Wind Energy Technician Student

Meet Christine Adamietz — a wind energy technician student.

Even as a kid, Christine Adamietz loved climbing. So much so that her dad had to remove the bottom rungs from the grain bins on the family's farm to keep her safe. It was no surprise to anyone that she decided to enroll in Minnesota West's wind energy technician program.

Since starting the program, Adamietz has regularly climbed the school's lattice-tower wind turbine to inspect, clean, and regrease it. These are all things she'll be doing in the field as a technician when she completes her two-year degree in May 2010. One of a handful of women in the program, she says she feels welcome and comfortable at Minnesota West. "We're not competitive," she says. "It's a small group and everybody knows everybody, so people just try to help each other."

Adamietz, who chose the college's Canby campus because it's six miles from where she grew up, admits she was a little discouraged when she started the program and initially struggled to understand lessons on electricity. But her instructor, Gary Olsen, gave her the help she needed to succeed. "He's not just a teacher. He has his own electrical business so he knows his subject really well and how to explain it," she says. "He listened to me and told me I would be able to get it, and I did."

Adamietz also appreciates how Minnesota West helped her land a sought-after internship with Vestas, a wind energy company in Tyler, Minnesota, that will boost her skills and her resume. "Minnesota West got us started by bringing in companies to do interviews, and I chose to pursue Vestas because it was the top-rated internship in my class," says Adamietz, who will be interning with the firm (and climbing 200-foot towers) until she graduates.

Right now, Adamietz is considering her options for the future. While she likes the idea of working close to home, she's also interested in hiring on with a company that would send her all over the country, and maybe the world, to work on turbines. "I'm glad to have so many opportunities," she says. "If you're not interested in your job, you've made the wrong decision for your life."