Frostburg State University is Planning a Resilient Energy Future

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) develops innovative energy programs that promote clean energy, drive economic development and encourage energy resilience for Marylanders.

The Resilient Maryland program combines clean energy technology such as combined heat and power, energy storage, solar and similar technologies to help organizations to withstand power disruptions and outages. This inventive program funds the planning, feasibility, and design of new sustainable energy projects.

MEA provides Clean Energy Rebates to businesses, nonprofits, local governments, and State of Maryland government agencies and departments that install clean energy systems on facilities located in the state. MEA also offers a Residential Clean Energy Rebate Program for homeowners who install renewable energy measures in their home like solar or geothermal heating and cooling.

MEA offers a wide variety of grants and tax credits that help residents close the savings gap on everything from home heating to electric vehicle charging equipment. Read about some of our featured grants here and visit us online at **www.Energy.Maryland.gov**, to see our full list of programs for residents, businesses, nonprofits and local government agencies.

Maryland Energy Administration

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

While electric customers in Frostburg, Maryland may see low energy rates (price per kilowatt), the cost to transport that energy can become unpredictable and expensive. Frostburg State University (FSU) has taken a holistic approach to how they use, manage and teach about energy on their campus. Founded in 1898, FSU, like many historic institutions, needed to address an antiquated energy infrastructure which limited the school's opportunities for energy conservation. Managing power outages is another challenge for FSU. Located in Western Maryland, in the Appalachian highlands, the campus and Frostburg community sees over 60 inches of snowfall each year along with extended freezing periods. All of these reasons made an excellent case for planning and designing the microgrid. The first hurdle, though, was finding money in the budget to find and pay for the expertise to create the plan. That's where help from an experienced energy contractor and the State of Maryland came in.

In February of 2020, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) developed a pilot program designed to fund the planning for projects just like FSU had in mind called Resilient Maryland. Al Delia, FSU Vice President of Regional Development and Engagement reached out to the experienced experts in renewable energy at Optimize Renewables (OR) and applied for an MEA grant to engineer a campus-scale microgrid to serve the university and local community.

FSU was one of the first organizations to receive a Resilient Maryland grant. The $100,000 grant was utilized to create a plan that addressed energy efficiency, clean and sustainable energy goals, leverage utility revenue streams and incentives, and allowed FSU to run critical facilities independent of the energy grid, called "islanding" via a microgrid. Prioritizing education, FSU and OR also designed a renewable energy training certification program around this microgrid through which students and displaced workers can train alongside experienced professionals and join the clean energy workforce.

The energy transformation in Frostburg is just beginning. In 2021, the City received a $100,000 grant to research and possibly plan for a community microgrid to serve facilities and services critical to public safety, such as emergency shelters and water systems. Additional resilient energy projects are planned for Baltimore & other cities around the state. Follow along for news via **www.Energy.Maryland.gov**.