamie received his bachelor’s degree in the spring of 2013 and found two ten day jobs in Germany on an RE/EE Renewable Energy Department trip touring wind, solar, and sustainable development communities. He was among the advanced level of renewable energy producers.

“Looking back, Jamie said, “GCC was challenging, the classes were small, I knew the professors well. Christine Copeland, Program Assistant and Intern Coordinator for the RE/EE program, really helped me get the internship and into Illinois State.”

Teresa Jones, coordinator of GCC’s RE/EE Program said, “GCC’s RE/EE program started with funding for workforce development, and we’ve seen many energy sector workers grow in their skills, older students transition to new careers, and successful professionals apply new skills and knowledge to existing ones. For many, it’s a terminal degree.” Jamie was a more traditional community college student looking for directors who very successfully transitioned to a four-year institution and beyond. Jamie is on track for a higher-level management position in the Energy and Facilities field and wants to bring his skills and knowledge to New England and be part of the energy transformation here.”

For information about GCC’s Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency Program, contact Christine Copeland or Teresa Jones at (413) 775-1472.

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