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**Energy Mentor Network celebrates one year anniversary since launch**

*Network's growth highlights Tennessee's advantage in global energy marketplace*

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KNOXVILLE, Tenn. - The Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council (TAEBEC) celebrated the one year anniversary of the [Energy Mentor Network](#)'s launch at TAEBEC's annual "Opportunities in Energy" event on December 7 at The Square Room.

The network, run by TAEBEC in partnership with Launch Tennessee, was announced during last year's "Opportunities in Energy" event, which showcases the state's lucrative advanced energy industry and recent achievements in the field.

The Energy Mentor Network's goal is to foster the growth of Tennessee advanced energy startups by connecting entrepreneurs with mentors and industry specific expertise.

Since last year, the network doubled the number of mentors in the program to 25 with expertise ranging from energy systems, clean tech, intellectual property, business and finance strategy. [Six companies](#) are currently enrolled in the Energy Mentor Network.

Earlier this year, the network also recognized its [first graduate, Solar Site Design](#), which achieved significant traction while enrolled in the Energy Mentor Network.

Headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, Solar Site Design is a collaborative, cloud-based marketplace platform that connects sales-ready commercial and industrial solar projects to top solar construction companies to drive down customer acquisition costs. Solar Site Design is partnering with leading solar panel manufacturers that will help to attract more construction companies to subscribe to its Commercial Marketplace platform.

"The Energy Mentor Network's growth proves Tennessee is continuing to become a center for success for energy entrepreneurs and businesses," said Matt Kisber, President of TAEBEC and President & CEO of his own company, Silicon Ranch Corporation. "The Energy Mentor Network is yet another tool Tennessee can leverage to gain our more than fair share of the \$1.4 trillion global advanced energy market."

TAEBEC also unveiled a fourth part to its video series at the event, showcasing Tennessee's advanced energy entrepreneurs and the resources available within the state to foster their growth.

Click here to view the fourth video: <http://www.tnadvancedenergy.com/about-us/what-is-advanced-energy/>

“The mentorship of Tennessee’s advanced energy entrepreneurs is crucial to developing our state’s advanced energy ecosystem,” said Jill Van Beke, Chief Program Officer, Launch Tennessee. “The mentors’ expertise and guidance offer these entrepreneurs an advantage in a marketplace in which Tennessee already has a distinct lead.”

The purpose of the Energy Mentor Network is to develop quality startups. The Network pairs industry expert mentors with promising new companies through a structured program involving panel presentations and mentoring sessions. After completing the program, startups will have an investable pitch deck, a rock solid business model and a plan to establish more traction. These tools will position Tennessee’s entrepreneurs to raise capital, request other funds like SBIR grants, and scale their company.

The Energy Mentor Network is modeled after [CONNECT San Diego](#)’s 30+ year old Springboard program. Each company or entrepreneur is matched with a team of C-level executives who have deep experience in growing and scaling companies. This mentoring team is led by the Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) that coaches and guides their company through The Energy Mentor Network’s program for a period of 3-9 months.

Applications are open for mentors and startups to participate in the Energy Mentor Network. For more information and to apply, visit: <http://www.tnadvancedenergy.com/energy-mentor-network/>

### **About the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council**

The Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council champions advanced energy as a job creation and economic development strategy. It educates public officials and business leaders about the value and job creation potential of Tennessee’s advanced energy economy, establishes strategic partnerships to connect assets with opportunities and informs policy that expands and strengthens the industry.

For more information, visit [www.tnadvancedenergy.com](http://www.tnadvancedenergy.com)

### **About Launch Tennessee**

Launch Tennessee is a public/private partnership that fosters entrepreneurship, high-growth startups and capital in the state. We serve entrepreneurs by working with six regional Entrepreneur Centers to deliver funding and services, by implementing entrepreneurial programs and by engaging in activities to grow capital. To support startups commercializing technology, LaunchTN partners with leadership groups in the state’s key industry sectors to operate networks in the life science and advanced energy sectors. LaunchTN is proud to work with Life Science Tennessee and the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council to operate these programs for Tennessee entrepreneurs which have served 28 startups, who have raised over \$14M in funding.

For more information visit [launchtn.org](http://launchtn.org)