

Here's what ECG has been up to in February!

By ECG February 9, 2023

Generation Fusion Pilot Sparks 5th Graders' Interest

Dozens of students, parents, community, and government leaders from the Schenectady/Troy area came together at the Tech Valley Center of Gravity on February 18th for Energy for the Common Good's (ECG) Generation Fusion Pilot Program presentation day showcasing students' fusion projects.



The first cohort of 5th grade students took part in the afterschool STEM-based program learning about climate, clean energy, and fusion energy. Students in the program presented their fusion projects, sharing their experiences and demonstrating what they learned.

Speakers at the event included US Representative Paul Tonko, who represents New York's 20th Congressional District and sits on the Congressional Fusion Caucus, Schenectady Mayor Gary McCarthy, Nicole Marriner from Schenectady City School District, Yifei Zhang from SuperPower, and ECG Board member and ITER Communication Head, Laban Coblenz. ECG President Jane Hotchkiss and Director of Education Kayla Miller led the day's event.

ECG's pilot workshops operate at the intersection of climate change, clean energy, and human engagement, creating an early understanding of fusion's value, alongside renewables, to disrupt our dependence upon fossil fuels. The Generation Fusion Program is a keystone of ECG's fusion advance advocacy offering fusion awareness to youth and their communities. Our mission is to build awareness of fusion's benefits for their generation; create hope for mitigating climate change; and inspire them to pursue STEM as a pathway to being part of the workforce expanding fusion to its full potential.

Celebrating CFS' ribbon cutting for its headquarters and campus in Massachusetts

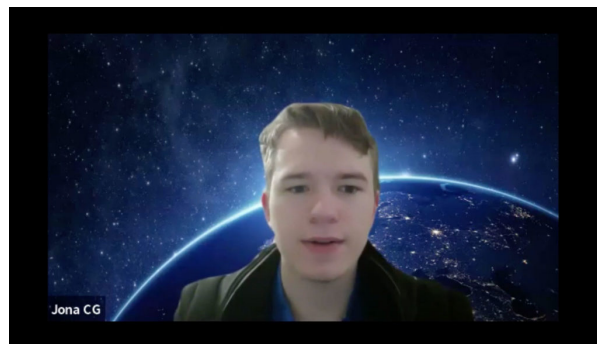
On February 10th, Commonwealth Fusion Systems (CFS), a private fusion energy company, commemorated the opening of their headquarters and campus in Devens, MA. The ceremony was hosted by CFS leadership and employees and attended by a wide array of stakeholders at the national, state, and local level.



Among government representatives in attendance were Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm, US Senator Elizabeth Warren, US Senator Edward Markey, Congresswoman Lori Trahan, and Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. Energy for the Common Good was also there, celebrating the moment with CFS and other local and national stakeholders in the fight against climate change.

Counting Stars – Contributions of Fusion Power to Global Climate Action

The ECG sponsored webinar, Counting Stars: Contributions of Fusion Power to Global Climate Action, was organized by Jona Cordonier Gehring, Youth Advisor for ECG, and Vice Chair for The Global Youth Council for Science, Law, and Sustainability.

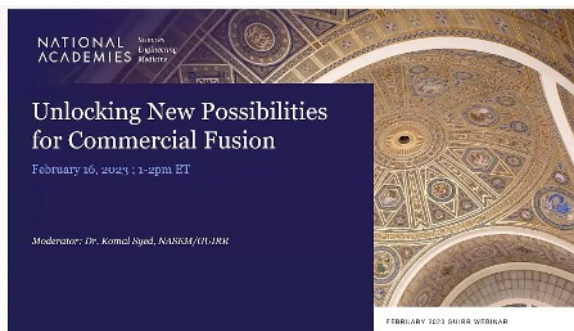


If you missed this international youth and experts event, check out the video on the ECG website.

Excerpts from the full webinar include Fusion & Youth, a short video explaining the fundamentals of fusion power and how youth can get involved now and for future study and career opportunities; and Fusion & Climate Action, a short video discussing the energy crisis, the need for clean, low-carbon alternatives to fossil fuels, and the challenges and opportunities of fusion power to help.

NASEM Webinar on Commercial Fusion

In 2021, the National Academies of Science published a Consensus Study Report entitled [Bringing Fusion to the Grid](#). The report was celebrated by the fusion industry and climate solutions advocates like ECG as it marked the highest possible endorsement of fusion from the scientific community.



