

Fresh  Energy

**25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
*Scrapbook*



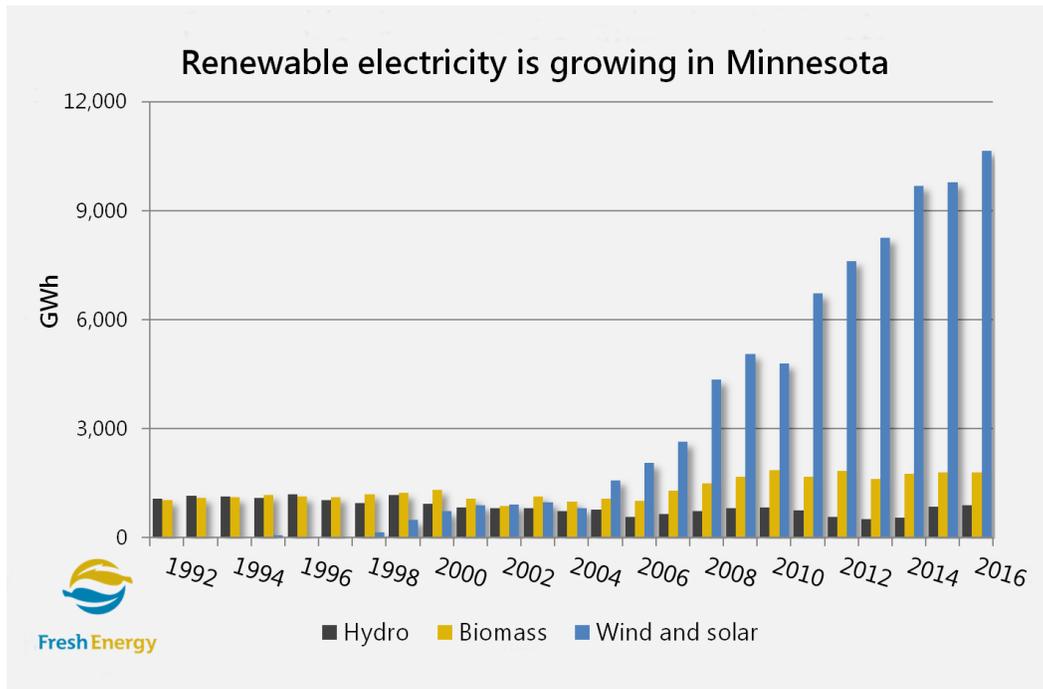
1992 - 2017



In 2017, Fresh Energy marked a major milestone with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of our incorporation in 1992. As Fresh Energy looked back on a quarter century, we took a deeper dive on assessing our work on three key issues: renewable electricity, energy efficiency, and coal retirement. We also profiled six energy leaders who worked at Fresh Energy early in their career and have gone on to do great things. We are grateful to everyone who has helped power the clean energy transition—and we look forward to continued progress together.



## Fresh Energy's 25 years of progress on renewable electricity



**Then:** When Fresh Energy was founded there was almost no renewable electricity on our energy system. The decision to use wind and solar at that time would have been done almost entirely for the sake of their environmental benefits at the expense of a significant premium in terms of cost.

**Now:** Minnesota is set for a massive increase in solar and wind. We've already grown our renewable energy markets dramatically — from around 5 percent back in 1992 to nearly 20 percent today. Common sense public policy and rapid advancement of clean energy markets and technology have made wind and solar the best option on economics alone.

**Next:** With so many businesses, communities, and families looking to invest in renewables, the way projects get constructed and connected will only become more critical. We're working to shape the rules of the game to ensure clean energy projects can move forward without getting slowed by red tape. By transforming our economy to run on clean electricity, we can truly unleash the momentum in the market for clean energy.

## RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY

Fresh Energy has shaped and led Minnesota progress on renewables, working with partners on key points along the way:

