



MEDIA RELEASE

CT Department of Labor Communications Office
Sharon M. Palmer, Commissioner

Community Colleges Now Helping To Train Students In Manufacturing Apprenticeships

New Partnership Brings Learning Component to College System

WETHERSFIELD, February 19, 2014 – Department of Labor Commissioner Sharon M. Palmer and Board of Regents President Gregory W. Gray today announced a new multi-agency partnership that will allow individuals taking part in registered apprenticeship programs and training for careers in manufacturing fields to obtain educational instruction at six of the state’s community colleges.

“This is an excellent example of state agencies sharing their resources and knowledge for the common good of building a stronger workforce for Connecticut’s employers,” said Commissioner Palmer. “The goal was to define the skills employers truly need, which in turn assisted our community colleges in developing curriculum that effectively complements the on-the-job training required of every apprentice.”

The partnership, which includes the Connecticut Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship Training, Board of Regents for Higher Education, Connecticut Colleges and Universities, and the State Department of Education, is part of an effort to bring the learning component of the apprenticeship program to community colleges so students can enroll in either day or evening classes, train on state-of-the-art equipment, and complete the comprehensive classroom component more quickly. Community colleges offering related instruction classes include the four Advanced Manufacturing Centers at Asnuntuck Community College, Housatonic Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College and Quinebaug Valley Community College, as well as Manchester Community College and Middlesex Community College.

“Connecticut’s community colleges are uniquely positioned to react rapidly to changing workforce demands and ensure that our students get the highest-quality training in their fields,” said President Gray. “This partnership takes advantage of our strong advanced manufacturing programs taking talented students through training right into the workplace -- producing skilled manufacturers and contributing to the statewide economy.”

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Each year of registered apprenticeship requires a minimum of 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and 144 hours of related classroom instruction. Most apprentices interested in manufacturing careers are in training for three to four years, which translates to between 6,000 and 8,000 hours of on-the-job work and up to 576 hours of related instruction. While the related instruction can now be accomplished at the designated community colleges, the on-the-job training hours must be earned in a workplace setting.

Registered Apprenticeship is the premier form of workforce development that combines a work schedule of on-the-job training with related classroom instruction. Currently, there are more than 4,600 registered apprentices in the state, working for 1,500 active employers-sponsors.

One major difference is that a graduated four year apprentice will likely have no student loan debt as opposed to a four year college student. Additionally, many apprenticeship programs also qualify for college credits.

Upon completion of an apprenticeship, average wages are \$50,000 per year with most earning excellent retirement and health benefits in addition to wages. Careers often advance into supervisory or project management positions, jobs in health and safety, while others open successful businesses.

For further information on registered apprenticeship programs, please contact Program Manager Vinnie Valente, Office of Apprenticeship Training, at Vinnie.Valente@ct.gov.

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