

Collegian

The Newsletter of The New England College Council *Fall 2013*



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Mount Wachusett Community College

Mount Wachusett Selected to Oversee \$15.9 million U.S. DOL TAACCCT Grant

Federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Science Foundation recently awarded to Mount Wachusett Community College will help boost the regional economy in North Central Massachusetts, and bolster state and national initiatives as well.

Mount Wachusett will oversee a \$15.9 million, multi-state grant to provide accelerated training and credentials to students pursuing careers or job advancement in advanced manufacturing. In September, the U.S. Department of Labor announced \$475 million in grants to community colleges and universities around the country for the development and expansion of innovative training programs in partnership with local employers. The grants are part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant program, a multiyear, \$2 billion initiative to expand targeted training programs for unemployed workers, especially those impacted by foreign trade.

MWCC, the lead institution, joined Southwest Tennessee Community College, North Central State College in Ohio, and Bossier Parish Community College in Louisiana to create the Advanced Manufacturing, Mechatronics, and Quality Consortium to help job seekers quickly obtain training and credentials in the advanced manufacturing fields of Mechatronics and Quality career pathways.

The consortium was awarded a total of \$15,875,432. MWCC, which partnered with the three institutions based upon similar economic development goals and interests in their regions, was awarded \$6,450,356 to provide accelerated training and credentialing programs in North Central Massachusetts that build upon manufacturing training initiatives implemented by MWCC through Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) funding received in 2011.

“We are delighted to be selected as the lead institution in this critical workforce initiative and in the confidence the Department of Labor has shown in our college and in the consortium to help reshape the workforce in our respective regions,” said MWCC President Daniel M. Asquino.

“Regional statistics show a need for skilled employees in advanced manufacturing, an industry that does form the backbone of our local economy,” said Jacqueline Belrose, MWCC vice president of lifelong learning and

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workforce development. "This grant will enhance our ability to provide hands-on training, experience and credentials to hundreds of unemployed and incumbent workers in our region and put them on their way to high-paying jobs at local companies."

The Advanced Manufacturing, Mechatronics, and Quality Consortium will serve more than 1,720 TAA-eligible workers, veterans and other individuals in Ohio, Louisiana, Massachusetts and Tennessee. Each college brings a unique expertise in the mechatronics and quality fields that will be leveraged to create and implement stacked and latticed credentials that will be shared across all four colleges.

Together all four colleges will implement an entry level program that will include a common assessment process for assessing students' advanced manufacturing aptitude using Standard Timing Model technology and Work Keys enabled tools and will align with the National Career Readiness Certificate that will be regionally adaptable to meet the unique needs of each region. The project's intent is that all students will complete the training with the National Career Readiness Certificate and one or more industry-recognized certifications that can be stacked and latticed for greater skill attainment and employment flexibility.

Additionally, all colleges will align curriculum and offer a Certified Production Technician curriculum aligned with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC). AMMQC will then develop and/or adapt intermediate and advanced stackable and latticed credentials using a Center of Excellence approach that uses the existing strength of each college to develop competency models and corresponding credentials that will be validated by industry and shared across all colleges. These stackable credentials will address the needs of employers for increased technical skills; they will be customized to each of the region's needs so that the credits will articulate into credit-bearing programs at the colleges and among colleges.

The Manufacturing Institute, an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), will serve as the key partner in aligning the targeted stacked and latticed credentials developed and/or modified with industry recognized credentials. AMMQC will also develop a common system for awarding prior learning credit and using technology enhanced instruction that will accelerate time to completion.

College Receives Additional Funding from NSF

This past summer, MWCC also was awarded two multi-year grants from the National Science Foundation totaling over \$1.1 million to bolster training and the economy in the region.

MWCC was awarded a five-year, \$640,000 grant for students pursuing academic degrees in the STEM fields. The grant will provide scholarships and support services to 150 full-time students in science, technology, engineering and math programs. Recipients have the potential to receive up to \$3,300 as they complete their associate degrees in four science, technology, engineering and mathematics majors: biotechnology; computer information systems; pre-engineering; and natural resources.

A three-year NSF grant totaling \$779,716 will support a new Advanced Technological Education program. The project, administered through the college's Division of Lifelong Learning and Workforce Development, will develop four competency-based stackable credentials that lead to a new Associate Degree in Analytical and Quality Technology. The modular curriculum will be incorporated into credit-bearing courses as well as non-credit workforce training courses to meet specific needs of industry.