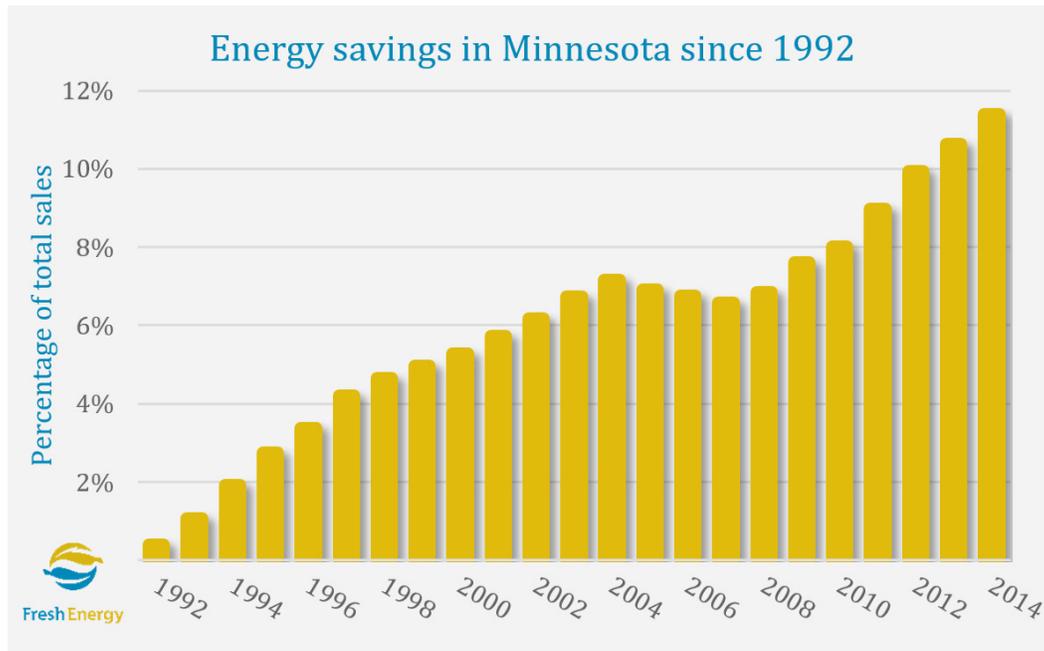
- **1991:** Campaign launched to get “1,000 megawatts of renewable energy by 2000”
- **2001:** Renewable energy goal set: 10 percent renewables by 2015
- **2007:** 25 percent Renewable Electricity Standard set
- **2011:** Cost share plan approved by the Midwest Independent System Operator for 17 new transmission lines (\$5.2 billion) to support 23,500 megawatts of wind power
- **2013:** New standard set requiring all public utilities to generate at least 1.5 percent of their electricity from solar energy resources by the year 2020, and Community Solar program is created

*“Minnesota has been a national leader in developing and promoting renewable energy. Fresh Energy has been instrumental in helping define and implement policy decisions that have helped our remarkable renewable energy growth. Now more than ever, Fresh Energy’s leadership is vitally important.”*

David Mortenson, Chairman, Mortenson



## Fresh Energy's 25 years of progress on energy efficiency



**Then:** When Fresh Energy was founded energy conservation was sort of a folksy thing that people taught their kids—close the refrigerator door, turn off the lights when you leave the room, turn on a fan instead of the air conditioner. One of policies Fresh Energy passed required efficient lights in exit signs throughout the state.

**Now:** Minnesota is a leader on energy efficiency thanks to the energy savings and spending requirements included in the nation-leading 2007 Next Generation Energy Act. Fresh Energy and its partners have also helped shape new, more innovative rate designs at the Public Utilities Commission that hold fixed monthly fees down and allow customers to save money by conserving energy.

**Next:** As the grid continues to get cleaner and cleaner, Fresh Energy's efficiency work is shifting from focusing purely on energy savings and more on energy performance. We're working to create more transparency about how much energy costs at different times of the day and let customers adapt to those prices—driving more demand for low-cost renewables and shifting more of our economy into the electric sector simultaneously.

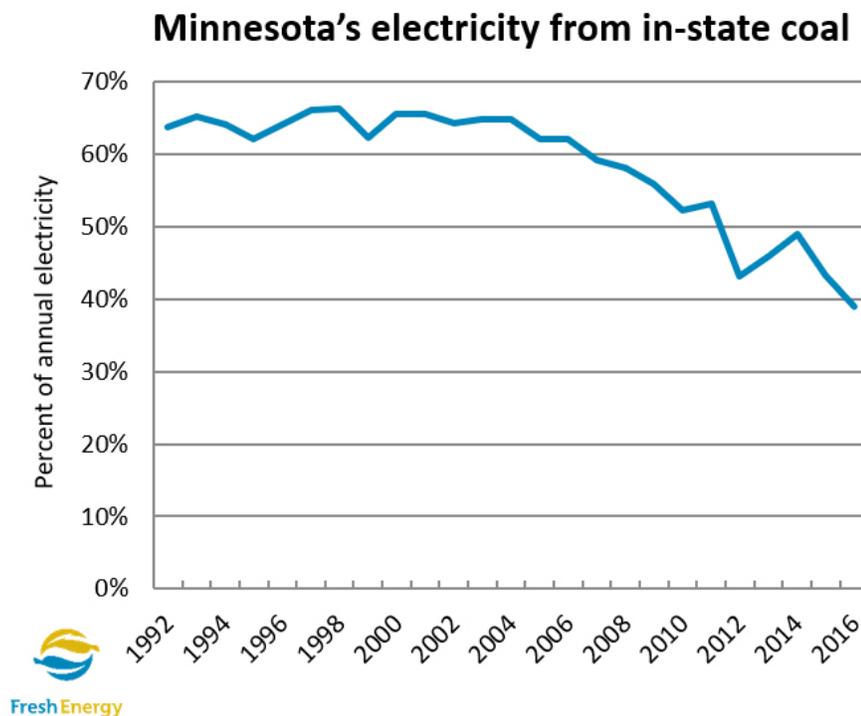
## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Fresh Energy has shaped and led Minnesota progress on energy efficiency, working with partners on key points along the way:

