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APPRENTICESHIPS: A BEST PRACTICE FOR DIFFICULT TO FILL POSITIONS

Kenny Price had his foot in the door with Burnstein von Seelen even before he completed his Machine Tool Technology degree at Piedmont Technical College. The Abbeville company took Price on as an apprentice in the Tool and Die division, which has now led to a full-time position with the company.

And they're looking for even more machinists.

"I contacted Bob (Koster) because we were struggling to find tool makers," said Chris Ramey, tool room supervisor at Burnstein. "Seventy-five percent of my work force is at retirement age." (continued on page 2)

A SOLUTION TO A NATIONWIDE CHALLENGE

Burnstein isn't alone in having difficulty finding employees. In fact, according to the 2012 Talent Shortage Survey, a study conducted each year by ManpowerGroup, finding qualified machinists is one of the top ten most difficult recruiting tasks for companies in the United States, and it has been for five out of the last six years.

After conducting national searches for qualified workers, the company decided to take a proactive approach to the problem. Ramey met with Koster, department head for metal trades at PTC, seeking qualified students to become apprentices at Burnstein. He said he was impressed with Price's maturity level and potential and offered him the position.

“What Kenny is doing now is what most machine shops used to do,” Koster said. “Little by little, the journeyman would teach apprentice workers to run the machines and allow them to do more as they learned. So by doing this, Burnstein is ‘growing their own.’ It’s the best way to fill these positions.”

While apprenticeships help the company ensure employees have the right skills to be productive, Ramey says he has to strike a balance between teaching and keeping the shop running. The training provided by the Machine Tool Technology program at Piedmont Tech creates the solid foundation Ramey and other machine shops throughout the region need.

A SOLID FOUNDATION

“I was very prepared with the basics,” said Price. “The instructors at Piedmont Tech taught me a lot on the manual machines.”

“Bob works with these students and knows which students have the mentality to be a good machinist,” Ramey said. “They find the students that show the ability and we can take them and work with them.”

Price received his associate degree in June. He's half-way through his apprenticeship, but he is already excelling at his job.

“Kenny has improved over time, so we've put him into a position that opened up due to a retirement,” Ramey said.

“We will continue the apprenticeship, but as he becomes more self-sufficient, we can bring in a new apprentice.”

A TIME-TESTED METHOD

The apprenticeship program is the best-practice method for introducing students to the machine tool technology field, Koster said. The companies participating in the program are being proactive and preparing their own work force from the beginning.

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There are also benefits for workers who complete their training in this way, said Ramey.

“When [Kenny's] done with the apprenticeship program, he gets his journeyman toolmaker, which is an outstanding thing to have for the future. When people see that in our field of work, they know that this guy knows what he's doing,” he said.

The Machine Tool Technology program at Piedmont Tech will continue to provide the work force for machine shops like Burnstein through programs like the apprenticeship. And Ramey said that as long as there's industry, good jobs will be available for well-trained machinists.

“It's a secure, solid career. Within just this fifty mile radius, there are probably 30 or 40 machine shops, and they're all looking for machinists,” said Ramey. “As long as there's always someone out there looking, and you have the skills they need, you'll always have a job.”



NEWS IN BRIEF

PTC ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH CAREER STEP

Piedmont Tech has partnered with Career Step, an online training provider for medical careers, to offer new online healthcare classes, including: Medical Administrative Assistant; Inpatient and Outpatient Medical Coding and Billing; Medical Transcription; and Medical Transcription Editing. Each program is designed to prepare the student to obtain a marketable certification. These programs are flexible, self-paced, and provide placement assistance upon completion.



NURSING ASSISTANT LABS RECEIVE RECOGNITION

Piedmont Tech's Nursing Assistant training labs in

Greenwood and Newberry counties were recently recognized by the South Carolina Department of Health & Human Services. Students in these two labs achieved a National Nurse Aide Assessment Program score of 80 percent or higher on written and skills tests taken in 2011.

PHARMACY TECHNOLOGY CEU COURSES NOW AVAILABLE

Piedmont Tech is now offering live yearly Pharmacy Technology Continuing Education courses. These courses provide Pharmacy technicians an opportunity to complete necessary renewal in their county. Two identical 4-hour sessions were offered in May and June. Pharmacy technicians can now expect to see these each year. ACPE credit for these programs is given by the South Carolina College of Pharmacy.

COMMERCIAL ART PROGRAM EXPANDS OFFERINGS IN MCCORMICK AND LAURENS

Piedmont Technical College is expanding its commercial art program with the addition of photography classes at the Laurens County and McCormick County campuses.



