

# barometer

## FOSTERING PROGRESS

POET Biorefining – Fostoria, Ohio, received the Energizing Careers Grant from the Ohio Department of Development. General Manager Mike Bishop said Beth Hannam, Coordinator of Corporate Training at Terra Community College (TCC), approached him about the grant to consider for the Fostoria site.

“These are exactly the kinds of partnerships that we are looking to create between local companies and the Kern Center at Terra,” said Hannam.

The grant was designed to give companies in the wind, solar and biomass industries a chance to develop a reliable, skilled

workforce to meet the energy needs of Ohio.

The Fostoria plant received over \$43,000 to apply to training at TCC. TCC worked with Fostoria to develop training specifically for POET team members. The training will cover areas in team building, problem solving, leadership development, management fundamentals, and work with high-pressure boiler systems.

The grant will train approximately 43 team members, but the benefits of the grant will reach and help 100 percent of the POET team.

## GAINING with GREEN

POET Biorefining – Caro received the Michigan Agri-Business Association’s (MABA) 2011 Green Agri-Business Designation. The award is given to recognize organizations that show exceptional environmental efforts in daily plant operations.

The Caro facility stood out for several reasons. The use of the Load Toad helped maximize the amount of DDGS in a rail car, which over time decreases the amount of energy used for

transportation. A waste heat recovery system and a total water recovery system helped the plant conserve energy and water. Another factor was the extensive recycling program the plant used.

“I think it helps us in a community where the neighbors and residents view us as a serious corporation involved in the environment and in reducing waste,” said Gloer. “Plus, it’s just the right thing to do.”

## Conserving Change

What started out as a solution

has become an eye catching way to give back to the heritage of the land for one POET plant. Two years ago, POET Biorefining – Preston faced an issue with top-soil runoff in one of their fields. Michele Anderson, Quality Manager, came up with the idea to manage the run off by planting a native prairie. Chris Hanson, Technical Manager, helped get the project up and running.

Now in its second growing season, the native prairie combines 80 percent native grasses and 20 percent wild flowers, with over 25 different native seeds. A local native seed company helped Anderson and Hanson select the types of plants that would work with their soil and climate.

“It’s overwhelming to look at tens of thousands of black eyed susans as you drive up to the plant,” said Hanson.

Anderson and Hanson have native prairie grasses and flowers in their own lawns at home, with General Manager Richard Eichstadt looking to move in that direction too. “When you read the statistics that say less than 1 percent of native plant ecosystems are still here since European settlement,” said Anderson, “it’s rewarding to be doing our part to put the ecosystem back in place.”

In addition to the native prairie, the Preston facility also stays earth friendly by utilizing a rain garden to reduce and purify rain water.

“The native prairie and rain garden reinforces POET’s commitment to green, and the kinds of things were doing in ethanol and renewable fuels,” said Eichstadt. “It all correlates with the prairie ecosystem.”

## Karting on E15

POET Biorefining – Lake Crystal, Minn., donated 100 gallons of E10 to the Mankato Rehabilitation Center Incorporated (MRCI) for the MRCI Grand Prix. The event raised money for MRCI, who helps over 3,000 people with disabilities live independently. Along with fuel and cash donation, 5 POET team members participated in the go-kart races.

“It was a great group of people, and is something we’re looking forward to next year,” said General Manager Chris Oehler. “But next year we’ll be running the go-karts on E15.”



Volunteers at the MRCI Grand Prix Event.

## Moving Forward

Minn. State Senator Amy Klobuchar toured the POET Biorefining – Lake Crystal facility. Klobuchar, who is working with S.D. State Senator Thune on potential VEETC legislation, wanted to refresh herself on the ethanol process. Klobuchar’s visit also built her knowledge base of the current industry and helped her gather ideas on how to move forward with opportunities available throughout the industry said Oehler.



POET team members with Senator Klobuchar.

**80%**  
NATIVE  
GRASSES

**20%**  
WILD  
FLOWERS



**“The biggest benefit of a prairie is the natural soil conservation it offers.”**

- Chris Olson, Preston Technical Manager

**Above:** Rain garden at the Preston Biorefinery.

**Left:** Different flowers and grass in the native prairie.

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## in the habit of helping

Four Ind. plants took part in the Habitat Ag Home Build during the 2011 Indiana State Fair. The Habitat for Humanity home was built over the 2 week duration of the fair. The Alexandria, Cloverdale, North Manchester and Portland plants will provide landscaping and a mini-barn at the permanent location of the house.

Although this is the first year the Ind. plants took part in the Ag Home Build, Steve Pittman, POET Biorefining – Portland General Manger, is no stranger to working with Habitat for Humanity. Pittman has helped build over 5 Habitat for Humanity homes.

“If somebody asks, I immediately say yes,” said Pittman. “Habitat for Humanity is a very positive program and does a lot of good across the country.”

Dave Hudak, POET Biorefining – Alexandria General Manager said he would definitely like to do it again next year.

“It just makes sense,” said Hudak. “Everyone is connected to each other.”



Above: The Ag Home Build house built for Veronica Whitehead, a local Indianapolis resident, and her family.



The Ag Home Build Opening Ceremony where a panel raising was done by Ind. Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, Ind. First Lady Cheri Daniels, and Veronica Whitehead.



## Serving Those Who Served Us

A monument has many uses, but it serves one important purpose in particular. To keep memories alive.

The Leipsic, Ohio, Jaycees’ Chapter wanted to keep the memory of the Vietnam soldiers who sacrificed their lives for our country.

To do this, they set out to attain the Vietnam Traveling Wall Memorial.

When donations fell short, they looked to prominent businesses in the Leipsic area to help fill the gap.

POET Biorefining – Leipsic willingly donated to the cause. With their help, the wall was displayed in Ottawa, Ohio, at the Ottawa Fair Grounds.

“It was an emotional, yet rewarding opportunity to give back to the local community,” said General Manager Mark Borer.