- **1991:** New residential building code aims to reduce energy use by 30 percent, utilities must invest at least 1.5 percent of electricity revenue and .5 percent of gas revenue on energy savings
- **2000:** Sales tax exemptions are established for energy efficient products
- **2007:** Energy efficiency savings are now required to reduce electric and gas utility demand by 1.5 percent each year
- **2010:** Cities can now offer loans to property owners to finance energy efficiency improvements that are paid back through the equity on the property



## Fresh Energy's 25 years of progress on retiring coal plants

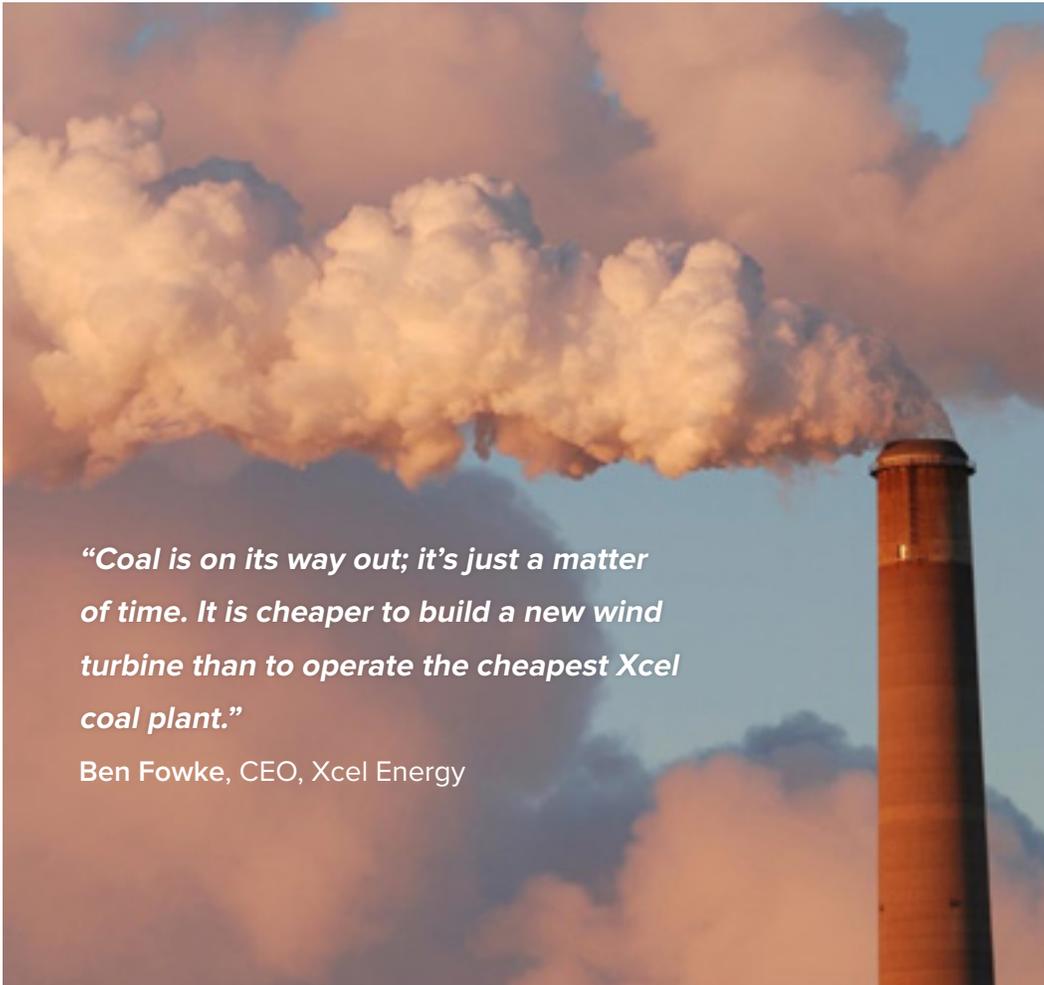


**Then:** Minnesota has been historically dependent on coal, despite having no coal deposits in the state. When Fresh Energy was founded in 1992, Minnesota generated almost two-thirds (64 percent) of its electricity from coal and utilities were still proposing new coal plants here and across the country.