Mount Wachusett Community College recently announced the opening of its Manufacturing Workforce Certification Center at its Devens campus during the second annual National Manufacturing Day on Oct. 4

MWCC Receives Continued Recognition as a Top Military Friendly School

GARDNER – A designated Yellow Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs with a long history of supporting veterans, Mount Wachusett Community College has received continued national recognition for the wrap-around services provided through its Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success.

The center has become a vibrant hub on campus focused on academic success, personalized support, camaraderie and civic engagement.

For the fifth consecutive year Mount Wachusett has been recognized as a top military friendly school for creating a culture of positive energy and academic support for veterans, active military members and their dependents. The 2014 Military Friendly Schools list, released by Victory Media, names the top 20 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace military students and ensure their success in the classroom and after graduation. Now in its fifth year, the list serves as the primary resource for service members and military families seeking education and captures best practices among schools in supporting military students.

MWCC also was recognized this fall as a top military friendly school by Military Times Edge and Military Advanced Education.

In August, MWCC was recognized as one of 250 colleges and universities taking part in President Obama's new "8 Keys to Success" initiative to help boost academic opportunities and improve employment outcomes for veterans. The eight keys build on the administration's work to provide veterans and military families with a high-quality, affordable education and highlight specific ways that colleges and universities can support veterans as they pursue their education and employment goals.

MWCC is one of six Massachusetts institutions and the first community college in the Commonwealth to embrace the 8 Keys initiative.

"We are proud and honored to be recognized for our ongoing commitment to the men and women who courageously serve our country, and to their families who also make a tremendous sacrifice," said President Daniel M. Asquino. "It is our privilege and duty to support these heroes within our communities as they pursue academic and career goals. Moreover, their presence and active participation on our campus enriches the entire college community."

In 2010, MWCC was one of 15 colleges in the country selected to establish a model center through a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Though the three-year, \$400,000 grant concluded this fall, the college has fully incorporated the center's services and programs into its array of comprehensive student support services. The veterans' success center is now serving more than 300 students each year. Support services address the unique academic, financial, social and physical needs to veterans, military personnel and military families transitioning to college life.

"I got here just as the center was starting up and got to see how it progressed over the years," said Marine Corps veteran and business administration major Nicholas Guthmiller of Gardner, who served in Iraq. "This veterans center has really helped me out. The first semester I was here I really struggled with the transition of going from one world to a completely different world. Being around other veterans who are going through the same thing really helped ease the transition."



Mount Wachusett Community College's Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success has become a vibrant hub on campus. The college has received national recognition from several organizations for its support for veterans and military personnel and for implementing the Obama Administration's new "8 Keys to Success" initiative. Students and staff members include, front row: Andrew Brunell, David LeBlanc, Andy Kinglsey, Nick Guthmiller; back row, Nate Radke, Center Director Kristine Larkin, Jeff Young, Chris Miller, Adam Tenney, VA certifying official Sarah Savoie, Mitchell Landry and Nicholas Jamieson.

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology

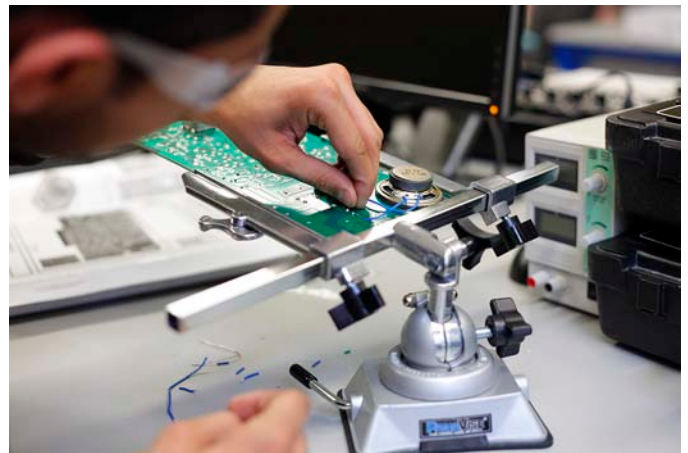
The Emerging Power of the Associate of Science Degree

At Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT), a non-profit college of engineering and industrial technologies in Boston's South End, we see employment as the essential indicator of institutional success. Currently, 90% of our graduates secure a job in their field or continue their studies towards a bachelor degree. While we are proud of our achievement, we need to do a better job in demonstrating the value proposition of the associate degree (especially in STEM fields) to high schools in order to increase recruitment of high school students.

