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**Minnesota State University, Mankato Named One of Three Academic Partners
in New International Renewable Energy Institute Created by Sweden**

Mankato, Minn. – Minnesota State University, Mankato has been named the Minnesota academic partner in a new, international renewable energy institute that will facilitate an exchange of ideas and technology between Sweden and the United States.

The College of Science, Engineering & Technology was named recently as Minnesota headquarters and one of three higher education partners in the new International Renewable Energy Technology Institute. The institute was created by Sweden to collaborate with the United States on new renewable-energy technologies.

The institute will consist of a nonprofit academic entity and a for-profit branch that will move technology between states and countries. Minnesota State Mankato will host the nonprofit academic consortium in Minnesota – one of three partner-states in the institute.

New York (represented by the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of the State University of New York at Albany) and Georgia (represented by the Georgia Institute of Technology) also were selected to join the organization.

“We have had a long and successful history in the area of applied research for renewable energy on both the consumption side, with regard to liquid fuels for engines and energy conservation, and on the production side in the areas of fermentation and cellulosic fuels,” said John Frey, dean of Minnesota State Mankato’s College of Science, Engineering & Technology. “We look forward to this project with great enthusiasm,” he added.

One of Minnesota State Mankato’s first activities will be to co-host International Bioenergy Days Sept. 28 through Oct. 3. More information about the conference is at www.bioenergydays.com.

The BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota bid for the institute, in collaboration with Minnesota State Mankato and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

“This is a great opportunity for the bioscience community of Minnesota,” said Dale Wahlstrom, CEO of the BioBusiness Alliance. “This collaboration will allow us to have access to people and knowledge from other states and across the globe to facilitate rapid deployment of new technologies. The people and capabilities from our academic partners and our Swedish counterparts are very impressive. They will make great partners.”

Sweden is widely recognized as an international leader in research, implementation and commercialization of renewable energy and energy efficiency. Sweden supplies 26 percent of its energy needs from renewable sources.

Sixteen states applied to Sweden for partnership, and the institute invited colleges and universities from those states to apply for academic participation. Minnesota State Mankato, the State University of New York at Albany and the Georgia Institute of Technology were selected by the institute's organization committee, made up of business, government and academic leaders from Sweden and the United States.

Funding will be shared among the three states, Sweden and the federal government. The BioBusiness Alliance, the Department of Economic Development and other groups are working with state and federal legislators to secure funds.

“We supported this innovative project from the beginning because of the potential it has to create several economic opportunities in Minnesota through international company expansion, business recruitment and job growth,” said DEED Commissioner Dan McElroy.

Michael M. Wood, U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, encouraged Sweden to establish the institute through an initiative, “The One Big Thing,” to stimulate cooperation between the United States and Sweden.

The BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota is an industry-led, action-based 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of bioscience-related industries to create jobs for the citizens of Minnesota. The alliance's mission is to position Minnesota as a global leader in biobusiness, by bringing together all related areas of the biosciences to ensure the long-term success of the industry.

Minnesota State Mankato is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which comprises 32 state universities, community colleges, technical colleges and combined community and technical colleges located on 53 campuses across the state. The system serves approximately 242,000 students annually.

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