**Now:** Thanks to the advocacy of Fresh Energy, Minnesota has gone from proposing new coal plants to securing the retirement of 19 of the 23 large coal-burning units in Minnesota. Between 1992 and 2016, Minnesota has significantly cut back on its use of coal from 64 percent to 39 percent of Minnesota's electricity generation. Historic low costs for wind and solar generation and large advances in energy efficiency deployment have put pressure on utilities to retire their coal plants early. Yet because burning coal results in massive amounts of carbon and fine particulate pollution, coal plants are Minnesota's biggest source of global warming pollution, and their emissions harm human health.

## COAL RETIREMENT

**Next:** Fresh Energy will continue to advocate for the retirement and efficient, renewable replacements of Minnesota’s remaining four coal-burning power plants. We will ensure that state regulators use the updated real health and environmental costs of carbon and other pollutants from power plants and will demonstrate that combinations of energy efficiency, demand response, energy storage, solar, and wind investments are better alternatives. The move away from large power plants to more distributed energy resources won’t just make the grid cleaner and more cost effective, but also more resilient. There’s no better model for this kind of dramatic carbon reduction than Minnesota-based Xcel Energy. In just a few short years they’ve shifted their strategic plan and committed to an 85 percent carbon-free energy mix by 2030. Ben Fowke, the CEO of Xcel Energy, said it best: “Coal is on its way out; it’s just a matter of time. It is cheaper to build a new wind turbine than to operate the cheapest Xcel coal plant.”



## COAL RETIREMENT

Fresh Energy has shaped and led Minnesota progress on reducing carbon emissions and retiring coal plants:

- **1993:** Fresh Energy's first legislative advocacy resulted in the passage of a state law that required regulators to consider the health and environmental externalities when weighing utility proposals to invest more in fossil-fuel power plants.
- **1994:** The Minnesota legislature set into law a preference for prioritizing energy efficiency, then renewable energy, then natural gas, and then coal and nuclear, for supplying new power needs.
- **2001:** The Minnesota legislature approved a deal Fresh Energy helped work out with Xcel Energy to stop burning coal at two inner-city power plants and add air pollution controls to a third metro-area coal plant.
- **2006:** The Minnesota Legislature passed into law a policy on which Fresh Energy worked with utilities, the state, and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, to require 90 percent mercury emissions reductions from the state's six largest coal-burning power plants.
- **2007:** Minnesota passed the Next Generation Energy Act setting science-based economywide state greenhouse gas reduction goals.  
*"It is the goal of the state to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors producing those emissions to a level at least 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2015, to a level at least 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, and to a level at least 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050."*
- **2009:** Fresh Energy's successfully advocated that a new coal proposal proposed to be built in South Dakota was not needed to serve Minnesota customers.
- **2015:** Fresh Energy used the same analytical model used by utilities to prove that retiring large coal units owned by Xcel Energy and replacing them with large increments of efficiency, wind, and solar was the least-cost option for Xcel.
- **2016:** The Public Utilities Commission approved Xcel's revised 15-year plan, including retirement of those big coal units.
- **2017:** The Public Utilities Commission updated the externalities values that utilities are required to include in plans when evaluating resource decisions, adopting more scientifically valid carbon dioxide health and environmental costs, as advocated by Fresh Energy.

## ALUMN INTERVIEWS



### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | ETHAN FAWLEY

Executive Director of the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition

by Alexis Williams, senior engagement specialist

Ethan first came to Fresh Energy in 2008 when he was hired as the Transportation Connections Coordinator. He was later promoted to the Transportation and Built Environment director and left Fresh Energy in 2013 to become the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition's first executive director.

#### **Prior to coming to Fresh Energy, where were you in your career and what motivated you to work for the organization?**

**Ethan:** I was freshly out of grad school, volunteering, consulting, and waiting for the right job opportunity to come along. I recognized after graduating that I didn't want to take just any job. I really wanted to go to work in a place where I felt that I could work on my values. When the position for the Transportation Connections Coordinator opened at Fresh Energy, I felt like it was the perfect job opportunity. It provided an extraordinary opportunity for me to connect both my passion and professional expertise. I knew I could do the job well and be excited to come to Fresh Energy every day. It was a huge break for me. Fresh Energy is a very competitive place to work and I felt very lucky to get the job. It changed the direction of my career. I have a background in city planning, and I could have gone to work in government. Instead, because of my break at Fresh Energy, I get to work in advocacy.

FRESH ENERGY ALUM | ETHAN FAWLEY

**What were some of the highlights of your time at Fresh Energy?**

**Ethan:** One of my personal highlights was the opportunity to lead the Minnesota Complete Streets Coalition starting in 2009 and into the 2010 legislative session. Lots of folks were involved: more than fifty organizations and hundreds of people—from volunteers to professional lobbyists. The campaign was successful and Minnesota adopted a Complete Streets law in 2010 ensuring that streets are safer and more accessible for pedestrians, transit riders, bicyclists, and drivers. It was the first campaign I had the opportunity to lead. It was a chance for me to learn from many great people, and I still see the impact of this law every day. It was a big opportunity and I was thankful that Fresh Energy and the members of the Coalition felt comfortable with me in a leadership. Not every workplace gives that kind of leadership opportunity to someone who had only been at the organization for a year.