Two-year college grads in STEM fields are well prepared for economic self-sufficiency. In fact, in February, a story in the Hechinger Report of Teachers College, Columbia University, pointed out that average first year earnings for associate degree students is one or two thousand dollars higher than for bachelor's graduates. In some technical fields, such as energy, health care, or computer networking, associate degree and even certificate holders earn more than the average master's recipient. Georgetown University Center for Education and the Workforce (CEW) reports that nearly 30% of Americans with associate degrees now make more than those with bachelor's degrees. An associate degree can ramp up a student's earning power in half the time and for much less money than many four-year options.

Here in Massachusetts, Governor Patrick has created a statewide Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative to partner industry with STEM education. These networks of private-public partnerships aim to train a skilled workforce so that advanced manufacturing jobs remain in the state. These jobs are essential to the innovation economy and the vitality of the region. Economists forecast over 100,000 jobs in this sector alone opening here in Massachusetts over the next decade. Most of these jobs will require a specific set of skills and training provided by the associate degree. With the average annual salary for these skilled advanced manufacturing jobs at around \$75,000, they provide a ladder to middle class prosperity.

At BFIT, we rely on our dialogue with industry to inform all of our academic programs. Because of our relative small size, our college is nimble in adjusting, augmenting, and developing curriculum to meet the demands of industry. A visit to Kiva Systems prompted planning for a course in lean manufacturing. Our Partnership with FastCap Systems—a startup geared towards solving some of our toughest energy problems—has provided internship and job opportunities for our graduates. Infrared technologies are being used in our HVAC program to prepare future technicians for changing protocols in the field. A partnership with the Compliance Mentor Group LLC places our students in a year-long mentorship program where they get real world job training on construction sites around the city. This partnership introduced a new associate of science degree



program in our Building Technology Department called Construction Management when it became evident that the need to deliver a facility on schedule and within budget requires a specific set of skills. In order to meet industry demand for new hires that possess technical-speak, foundational business knowledge, information literacy, and management skills, the College is rolling out a new associate of science degree program in Technology Business and Management in the fall of 2014. Our Opticianry program—the only one in the state—is preparing young people for good careers as opticians, boasting a job placement rate of 99.5%, while our associate of science degree program in electrical technology (also unique in MA) is training the next generation of electricians to replace an aging workforce.

Furthermore, our College's collaboration with the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC)—a nonprofit organization that connects business, the Boston Public Schools, higher education, government, labor, and community organizations to

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create innovative workforce and education solutions that benefit Boston residents and businesses alike—continually influences our choices in curriculum planning and program development, resulting in skills alignment. Our new Bachelor of Science program in Health Information Technology was inspired, in part, by the productive conversations we had over the course of a year with healthcare leaders of area hospitals, colleges, and workforce partners where the need for medical electronic records technicians became quickly evident. The acceleration of the transition from paper-based medical systems to IT-enabled systems has created an urgent need for a Health Information Technicians. As the fastest growing field in the health care industry, Health Information Technicians will not only save the industry billions of dollars, but improve the quality of healthcare. Currently, BFIT is the only college in Massachusetts to offer this Bachelor of Science degree.

21st century skills are also a vital indicator of student success in the workplace. Communication, critical thinking, professionalism, sustainability, and teamwork, are commonly identified by employers as desired qualities in future hires regardless of industry. BFIT prides itself on developing these skills in our students through in an intimate classroom and lab setting, so that when they enter the workforce, they are not only tooled for success, but placed on the fast track for leadership roles.

As technology evolves, so does our approach to teaching it. New England's economic vitality rests on the ability of industry, government, educational institutions, and private enterprise to work in concert. This collaboration will continue to demonstrate the tailored value of the Associate of Science degree in meeting industry needs both now and in the future."

Middlesex Community College

Middlesex Community College Trains Health Care Students to Quickly Enter the Workforce

LOWELL, Mass. -- Middlesex Community College's Academy of Health Professions (AHP) offers short-term, accelerated programs that prepare students for entry-level careers in health care fields – and allow them to work while they continue their education.

Since 2010, this innovative program on MCC's Lowell campus has turned out a growing number of skilled health care workers to meet the industry's increasing needs. Middlesex AHP programs include Certified Nursing Assistant, Clinical Laboratory Assistant, Medical Office Administration, Medical Receptionist and Phlebotomy. And, coming this spring is a new evening Medical Assistant certificate program.

AHP graduates are among the growing ranks of medical professionals who work with patients before and after seeing their doctors. They are the medical receptionists, office administrators, nursing assistants, phlebotomists and clinical laboratory assistants who are integral to the new team-like approach to medical care.