Beginning in the fall, Photography I, the basic digital photography class, will be offered at the Laurens County and McCormick County campuses. Classes will be held beginning at 5:30 p.m. to accommodate anyone interested in taking a basic course.

PTC NURSING PROGRAM REACHES 100 PERCENT NCLEX PASS RATE

Recent graduates of Piedmont Technical College's Associate Degree Nursing program have achieved the elusive mark of perfection. The students who completed the program in December have passed the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) with a 100 percent pass rate. The year to date national average for U.S. educated students is 91.23 percent.

PTC, USC AIKEN CREATE A NEW GATEWAY FOR STUDENTS

Piedmont Technical College and USC Aiken recently signed two agreements that will make it easier for students to pursue their bachelor's degree - an articulation agreement that will provide a new gateway for students who would like to enter the field of early childhood education and a Bridge Program intended to make the transition to the University as uncomplicated as possible.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITADEL

Piedmont Technical College and The Citadel recently signed an articulation agreement that will promote transfer opportunities for students who would like to begin their studies at PTC, and then transfer to The Citadel Evening Undergraduate Studies program.



"Students will still receive the same high quality education with the same instructors as the Corps of Cadets, but in a more traditional university setting like Clemson or USC," said Dr. Robert McNamara, associate dean of Evening Undergraduate Studies. "The delivery system is just different in that the courses are offered in the evening."

TRAINING BEGINS AT THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING



The Piedmont Technical College Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Laurens County is now open for business. The Center opened in late May by providing three training programs for two local companies in the first week of operation, and the facility has been bustling ever since.

"This facility will be an asset not just for our manufacturing partners, but to the general public as well," said Rusty Denning, associate vice president of Continuing Education and Economic



Development at PTC. "Space will be available for meetings, public offering programs or small business training." Offerings have included industrial equipment training, soft skills classes, WorkKeys testing and preparation,

"The Center is a dream that has become a reality. We can now provide a level of training for the industrial base in Laurens County that we'd have been unable to offer previously."

resume writing and behavioral interviewing skills. Three credit programs geared toward providing students with quick preparation for employment in modern manufacturing will be available beginning in the fall semester, and plans for additional offerings are in motion.

"The Center is a dream that has become a reality. We can now provide a level of training for the industrial base in Laurens County that we'd

have been unable to offer previously," said Denning.

The Center's rapid completion came about thanks to a partnership between Piedmont Technical College, the PTC Foundation, Laurens County, the Laurens County Economic Development Corporation and the generous support of local industry.

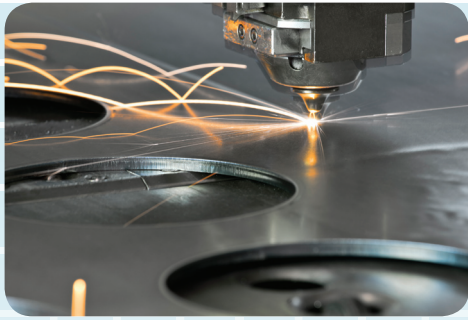


The Center also includes a Work-Readiness Center, which will assist individuals who are seeking employment. Resume building, interviewing techniques and other job skills will be available to those who qualify at no cost.

Phase Two of the project will include a Mechatronics Lab, a Welding Lab, additional CNC equipment and another classroom shared between CNC and Mechatronics. This second phase will also include flexible space to accommodate additional readySC projects as more industries choose to locate in the county in the future.

For more information on the offerings or to schedule training, contact the Center for Advanced Manufacturing at (864) 682-3702.

QUICKSKILLS PROGRAM TO PREPARE WORKERS DIRECTLY FOR ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYMENT



Discussions of employee recruiting in manufacturing often come back to a “skills gap” problem: employers have jobs to fill, but can’t find the workers with the right skills to fill them. With so many large announcements in South Carolina recently — from ZF Group, to expansions by Michelin and Bridgestone — it’s become critically important for large employers and educational institutions to work together to anticipate and fulfill their workforce needs.

Piedmont Technical College has recently collaborated with ZF Group to design three certificates that will prepare students directly for entry-level employment at the new transmission facility in Laurens County, which will eventually employ 1,000 plus workers.

Called QuickSkills, the program offers three different concentrations: Manufacturing Assembly Operator, Quality Assurance Technician, and CNC Operations. Each of these is tied to a specific job that ZF Group will be hiring for in the coming months.

