

### CAREER PROFILE: PAT WALSH, WIND TURBINE TECHNICIAN

A wind turbine technician repairs and maintains wind turbines. That means that every day I get to climb 300-foot towers and fix broken turbines! To be able to repair a wind turbine, I had to become an expert in hydraulics, electricity, wind turbine mechanical systems, and electronics. Technicians must also be physically fit and very safety conscious, as the job can be physically strenuous. Of course, I cannot be afraid of heights, either. While the heights may sound scary, the perks of this job are good. I earn a competitive salary with benefits, not to mention enjoying the spectacular views every day while on the job! In addition, I, like many technicians, got to travel to Europe as part of my training.

Colleges across the United States have begun offering training programs for wind turbine technicians. These 2-year programs teach students everything they need to know to be a certified “wind-smith.” I was trained at Iowa Lakes Community College, but my co-workers came from several different schools. These days, demand for wind technicians is high, and some students are hired by the wind industry while they are still finishing their training.