"Today, health care is all about teamwork. There's a need for trained personnel to assist with blood draws, give injections, and handle front office (receptionist) jobs," said Denise Garrow-Pruitt, MCC's Assistant Dean of Health.

AHP trains students in a nontraditional way, through accelerated, short-term, hands-on courses. The program also assists students with clinical practicums and is focused on getting them into the workforce quickly – a boon to workers looking for jobs.



Denise Garrow-Pruitt, Middlesex Community College Assistant Dean of Health (left), and Academy of Health Professions Director Angel Pepin (right) have extensive experience as hospital administrators and share that knowledge with AHP students.

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Courses are offered days or evening/weekends in eight-week sessions on a rolling-admissions basis. AHP students can enter at any level of the program, as long as they meet entry requirements, including a reading test, physical exam, immunizations and criminal screenings. Clinical practicums are offered at area hospitals, nursing homes and medical offices.

“Our goal is to help those who are unemployed or underemployed learn the skills and get into jobs in the medical field with 18 to 29 credits and a certificate,” Garrow-Pruitt explained. “After being hired in entry-level positions, our students’ employers can help them to continue their training – with tuition reimbursement – and move into more highly skilled jobs.”

Established in 2010 with funding from the Commonwealth Corp. and now part of the Massachusetts Community Colleges & Workforce Development “Transformation Agenda,” AHP offers students intensive, comprehensive and content-driven training that allows them to work while they continue their education, said Angel Pepin, Director of AHP and a former hospital administrator.

“Our program model provides students with ‘stackable’ certificates that give them options to enter the health care field and continue on a career path to other health careers,” he explained.

Amy Koukou and Susan Grenier are prime examples of a key AHP goal: to expedite the training of underemployed workers, or those seeking career changes, and introduce them to exciting careers in the health industry.

Before enrolling in AHP, both women had jobs, but were no longer satisfied with their work. Koukou was a nursing assistant in a local long-term care facility, and Grenier was a public school special needs paraprofessional.

After exploring options at AHP, they enrolled in the Phlebotomy and Clinical Laboratory Assistant certificate programs. Koukou and Grenier have now completed their studies and certification as phlebotomists and clinical lab assistants, and are trained for jobs drawing blood in a hospital or medical practice lab, and assisting in those laboratories.

“I learned so much in AHP,” said Koukou, a Liberian native who lives in Lowell, Mass. “They teach you skills, including lots of hands-on practice drawing blood on each other.”

Grenier, from Salem, N.H., originally planned to become a nurse. But an AHP instructor’s enthusiasm for phlebotomy and clinical lab work swayed her to change her mind. “Once I learned about the laboratory assistant programs, I changed my focus. I found that I liked the idea of working with people in phlebotomy, as well as in the lab. And in 2014, I plan to enroll in MCC’s new Medical Laboratory Technology degree program,” she said.

“We work with students to get them employed,” added Garrow-Pruitt. Success rates are high for AHP program participants because of the training and support they receive, she said. “Health care careers have no expiration date. Our students learn specialized skills to prepare them now, and there will always be a need for people who do these jobs.”

For more information about Middlesex Community College’s Academy of Health Professions, visit <http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/ahp> or call 1-800-818-3434.

MCC is one of the largest, most comprehensive community colleges in Massachusetts. We offer more than 75 degree and certificate programs, plus hundreds of noncredit courses, during the day, evening and weekend, on our Bedford and Lowell campuses, and online. Middlesex – a great place to begin your future!



Middlesex Academy of Health Professions students Amy Koukou (left) and Susan Grenier practice their phlebotomy skills on each other, as part of their AHP coursework.

Massasoit Community College

Collaboration is the Key

Massasoit Community College and The Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board (BAWIB) in collaboration with Churchill Linen are training employees on-site as part of a Learn at Training Implementation Grant funded by the Commonwealth Corporation. In 2012, BAWIB led Massasoit and Churchill Linen in applying for (and receiving) The Learn at Work Planning Grant to conduct a workplace needs analysis and workplace education program design. Following the analysis last year, an implementation grant was awarded to conduct the training which started this past summer. Massasoit Community College enrolled and is currently training 28 Churchill Linens employees who are now immersed in the program. With a collaborative approach between the College, the WIB and Churchill Linen has resulted in a program that is valued by the participants as evidenced by the attendance rate, 19 of the 27 participants have rates of 93% or higher.

