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IGEN Community Colleges to Conduct Electric Vehicle Road Trip to Celebrate Network Successes in Advancing EV Infrastructure

Illinois – From June 23-25, 11 Illinois Community Colleges involved with the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) will engage in an Electric Vehicle Road Trip, to demonstrate the progress of the Illinois Community Colleges strengthening EV infrastructure (the “IL Community College EV Highway”), to promote further deployment of EV infrastructure, and to raise awareness about EV technology and the environmental issues that necessitate a move to a more sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Event organizers also hope the event will ease the fears of potential EV consumers. “The electric vehicle has come a long way in just the last five years, but even as sales rise, some pesky problems persist,” said Lewis and Clark Community College Director of Sustainability Nate Keener, lead organizer for the event. “Range anxiety and battery concerns, for example, continue to plague the mind of the potential electronic vehicle consumer. The fear of running out of charge and being stuck without a place to recharge keeps many people from purchasing. With this trip, we hope to chase away some of those fears and show that it actually is possible to drive great distances in electric and hybrid vehicles.”

The EV Road Trip will start at the southernmost “charged” community college, i.e. the southernmost community college with an electric vehicle charge station – John A. Logan College in Carterville – and will proceed north toward the northernmost “charged” community college over the course of 3 days with a crew of 2-4 people that will rotate in and out of the car at strategic stops along the way. The car will be staffed by community college sustainability professionals, students, and/or IGEN staff. Along the way, the road trip will stop at each community college with an EV Charge Station.

The event will be videotaped and recorded for social media. People interested in following along with the road trip are encouraged to visit the IGEN Facebook and Twitter pages to track their progress as they publish periodic updates about their journey.

The effort is being supported by Illinois Governor’s and Lieutenant Governor’s Offices, the Illinois Office of Tourism, the Illinois Green Economy Network, Nissan, Chargepoint, and

Green Wheels USA. Governor Pat Quinn touts Illinois' leadership in the electric vehicle arena. "Illinois has the pedal to the metal when it comes to building a cutting edge electric vehicle infrastructure. We have nearly 5,000 registered plug-in cars, and 450 public and private charging stations, including one of the nation's largest networks of fast-charging stations," Governor Pat Quinn said. "As gas prices soar, Illinois motorists are starting to embrace this clean energy transportation option. The 'Illinois EV Road Trip' is a great showcase of this emerging technology, our community college system and such Illinois gems as Route 66."

"I am pleased to see Illinois' community colleges showing how they are taking the lead in utilizing and promoting sustainable technology," said Lt. Governor Simon. "By making charging stations available on campus, schools are not only supporting safe and reliable EV technology and our environment; they are also making it more convenient for employees who own or are considering an electric vehicle to charge at the workplace." As the relay proceeds, event organizers will encourage each college to commit to the Department of Energy's Workplace Charging Challenge Pledge, which aims to achieve a tenfold increase in the number of U.S. employers offering workplace charging by 2018.

The rally team is also excited to partner with the Illinois Office of Tourism and to welcome MiniAbe as an honored guest for the trip. "Illinois is home to the ultimate road trip, with seven scenic byways including Route 66, the Great River Road and the Lincoln Highway," said Deputy Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Office of Tourism Jen Hoelzle. "Even our mini-ambassador, MiniAbe, has traveled his share of the open road in Illinois, and we're proud to be a leader in the electric transportation movement. Charging stations across the state, starting at the Executive Mansion in Springfield, bring Land of Lincoln EV road trips within the public's reach."

IGEN is a consortium of all 39 Illinois community college districts across the state working to grow the green economy of Illinois. Its mission is to provide a platform for collaboration among all Illinois community colleges and their partners to drive growth of the green economy. IGEN's unique statewide cooperative approach leverages the power of a sustainability network with the deep community connections of individual colleges to expand deployment of clean energy technologies, increase employment opportunities, improve environmental and human health, foster community engagement, and accelerate market competitiveness.

The Road Trip will have media events at participating colleges and other host sites on the following days:

- June 23rd:
 - John A. Logan College, Carterville, 8:00 am – featured speaker Lt. Governor Sheila Simon
 - Kaskaskia College, Centralia, 12:50 pm
 - Southwestern Illinois College, Belleville, 2:25 pm

- Lewis and Clark Community College, Godfrey, 4:30 pm – featured speaker Dr. Dale Chapman
- June 24th:
 - Executive Mansion, Springfield, 10:00 am
 - City Hall, Lincoln, 11:30 am – Invited Speaker Mayor Snyder
 - Downtown Atlanta, 12:15 pm – Invited Speaker Mayor Finchum
 - Heartland Community College, Normal, 2:00 pm – featured speaker, Normal Mayor Chris Koos
- June 25th:
 - Kankakee Community College, Kankakee, 8:00 am
 - Prairie State College, Chicago Heights, 9:45 am
 - Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills 11:40 am
 - Triton College, River Grove, 1:15 pm
 - Wilbur Wright College, Chicago, 2:30 pm
 - College of Lake County, Grayslake, 4:30 pm

For more information about the EV Road Trip, contact Nate Keener, Director of Sustainability at Lewis and Clark Community College at 618-468-2782 or nkeener@lc.edu. To learn more about the Illinois Green Economy Network, visit the IGEN website at www.igencc.org.

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