**Was there anything you learned during your time at Fresh Energy that help you in your role as executive director at the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition?**

**Ethan:** I wouldn't be where I am professionally without the opportunities Fresh Energy gave me. I am especially thankful for the chance to serve as the lead coordinator for the Complete Streets Coalition. In my role as the Transportation and Built Environment director, I learned how to help fundraise, manage a budget, build relationships, keep an eye on efficiency, and manage other staff. All those things were extremely valuable in preparing me for my current role at the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition.

**Anything else you would like to add about Fresh Energy?**

**Ethan:** The energy policy landscape in Minnesota is shaped by Fresh Energy and our state is a better place because of it. Fresh Energy is a tremendous organization with amazing people. The consistency of work over 25 years is a real tribute to all the staff and board. It's hard work making change. Fresh Energy has been really smart about when to push and has delivered so much. Thank you for all you do.

## ALUMN INTERVIEWS



### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | DAVID COLLIER

Aide to the chief inclusion officer for the State of Minnesota

by Kirsten Triller, engagement fellow

David worked at Fresh Energy from January to May 2016 as a Capitol Pathways intern while he was in school at Metro State University. The Capitol Pathways program works to open access to the Minnesota Capitol to the next generation of leaders of color and ensure our government is truly representative of our communities. He is now the aide to the chief inclusion officer for the State of Minnesota.

#### What made you interested in participating in the Capitol Pathways program?

**David:** One of my counselors at school sent me information about the Capitol Pathways program, which provided opportunities for students of color to get experience working with policy. At the time, most of my work experience was in youth development and I didn't have a lot of experience with the Legislature at that point. I applied for the internship, and of the approximately 150 applications, I was selected as one of the 26 cohorts. We had to pick three subject areas to work with through the Capitol Pathways program, and I chose renewable energy as one of them. It was a topic I was curious about and wanted to learn more about.

### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | DAVID COLLIER

#### What were some of the core activities you worked on while you were at Fresh Energy? What were some of the highlights?

**David:** As part of that program, I worked with Fresh Energy’s legislative team to build support and protect key policies in the session. I had the opportunity to sit in on different hearings, meet with House and Senate representatives, track bills, and shadow Fresh Energy staff to learn more about the legislative process and how a bill goes from being formed to getting passed. During the 2016 Legislative session, our big focus was working on pollinators and transportation.

#### Can you tell me more about your role as the aide to the chief inclusion officer for the State of Minnesota?

**David:** At the end of my internship, I was asked to speak alongside Governor Mark Dayton and other interns at the reception to celebrate the first year of the Capitol Pathways program. I remember that in his remarks at the celebration, Governor Dayton said, “Take advantage of the opportunities in front of you.” That resonated with me. Looking back, it’s kind of ironic since I had no idea I would be working under Governor Dayton soon after. A little bit later, I had the opportunity to meet with James Burroughs, who told me about his role as the chief inclusion officer. After meeting with him more, he asked me if I would be willing to interview for a position as his aide—which I did and was soon hired for.

We have four big focuses with inclusion. One, we want to encourage recruitment and provide employment and retention of protected groups—people of color, LGBT, people with disabilities, and veterans to name a few. Then we work with the Equitable Share Contract. When it comes to the state government, over 2 billion dollars goes out for contract every year. In 2015, less than 0.5 percent of contracts went out to the African American community, for example. This population is about 20 percent of the Twin Cities, and the Equitable Share should reflect what the population is. We also want to increase community engagement, and we do this by having conversations with community groups, not to them. We want to get them at the table, making sure they have a voice. We want to give a voice to people who otherwise wouldn’t feel like they have one. Then we want to encourage some social reform. Especially in light of recent events, we want to get police officers, community members, and legislators all to the table to talk about these issues. We’re not pointing a finger, we’re just trying to encourage conversation and build trust.

## ALUMN INTERVIEWS

### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | DAVID COLLIER

**Was there anything you learned during your time at Fresh Energy that helped prepare you for this role?**

**David:** Learning how to track and search for bills has been very helpful for my work in the Governor's office. Also, being involved in the Capitol Pathways program, I realized it wasn't normal for students of color to get the opportunity to work in the legislative environment. I would walk into meetings sometimes and get looks like, "Why is that person here?" Being in the program has helped me better encourage other students of color to be in a similar position.

I was happy I got the chance to work at Fresh Energy. Everyone was wonderful to work with. Leadership will always be the reason an organization does well or doesn't do well, so I want to credit Michael Noble's excellent leadership at Fresh Energy.