Established in 1932, Churchill Linen is a full service linen company providing quality linens and service to businesses in the New England area. They have kept the same standards from the day they started and it shows in the quality of services customers receive. They take pride in quality and comfort in all of their products. In addition, Churchill Linens has been a strong advocate for the Cape Verdean population, as a large segment of their workforce are of Cape Verdean descent. Through the needs analysis they discovered that they could strengthen their efficiency and effectiveness if supervisors were able to communicate better with non-English speaking employees. Massasoit CC developed a contextualized curriculum in conjunction with the floor supervisors, to create the most effective learning design for the employees. A 36-week, 144-hour program was designed to assist employees in their understanding of the English language which will allow them to progress in their careers with Churchill. In turn, the company anticipate that they will ultimately save money, become more efficient, and reduce accidents.

The trainings are offered through Massasoit Community College on location at Churchill Linen. Employees attend classes on-site at the end of their work day two days/week. As an incentive, employees who attend at least 80% of the classes receive a company stipend. Massasoit also offers student support services after class by providing tutoring after class for those who wish to participate.

Quinsigamond Community College

QCC Announces New Healthcare and Workforce Development Center

Our new location is in the heart of the Commonwealth's high growth industry and... [will be] accessible to everyone," QCC President Dr. Gail E. Carberry said during the ceremonial lease signing event in February at the location of QCC's new Healthcare and Workforce Development Center.

The site, owned by the Worcester Business Development Corporation, is located in the former Telegram and Gazette building at 18-20 Franklin Street. The downtown location will support an estimated 1,500 students, faculty and administrators, in addition to creating space for workforce development programs.

QCC is dedicated to removing barriers to higher education. This new expansion is no exception. President Carberry indicated



Jeanne Dee, 2012 graduate of the QCC Nurse Education program speaks to attendees about her educational experiences at QCC.

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myriad opportunities that will be available to students at the new location, which will also alleviate overcrowding on the West Boylston Street campus.

The 72,409 square foot facility will more than double the space that QCC's Health Care programs currently have, making it possible to increase program offerings and enrollment and enable the use state-of-the-art simulation technology.

In addition to the new healthcare opportunities, the Center will also support QCC's current efforts to provide state-of-the-art training and education for Central Massachusetts businesses that need highly qualified and well-educated employees.

At the ceremony, Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education Senator Michael O. Moore pointed to the importance that community colleges have in the local economy, stating, "innovations at our community colleges...continue to ensure that the Commonwealth remains an attractive destination for businesses and provide them with a skilled workforce."

Kathie Manning, Dean of QCC's Training and Education Center noted, "...this is one of the areas that QCC excels in and the new location will allow us to better serve all the workforce needs of the employers in Central Massachusetts." Worcester Business Development Corporation President and CEO Craig Blais added that the project "...will bring a renewed sense of activity to our downtown neighborhood."



Massachusetts Division of Asset Management Maintenance (DCAMM) Commissioner Carole Cornelison emphasized the commitment to "...furthering our economic partnership with the City of Worcester... Quinsigamond Community College's new downtown presence will play a vital role in the revitalization of this Gateway City."

Capital Community College

Capital Community College Awarded Federal Grant to Prepare Unemployed Workforce for High Growth Jobs That Play Role in Crises

Hartford, CT - Capital Community College has been awarded \$2.3 million as part of a seven college, four state \$23,516,787 federal grant to expand targeted training for unemployed workers, particularly those impacted by foreign trade.

Led by Passaic County Community College in New Jersey, the Northeast Resiliency Consortium (NRC) of community colleges also includes Housatonic in Bridgeport, Bunker Hill in Massachusetts, Atlantic Cape in New Jersey, and Kingsborough and LaGuardia in New York. The NRC has joined forces to build a highly-skilled, qualified workforce to help mitigate their communities' short- and long-term vulnerabilities, as all were recently affected by crises and natural disasters including Hurricane Sandy, Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings, and the Boston Marathon bombings.

The partners will design and deliver critically needed programming and technology in industries that are crucial in preventing, responding and recovering from disasters and crises: health care, information technology and environmental technologies. They will prepare trade-impacted workers, veterans and other individuals, for employment and upward mobility in what are three of the Northeast's largest growth areas.

"Capital was particularly attracted to the theme of the grant - using education and innovation to create resilient workers, institutions and communities, that can both avert and recover from disasters," said Mary Ann Affleck, Capital's academic

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dean. “The curriculum to be developed by the consortium will include cyber-security, “green” construction management and training for first responders.”

