



# Giving Green Energy Generation a Boost

Fuelled by a vision of an environmentally sustainable society and grounded in the principles of electrical and industrial engineering, new university graduate Lyle Weichel and fourth year engineering student Kim Korchinski launched a green energy enterprise in 2005.

WestSource Energy has since secured 8,500 acres of land in Saskatchewan capable of producing up to 150 megawatts of wind power once fully developed. With the necessary pre-feasibility studies finished, a wind energy resource assessment completed and the development process continuing, the young duo now aims to negotiate a 20-year power-purchase agreement with local utility companies.

This year, the pair also established WestSource Solutions, a consultancy that helps home and farm owners, as well as Regina-area businesses, reduce electricity costs and produce green energy on a small scale. Of particular promise is the company's research into using collected solar energy, stored underground, to control ice and snow on municipal roadways and bridges.

With the help of a First Work Program grant from the Electricity Sector Council, Lyle Weichel has been able to dedicate himself full-time to achieving his vision of an environmentally sustainable future for Saskatchewan. "Generation of green energy and reduction of energy consumption are two sides of the same coin," asserts Lyle. "The First Work Program really helped us take our business to the next level."

## Putting Bright Ideas to Work

The First Work Program is one of several initiatives by the Electricity Sector Council to address critical human-resource needs in the sector. As a hub for HR research, the Electricity Sector Council understands that the vitality of Canada's energy industry depends on a committed and qualified workforce. Furthermore, the Electricity Sector Council is committed to resolving the recruitment, training and retention issues identified in a 2004 HR study commissioned by the Canadian Electricity Association and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.



**Building bright futures**

## Investing in Canadian Innovation

The First Work Program has helped more than 30 recent engineering and technical graduates like Lyle Weichel grow 15 small and medium-sized companies. Funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program, the initiative provides employers with wage subsidies of up to one-third of new graduates' base salaries. In so doing, the program offers companies valuable incentives to hire, train and retain young talent.

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