**FRESH ENERGY ALUM** | MARIA SURMA MANKA

B2B public relations strategist at Two Rivers Communications

by Kirsten Triller, engagement fellow

Maria Surma Manka worked at Fresh Energy from 2002 to 2007, beginning as an intern and moving into roles as administrative assistant and later the media relations coordinator. She is now the B2B public relations strategist at Two Rivers Communications.

**You graduated from Hamline University in 2002 with a political science and a Spanish degree. What motivated you to come work here at Fresh Energy?**

**Maria:** I always really cared about the environment. I grew up in rural Minnesota and spent a lot of my childhood in the woods. I've been hunting since I was 12, and anything related to the environment was really important to me. When the internship at Fresh Energy came up, and later turned into to a permanent position, it seemed like my political science interest was being "married" with my environmental passion. That got me so interested and excited about working at Fresh Energy. I remember telling Michael Noble that I would do anything Fresh Energy needed—mop the floors even—I just wanted to be part of this organization.

FRESH ENERGY ALUM | MARIA SURMA MANKA

**What were some of the core projects that you worked on here and highlights of your time at Fresh Energy?**

**Maria:** In my role as media relations coordinator, one of my core projects was working to launch RE-AMP's website. RE-AMP was a Midwestern coalition for clean energy and it brought together organizations from all over the country (especially the Upper Midwest) to work together to pass clean energy legislation and policies. This website, called The Commons, was where all these organizations got to share information. Fresh Energy was working on getting that website up and running and coordinating with a couple of partner organizations on media and communications. I felt like I was part of something really big and I learned a lot.

We were also working on passing the Renewable Energy Standard. As the media relations coordinator at that time, there was a lot of work to do regarding Renewable Energy Standard. In 2007, right before I left the organization, it passed! For me, that was a huge highlight and I was fortunate to leave on such a high note.

**How would you describe your career path since leaving Fresh Energy? Was there anything, looking back, that you learned at Fresh Energy that helped guide your career in business strategy?**

**Maria:** Toward the end of my time at Fresh Energy, I started a blog called MariaEnergia.com. It was about all the great things that were happening with renewable energy and policy. The blog took off and I ended up getting hired by other green news sites to write for them and cover several national events for the next several years—in addition to my day job.

As for my day job, I hadn't gone to school for marketing or communications, but because of my experience at Fresh Energy I found out I liked it and was pretty good at it. Toward the end of my time there, my supervisor and I functioned almost like a mini PR firm, coordinating messaging and media training with many organizations. This was excellent training before going to work for Tunheim, a public relations agency. At Tunheim, I worked with just about every sort of organization, but I had a particular focus on organizations working in the environmental/energy space. So I was able to continue pursuing my environmental interests.

## ALUMN INTERVIEWS

### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | MARIA SURMA MANKA

After I left Tunheim and moved to Central Minnesota, I started my own public relations consultancy called Two Rivers Communications. I work with mostly business-to-business companies on public relations and communications. I don't work exclusively for environmental or energy organizations, but that's definitely my sweet spot, and I'm lucky enough to work with Blattner Energy, the Sierra Club, WindShare, Schneider Electric, and others. I love the balance of nonprofit and for-profit organizations as I get to learn about the challenges of balancing policy with practical application. Overall, there's been a lot of crossover between my passion for the environment and energy and what I've been able to do with my career after Fresh Energy.

#### Is there anything else you want to add about your time at Fresh Energy?

**Maria:** I have worked and volunteered for several different environmental organizations and I appreciate Fresh Energy's pragmatic approach. I remember working for Greenpeace in California and I asked a protestor: "Have you talked to the company that you're protesting?" and she looked at me like I was crazy. Like, "Why would we go talk to them? We're protesting them." Whereas at Fresh Energy, I remember Michael Noble specifically explaining to me that whoever we may be on opposite sides with today, we may be at the same table together tomorrow. In other words, we cannot always be firing shots at each other because we're not going to get anything done that way. We've got to figure out how to work together to get stuff done. I think the measured, pragmatic approach that Fresh Energy takes is something that everyone should keep in mind during these divisive times.



**FRESH ENERGY ALUM** | JEREMY SCHREIFELS

Branch chief at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

by Alexis Williams, senior engagement specialist

Jeremy Schreifels joined Fresh Energy in 1997 as the first intern when the organization was still known as Minnesotans for an Energy-Efficient Economy. He is now serving as the, branch chief at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and visiting fellow at Resources for the Future.

**When did you work at Fresh Energy and what did you do?**

**Jeremy:** I interned with Fresh Energy in 1997 when the organization was then called Minnesotans for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ME3). At that time, the only other Fresh Energy staff were Michael Noble and J. Drake Hamilton. During my time at Fresh Energy, I wrote a report that put forward preferred environmental externalities values for carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, and lead after the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission case that decided there was a cost for global warming. These externality values were to be factored into resource planning decisions.

### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | JEREMY SCHREIFELS

#### What were you doing prior to your internship and what motivated you to come intern at Fresh Energy?

**Jeremy:** I started a graduate degree at Bemidji State University in environmental policy, but in the middle of my first year the university eliminated the program. Rather than shift my focus to another area of study, I decided to start my job search. When I moved to the Twin Cities in 1996, I was working at Anderson Consulting (now called Accenture) as a business systems engineer working in software development, but I had an unfulfilled interest to learn more about the environment and environmental policy. I looked for an opportunity to work with an organization that would help me learn about environmental issues facing Minnesota. I met with J. and Michael at Fresh Energy, learned more about the externalities case at the Public Utilities Commission, and joined on as the organization's first intern.

#### Tell me more about your career path following your internship at Fresh Energy?

**Jeremy:** After interning with Fresh Energy, I went back to graduate school at Duke University and earned my Masters of Environmental Management in Resource Economics and Policy, focused on climate change. I then did an internship with the Intel Corporation in their environmental, health, and safety department looking at the climate impacts of their products from manufacturing of chips to impacts of using computers—both the energy consumption and potential energy savings (e.g., video conferencing to reduce travel). When I graduated from Duke, I joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as an analyst in their Office of Air and Radiation's Clean Air Markets Division.

When I started at the Environmental Protection Agency in 1999, I was part of a team that designed and implemented emission trading programs to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from U.S. power plants. I was also invited to help China and other foreign governments design and implement their clean air policies. That led to the 2007 U.S.-China Joint Economic Study that assessed the costs and benefits of reducing emissions from the power sectors in both countries. Then in 2009, I was offered a spot at "China's MIT," Tsinghua University, where I did my Ph.D. studying pollution control opportunities in China's power and industrial sectors, which I completed in 2014. Two years later, I became a branch chief at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency managing power plant emission monitoring, reporting, and verification programs. At the beginning of this year, I also joined Resources for the Future as a visiting fellow where I conduct research on China's energy, economic, environment, and climate policies.

FRESH ENERGY ALUM | JEREMY SCHREIFELS

**Was there anything you learned during your time at Fresh Energy that helped guide your career in energy policy and where you are now?**

**Jeremy:** My internship at Fresh Energy exposed me to the issue of climate change and the role that economics can play in addressing it. It was this experience working at Fresh Energy and the externalities report that led me to go back to graduate school. Without that internship, I don't believe I would have followed the same career path.

My career has largely been an extension of that first internship, analyzing and addressing the externalities of power plant air emissions. Throughout my career I have often remarked about the policy in Minnesota and the externalities study that we did in 1997. In many ways, the Minnesota case is unique in terms of its impact on power sector planning and it is a model that I've been able to discuss with Chinese leaders to help them think about how they could factor environmental externalities into their decision making process.

**Anything else you would like to add about Fresh Energy or your time here?**

**Jeremy:** My internship at Fresh Energy was a really foundational experience for me. It led me to decisions about the direction I wanted to take my career. For that, I'm forever grateful. I learned a lot through my experience at Fresh Energy and the opportunity to work alongside other energy experts, primarily Michael and J. Following that 1997 internship, I have had many wonderful opportunities to explore a subject that continues to interest and excite me. For that, I owe a lot to Fresh Energy. Michael and J. nurtured that spark and pointed me down an amazing path.



**FRESH ENERGY ALUM** | MADELEINE KLEIN

Managing director of policy and market strategy for SoCore Energy

by Kirsten Triller, engagement fellow

Madeleine Klein interned for Fresh Energy in the fall of 1999, working under J. Drake Hamilton. She is now the managing director of policy and market strategy for SoCore Energy in Chicago, Illinois.

**In 1999, you had just graduated from Carleton College with a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies. What motivated you to come intern at Fresh Energy?**

**Madeleine:** At Carleton College, I had a concentration in environmental policy. Even with an American Studies major, I was oriented towards environmental policy. I was drawn to energy because it represented a problem that involved economics, social studies, and politics—a variety of disciplines. After I graduated, one of my professors knew Michael Noble and connected me with him. I remember meeting Michael and thinking that Fresh Energy was a cool organization.

**What were some of the core projects you worked on and what were some of the highlights of your time at Fresh Energy?**

**Madeleine:** During my internship, I helped to organize a conference on climate change. I also drafted and delivered letters to members of Minnesota House and Senate during the legislative session.

### FRESH ENERGY ALUM | MADELEINE KLEIN

#### Was there anything you learned during your time at Fresh Energy that helped guide your career in energy policy?

**Madeleine:** Pretty immediately after my internship, I moved to New Haven, CT to start graduate school, where I earned a Master's in Environmental Management. My internship at Fresh Energy gave me a flavor of what environmental policy might look like as a real job path, and it helped convince me that environmental policy was what I wanted to do with my career. I definitely credit my internship a lot for that.