NRC grantees will use funds to transform the way they schedule, sequence and deliver education and training programs that can be completed in two years or less. A variety of activities will be made possible, including hiring or training instructors to expand capacity to offer in-demand courses or certifications, leveraging online learning to accelerate skills attainment, developing new curricula and training models to add additional classes and certifications, purchasing new equipment to ensure students train on what employers actually use, designing new programs based on the input and needs of local employers, and expanding career pathways in which credentials are linked to industry skills and lead participants to jobs requiring advanced capabilities.

“We are excited to be a partner in this collaboration and know that it will have a great impact on Capital and the communities we serve,” said Wilfredo Nieves, Capital Community College’s president. “Through the grant we will be able to strengthen and enhance our region’s labor force by providing education and training in high-skill and new and growing workforce sectors.”

Capital Community College Joins Forces with Six Other Colleges and Two National Organizations to Aid Workforce Development in Northeast with \$23.5 Million

Hartford, CT – The Northeast Resiliency Consortium (NRC), composed of Capital Community College and six other community colleges in the Northeastern U.S. and two national organizations (Achieving the Dream and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching), has been awarded \$23.5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career and Training (TAACCCT) program to develop training programs committed to creating a highly skilled and resilient workforce. Capital Community College will work collaboratively with its consortium lead Passaic County Community College (NJ) and its co-grantees Atlantic Cape Community College (NJ), Bunker Hill Community College (MA), Housatonic Community College (CT), Kingsborough Community College and LaGuardia Community College (NY).

The NRC will become the region’s leader in addressing the employment needs of three industry sectors that are instrumental in helping local communities respond, recover, and adapt in times of crises, including health care, information technology, and environmental technologies, all of which are among this region’s largest growth industries. Dr. Mary Ann Affleck, Dean of Academic Affairs, commented on the specific programs that Capital will develop, saying, “This grant will enable Capital to develop degree programs related to cyber-security and green construction, workforce areas that are key in preventing and responding to environmental and technological disasters.”

Through a sustained and coordinated effort, Capital Community College will work with Achieving the Dream, the Carnegie Foundation, the community college partners and employers to build regional capacity for helping trade-impacted, unemployed persons, veterans and other workers in obtaining the competencies and credentials needed to transition seamlessly into demand occupations and to advance along a career pathway.

“Capital Community College’s participation in this Achieving the Dream initiative is affirmation of our role as a national leader college,” said Doris Arrington, the college’s Dean of Student Services. “To respond to local educational and workforce needs, while simultaneously broadening access to those who are underserved and underemployed, is central to our mission and what we do best.”

Norwalk Community College

When Employers Talk, Norwalk Community College Listens

The first community college established in Connecticut, NCC has a long history of developing programs in response to changing workforce needs.

During the dotcom era, NCC deployed programs in the newly emerging fields of web design, information technology, and computer security. In the 1990s, NCC anticipated the coming nursing shortage and worked closely with local hospitals to expand its nursing and allied health offerings and raise money for a new Center for Science, Health and Wellness.

The center opened in 2011 and features a 10-bed hospital simulation unit and Sim-Men patient simulators that can “breathe” and tell you where it hurts.

Recently, NCC took on an even bigger challenge – to put Connecticut’s labor force back on the job in the wake of the Great Recession of 2008, and to provide a pipeline of skilled workers in the exploding STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

Last year, Norwalk Community College received a \$12.1 million federal workforce training grant to help veterans, unemployed and underemployed workers prepare for new careers. U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis toured the college’s Center for Science, Health and Wellness and announced that NCC would lead a seven-college consortium in launching the Connecticut Health and Life Sciences Career Initiative.

Funding for the CT Health and Life Sciences Career Initiative comes from the \$2 billion Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training initiative (TAACCCT) administered by the U.S. Dept. of Labor.

As leader of the consortium, NCC is helping to educate and train residents for the 11,000 jobs expected to open in Connecticut over the next eight years in the health and life sciences. NCC is developing certifications, industry-recognized credentials and associate degrees, which combine classroom instruction with internships and clinical experiences.

“Community colleges are the engines of economic development,” said Solis, who has since resigned as Secretary of Labor. “Institutions like Norwalk Community College are making it possible for students with limited resources to enter the fields our nation needs most.”

NCC is fostering partnerships between community colleges and local employers to promote skills development and employment opportunities in such fields as nursing, allied health, science, technology, veterinary science, mobile phone technology, digital journalism, math, engineering, manufacturing and medical records technology. In addition to NCC, the Connecticut consortium includes Capital, Gateway, Manchester, and Middlesex Community Colleges; and Charter Oak State College and Eastern Connecticut State University.