On February 16th, the National Academies of Science hosted a webinar entitled [Unlocking New Possibilities for Commercial Fusion](#). The two speakers on the webinar were Dr. Richard Hawryluk and Dr. Scott Hsu.

Dr. Hawryluk, who chaired the committee that produced the report, is Senior Technical Advisor at the DOE Office of Science. Dr. Scott Hsu is DOE's Lead Fusion Coordinator. Together they discussed strategic initiatives to accelerate the technical and commercial viability of fusion energy and took questions from the audience. A [Forbes article](#) highlighted Dr. Hsu's observation that investment in fusion energy is about to go mainstream. The webinar is [available on replay here](#).

The National Academies of Science is a private non-profit society of distinguished scholars. It was established in 1863 by an Act of Congress, signed by President Lincoln, and is charged with providing independent, objective advice to the nation on matters related to science and technology.

CleanTech Alliance Webinar – a conversation between fusion energy companies & environmental advocates

On February 3rd, the CleanTech Alliance hosted a webinar on fusion entitled “Environmental and Equity Issues for Fusion Proponents: Perspectives from Advocates.” The webinar featured a Fusion 101 overview as well as a panel discussion from representatives of environmental organizations, including:

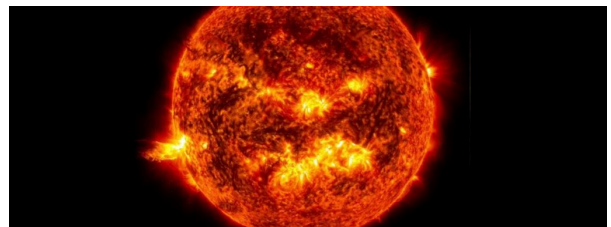
- Ryan Umstattd, Vice President of Product at Zap Energy
- V. John White, Executive Director of CEERT and Board Member of Energy for the Common Good
- Ross Macfarlane, Director of the Sierra Club
- Nancy Hirsh, Executive Director at NW Energy Coalition
- Aditi Verma, Assistant Professor at University of Michigan’s Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences

The Fusion 101 Primer can be [viewed on replay here](#). The environmental and equity panel discussion can be [replayed via this link](#).

The CleanTech Alliance was founded in 2007 by business and cleantech leaders in the Northwest. They facilitate the generation and growth of cleantech companies through educational programs, research, and other products and services.

Did you catch this article in Bloomberg?

ECG’s Jane Hotchkiss was quoted recently in a [Bloomberg article](#), “How Two Approaches to Nuclear Fusion Could Create Endless Clean Energy.”



Photographer: NASA

People should be closely following today’s startups, “knowing that even if just seven of them hit their milestones over the next 10 years, it will be a very impressive feat,” she said, adding that while the timeline might feel slow, “all these incremental steps are important.”

Spotlight on ECG Managing Director Wally Johnston



Wally Johnston began his work in the fusion energy space in 2014 realizing the potential fusion possesses as a climate change mitigation opportunity. At the time he was operating Energy for the Common Good (ECG) to foster carbon reduction, clean energy, and efficiency solutions. As fusion efforts began to focus on commercialization it became obvious to us that an all-out effort to alter the pace of adoption of new energy sources is critical for fusion to provide widespread benefit to the climate fight. In late 2019, we reformed Energy for the Common Good as a public good charity directly engaged in the education necessary to expand awareness and acceptance fusion as a power source. We find it exciting to be working with several groups who have come to recognize the importance of clearing a pathway to fusion adoption and expansion as soon as it is ready.

Wally's Wall Street experience as a Municipal Securities professional and his groundbreaking work leading the development of the one and only combinatoric fixed income matching system Bond Connect, provides him a first-hand understanding of the challenge and opportunity the public markets can offer to ignite fusion's rapid deployment. Solid vision of the targeted position in the energy market, risk shared funding mechanisms for the construction of devices and strong coalitions of advocates from public interest groups, governments, investors, customers, and the public are all required to make fusion energy a success. Wally recently served as Chair of the Concord – Carlisle Regional School Committee, helping the district manage its ability to serve students in the time of Covid-19.

Looking ahead to March

March is shaping up to be a very busy month! ECG is heading to Houston for CERAWeek, then to Washington, DC for the ARPA-E Innovation Summit and the FIA Annual Conference. Hope to see there!