

BC3's free program can develop workers for manufacturing, administrator says

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(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College will offer in July a free manufacturing pre-apprenticeship certificate program for eligible participants who can develop skills and earn nationally recognized credentials to enter Butler County's second-largest industry, a BC3 administrator said.

Students in BC3's 150-hour noncredit program, registered through the state Department of Labor, will learn about basic blueprint reading, manufacturing processes and introduction to computer numerical control, among other topics, said Kelly McKissick, coordinator of professional education and certificate programs in BC3's Workforce Development division.

In addition to obtaining a BC3 certificate and a registered pre-apprenticeship certificate from state Department of Labor, students can attain National Institute for Metalworking Skills credentials in measurement, material and safety; and in job planning, benchwork and layout.

They can also earn National Tooling and Machining Association credentials in precision machining technology; blueprint reading; and quality control, statistical process control and inspection; and an Occupational Safety and Health Administration 10-hour general industry card.

"There is a great demand for a labor force," McKissick said. "Having these skills and credentials are definitely an advancement on your resume to obtain a better position or an apprenticeship. Coming in with those skills makes a big difference."

The program is free to eligible participants as a result of a \$147,000 grant BC3 received from the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board and the state Department of Labor, McKissick said. To be eligible, students must pass a drug screening and criminal background check, complete a vocational screening assessment and possess a high school diploma or its equivalency.

BC3's program is scheduled from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays from July 15 to Sept. 5. Classes will be held on BC3's main campus following the purchase of a vertical mill, four computer numerical control simulators and other equipment from a portion of a \$20,000 grant BC3 received from XTO Energy.

Classes on OSHA topics and employability skills are set for Sept. 9-13.

BC3's manufacturing pre-apprenticeship certificate can lead to employment opportunities as machine operators, assemblers and press operators; or apprenticeships in machining, computer numerical control or quality control, McKissick said.

Scott Covert, training coordinator, Penn United Technologies, Cabot, will instruct the courses.

The manufacturing industry employed 13.8 percent of Butler County's workforce as of May, according to the state Department of Labor, trailing only health care and social assistance, at 15.9 percent.

For more information, contact McKissick at 724-287-8711 Ext. 8171 or email kelly.mckissick@bc3.edu.