In the past six months, NCC has launched a new Associate Degree program in Veterinary Technology. This program prepares graduates for higher education in the veterinary field, or for immediate employment in veterinary offices, research facilities, stables, dairies, and drug manufacturing companies. The college’s new Veterinary Assistant Certificate program, which can be completed in less than a year, prepares workers to assist veterinarians in clinics or animal hospitals.

Graduates of both NCC programs are eligible to take the Veterinary Technology National Exam, which provides national certification. Increasingly, veterinarians are requiring employees to have this important credential.



Students in Norwalk Community College’s Exercise Science Laboratory do a sports performance analysis.

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The college also has launched a new Group Exercise Instructor Certificate program featuring coursework in the fields of exercise physiology, kinesiology, and nutrition. Program graduates complete will have the expertise to work in commercial and clinical settings, and be prepared to take the American College of Sports Medicine's Group Exercise Instructor Certification Exam.

As medical facilities and doctor's offices make the federally mandated transition to electronic record-keeping, there is an urgent need for skilled workers who can design and manage electronic medical records systems. NCC offers instruction in this critical specialty through a one-year Medical Office Specialist Certificate and a two-year Associate of Science degree in Medical Office Management.

Health and science are not the only fields NCC is preparing workers for. With many older adults out of work or seeking to transition to a new career, NCC offers skill updates and career makeovers – and the ability to enter the job market quickly and affordably.

NCC is helping out-of-work journalists make the transition from print to online communications with a new Digital Journalism Certificate. This program was developed in response to the shrinking print journalism market. The certificate combines courses in graphic design, journalism and digital film editing with a digital journalism course on writing multimedia stories for the web, blogs and social media.

The college's new Smartphone App Development Certificate Program prepares students to enter the fastest-growing segment of the I.T. application development marketplace. It includes basic programming skills and techniques, an overview of mobile platforms, and device-specific advanced topics.

Baby boomers are benefiting from NCC's economic development programs, too. Baby boomers (Americans born between 1946 and 1964) are virtually coming and going -- many are retiring from the workforce, but a growing number are jumping back in.

In 2012, NCC was chosen to join the American Association of Community College (AACC) Plus 50 Encore Completion Program, a national effort to train 10,000 baby boomers for new careers. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the percentage of adults older than 55 in the workforce will grow to 25 percent in 2020, up from 13 percent in 2000. NCC is helping mature workers complete degrees or short-term certificates in high-demand occupations like early childhood education and social services that give back to the community.

"Connecticut was once famous as an insurance and financial services cluster. But since the Great Recession began, jobs in these fields have declined and the economy has evolved in new directions such as bio-medicine and 3-D manufacturing," said David L. Levinson, Ph. D., NCC President and Vice President for the Community Colleges of the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education.

Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy's economic development plan calls for the state to become a center for bio-medicine in the coming decade.

NCC has plans to partner with Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine, a laboratory specializing in the new field of personalized medical treatments based on a person's genetic code. Jackson Laboratory is constructing a new facility in Farmington, Connecticut, that is projected to create thousands of new jobs.

Dr. Levinson says the Connecticut Health and Life Sciences Career Initiative is developing programs to train technicians for bio-medicine jobs in hospitals, labs and other facilities, and to provide a career ladder for higher education through the Ph.D. level.



An NCC nursing student scans a name wristband on a patient mannequin.

Photo credit: Richard Freeda

Quinebaug Community College

QVCC Manufacturing Technology Center

The Value of Partnerships – Theory in Action

Danielson, CT – Some people have always known what they wanted to be when they grow up. For others, it was perhaps later in life when a particular situation presented itself and a career path was then chosen. That situation could have involved a teacher whose enthusiasm in their subject matter sparked a growing interest, the influence of a relative whose passion and commitment to their career fostered a desire to emulate, or an opportunity to ‘experiment’ with a career they may not have considered until that moment. Such is the case with the high school students in northeast Connecticut.

Quinebaug Valley Community College, in conjunction with Connecticut workforce development partners of the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (a non-profit consortium of over 30 manufacturing businesses, an area technical high school, two regional community colleges, and regional workforce development representatives) offers area high school students the opportunity to ‘experiment’ with the various aspects of a career in manufacturing by participating in an Annual High School Manufacturing Expo. This event provides students with an awareness of manufacturing as both a path of study and a career option. During this Expo they are exposed to the various facets of the brainstorming process through the development of a feasible project idea, design of a marketing plan, the creation of a model, and finally turning that model into a product -- showcasing their entire project and project documentation notebooks to a community audience and panel of judges.