After Fresh Energy, I had jobs in other focuses too, but I sort of zeroed in on energy. At the City of New Haven, I worked on greenhouse gas and air toxicity inventories and helped put together a climate change action plan. Through that job, I also got involved with a state-based climate change planning exercise. Then I moved to a New England-based non-profit, then the City of Knoxville, Tennessee, and then the Environmental Law and Policy Center in Chicago, Illinois. For me, it's been one step after the other, eventually landing at SoCore. I haven't had any real 180-degree turns in my career. I've been pretty focused on clean energy, though I've addressed it from the non-profit, municipal, and corporate perspectives.

#### Anything else you would like to add about Fresh Energy or your time here?

**Madeleine:** I feel like had I not had my initial three-month internship at Fresh Energy, I might not be an executive at a solar company right now. I credit Michael and J. for showing me how interesting this field is—and how important it is—and what you can do when you're working in a non-profit. It was my first introduction into energy work and it really had a big impact on what I've chosen to do ever since!



**FRESH ENERGY ALUM** | TODD REUBOLD

Director of communications for the Institute on the Environment at the University of Minnesota

by Alexis Williams, senior engagement specialist

Todd Reubold interned with Fresh Energy in 2004 and currently works as the director of communications for the Institute on the Environment at the University of Minnesota, as well as publisher of Ensia—a magazine sharing environmental challenges and solutions with a global audience.

**In 2004 you had just received your Masters of Science in Science, Technology and Environmental Policy from the University of Minnesota. What motivated you to come intern at Fresh Energy?**

**Todd:** When I started graduate school, my plan was to work for an environmental non-profit after I graduated. So early on, I researched a number of environmental non-profits in the Twin Cities. Towards the end of my graduate career, I reached out to Fresh Energy and learned about a six-month, full-time internship. It sounded like a great opportunity to learn more about environmental issues and the non-profit sector while applying the skills I'd developed in graduate school.

FRESH ENERGY ALUM | TODD REUBOLD

**What were some of the core projects you worked on, and what were some of the highlights of your time at Fresh Energy?**

**Todd:** The biggest project I worked on while interning with Fresh Energy was creating a Global Warming Policy Statement which was adopted by the Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. I also analyzed different strategies for curbing climate change impacts in the Upper Midwest and researched the economics of state-based renewable energy standards.

One highlight for me was the connections I made with others at Fresh Energy and the larger renewable energy community in Minnesota. Additionally, I gained first-hand knowledge about how policies are crafted and negotiated here in the state. Some of Fresh Energy's staff have decades of experience working with the Minnesota legislature, so I was able to learn from their expertise. When a bill is passed, you might see the signing ceremony or read about it in the news and not think twice about the work it takes to get to that point. But it takes a lot of work to make that happen. Through working with Michael Noble and J. Drake Hamilton, I was able to better understand all the negotiating, lobbying, and research that goes into getting something like a renewable energy standard passed in the state.

**How would you describe your career path since leaving Fresh Energy? Was there anything you learned during your time at Fresh Energy that helped guide your career?**

**Todd:** Currently, I have two roles: director of communications for the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment and publisher of *Ensia* magazine, which covers global environmental challenges and solutions. The environment has been a theme throughout my entire career, but right now I'm able to merge my interests in environmental policy, communications, and media.

I learned a lot at Fresh Energy that still influences my career today. I learned how to dig into research and prioritize primary sources, making sure to use the most accurate and up-to-date information. For Fresh Energy, this skill was critical in drafting policy statements, and for my work today, it's critical when we're researching story ideas or developing new communications materials.

I also learned early on the importance of building relationships with others who support a clean, healthy, vibrant environment and renewable energy goals. It's important to find those allies and advocates and then work together. These issues are so big and complex that it's necessary to find others to tackle these challenges together.

FRESH ENERGY ALUM | TODD REUBOLD

Anything else you would like to add about Fresh Energy or your time here?

**Todd:** What really impresses me about Fresh Energy is the organization's ability to get things done—whether that means helping the state pass renewable energy legislation or creating awareness of critical climate change issues. I've been very impressed by the organization's growth and impact over the years.

Lastly, I believe the internship I had at Fresh Energy, early on in my career, was critical to my being where I am today. It allowed me to develop confidence as a leader, gain important new career skills and form valuable connections with people in the field. I also witnessed the importance of networking, negotiation, and compromise in reaching big goals. I think that without my internship at Fresh Energy, I wouldn't be where I am in my career today.



# 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY *Celebration*

June 20, 2017 / Utepils Brewing, Minneapolis







408 Saint Peter Street, Suite 220  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

651 225 0878 /  [fresh-energy.org](http://fresh-energy.org)  
 [freshenergytoday](https://www.facebook.com/freshenergytoday) /  [@freshenergy](https://twitter.com/freshenergy)