Each high school is partnered with a manufacturing company from the region and work with that company throughout the months it takes to complete their project. They learn about their partner company from the inside out and in the process gain awareness to the vast diversity of products made at other manufacturing companies participating in this event. It is an invaluable experience that offers a great deal of insight and information that could not be provided in any other type of ‘hands-on’ venue.

In addition, these students learn about the manufacturing programs and Manufacturing Technology Center offerings here at QVCC as a cost-effective option for gaining either a certificate or degree in the manufacturing field with an avenue to move onward to a 4-year institution or future employment in the region via our internship program – a great way for college students to gain experience and companies to investigate the caliber of possible future hires. QVCC facilitates student internships for Engineering Science and Technology Studies degree students. Area manufacturing companies provide meaningful work, 10–12 weeks of full-time employment, and fair compensation while giving students the necessary hands-on experience needed to complete their skill-set. Upon completion of their internships and subsequent degree attainment, many of these students have returned to their ‘host’ companies for full-time employment. This gives their company partners prime access to the academic technical pipeline of skilled students that are home-grown and in most instances, looking the stay in this region of Connecticut long-term, and improves the quality of life in the eastern Connecticut area by engaging learners in the classroom, developing leaders in the workplace, and creating partners in the community (the QVCC mission).



High School Manufacturing Expo Project: Stick Appeal – The table top with a peel that keeps your table and cutting boards clean.



Mark Vesligaj, QVCC Professor of Engineering Science; Jim Dandeneau, CEO of Putnam Plastics; with QVCC interns-turned-employees Rebecca Byberg '10 and Breanna Boyden '08

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An extremely important factor for the State's manufacturing initiative is the construction of the new Advanced Manufacturing Center at the College's Danielson location, thus enabling the College to train students to fill existing and future job openings -- a key consideration in Connecticut since over half of the State's existing workforce is over the age of 45 and job openings due to retirement will become a stark reality for many during the next decade.

Supporting the mission of the College, QVCC's Manufacturing Technology Center provides students a blend of theoretical and practical experiences in advanced technologies relevant to the needs of their community's manufacturing companies. In their first successful year QVCC's Manufacturing Technology Center graduated 33 students - 31 of which gained employment by various regional machine and mold shops, and other manufacturing facilities. In addition, 77 percent of this first class maintained a GPA of 3.4 or higher during their first academic year.

Breanna Boyden enrolled in the QVCC Engineering Science program in 2007, and became part of QVCC's internship program by working as a paid intern in the Quality Department at area biomedical polymer company Foster Corporation. As Foster Corporation's first intern, Breanna coordinated multiple projects while applying the technical skills received at QVCC. Breanna said she learned a lot about good documentation practice and wrote several technical reports on her projects and testing. Breanna is most proud of her biggest accomplishment while at Foster -- her research project. She and one of the company's engineers completed a technical paper for presentation at ANTEC (Annual Technical Conference sponsored by the Society of Plastics Engineers).

Upon her graduation from Cornell University in 2011, she was hired full-time and now holds the position of Quality Engineering Laboratory Supervisor at Foster Corporation in nearby Putnam. Breanna also serves as a member of the QVCC Foundation as she travels her own journey from "Learner to Leader to Partner". Breanna is just one student of many who represents the value of college-business partnerships in developing curriculum to meet workforce needs.

In a different kind of partnership, QVCC's Instructor of Engineering and Technology Jakob Spjut was one of 10 Connecticut high school and college educators who took part in a manufacturing technologies and practices externship aimed to enhance manufacturing education by bringing the business and education communities together. The goals of this externship were to prepare students for high-tech manufacturing jobs and help Connecticut's manufacturers maintain a skilled and competitive workforce. Spjut spent 160 hours at local manufacturer Spirol International (fabricator of coiled, slotted and solid pins, spacers, shims, etc.) setting up heat treatment machines, working in a sorting room and performing hardness tests in the quality control department. This experience will serve him well as he prepares to teach Metrology, a new course offering at the College this semester.

From high school to workforce, Quinebaug Valley Community College puts theory into action with the Learners, Leaders, and Partners of the "community" known as the eastern region of Connecticut!



Breanna Boyden



Engineering technician and QVCC graduate Hans Wannier and QVCC instructor Jakob Spjut in front of a sorting machine at Spirol International in Danielson