The coursework will be offered at the newly operational PTC Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Laurens County.

Each certificate can be completed in four to six weeks. Students who meet minimum requirements for consideration by HTI for ZF Group will get a guaranteed job interview. Those selected for hire will come on board at a higher pay rate at ZF.

“Response has been very good so far,” said Rusty Denning, PTC associate vice president of Continuing Education and Economic Development. “The phones at the Center for Advanced Manufacturing have been busy since we launched the program in mid-June, and we expect that we’ll have solid enrollment when classes begin this fall.”

“This is about making a connection between the skills employers need and people who are looking for a good job. It’s a win for everyone,” Denning said

After completing the coursework for one or more of these certificates, students will be prepared for entry-level employment as an Assembly Operator, a CNC Machinist, or a Quality Technician at ZF Group.

These positions pay between \$13 and \$16.50 per hour, depending on previous experience.

Students can apply the credits they’ve earned toward an associate degree in Mechatronics or Machine Tool Technology, or toward the Machine Tool diploma, which can lead to careers that pay more than \$20 an hour.



Although the program was developed with ZF Group in mind, Denning says that the Continuing Education division will be working to customize it to meet the needs of other companies throughout the area.

“This is about making a connection between the skills employers need and people who are looking for a good job. It’s a win for everyone,” Denning said.



For more information about QuickSkills, visit www.ptc.edu/quick, or call Wanda Hill at (864) 682-3703.

MANUFACTURING ASSEMBLY TECHNICIAN CLASS MATCHES SKILLS OF UNEMPLOYED AND EMPLOYERS

In May 2012, South Carolina's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 9.1 percent as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The unemployment rate reached a high of 12 percent before beginning to improve.

Many of the people in our region that make up these statistics have been laid off during the course of the recession — and many of them were excellent manufacturing employees who've been unable to find work since. While these workers are unable to find jobs, local manufacturers are frequently unable to find skilled workers. This disconnect is what inspired Piedmont Tech to create the Manufacturing Assembly Technician (MAT) course.



AN UNTAPPED POOL OF WORKERS

When most people hear “unemployed worker”, they automatically think of someone who’s undereducated —

someone who lacks the skills to get the job done. Although that’s true for some, it’s not necessarily always the case.

In many cases, these displaced workers make excellent employees. They have a strong work ethic, they already possess some employable skills, and they’re eager and able to learn new ones.

Many displaced workers in this latter category simply don’t have the necessary knowledge to get a job. The process has changed too dramatically since the last time they had to look for work — and so has the world of manufacturing.

SKILLS FOR CHANGING TIMES

“So often, we see individuals with the skills that local employers are looking for. They just aren’t sure how to put them on paper or get them across in a behavioral interview,” said Lisa Bartanus, MAT course instructor. Piedmont Tech has worked with companies throughout the region to customize the MAT class in an effort to locate the employees that fit their criteria and to prepare those employees to apply for and obtain jobs.

Betty Connor, a former clinical counselor has discovered employable skills she didn’t realize she had. She said,

“Since being out of work, I never realized how much experience I have until we participated in mock interviews using STAR skills. I also learned how to look for and apply for jobs online. In today’s time, this is a must.”

According to Cassandra Mackey, a Greenwood resident previously employed in packaging, the MAT class has been helpful in identifying strengths and weaknesses. “I know that because I’ve taken this class, I bring more to the table when applying for jobs. I now have skills in Lean manufacturing, 5S, and problem solving,” she said.

A TARGETED CURRICULUM

The MAT program is two and a half weeks long and certain criteria must be met for participants to successfully complete the course.

The curriculum includes Problem Solving, Keyboarding, resume and cover letter construction, interview skills, online applications, hands-on maintenance, safety, quality, math, mechanical reasoning, reading for information, locating information, and an overview of Lean.

Students leave the program with an updated resume, cover letter, WorkKeys scores, and behavioral interview skills in addition to updated manufacturing skills learned through hands-on application.

For more information about the Manufacturing Assembly Technician classes, contact Continuing Education at (864) 941-8400.

PTC COMPUTER TRAINING KEEPS YOUR BUSINESS CURRENT

Piedmont Technical College offers a wide range of Computer Training courses designed to keep your employees up to date, and to train them in new skills for all of your organization's needs.

Whether onsite or at any of our eight locations, you'll find that our training is both top-notch and affordable. Whether your company is in need of training for a software changeover or a class that covers an entirely new program, our computer training can meet your needs. Schedule all of your training with Piedmont Tech to take advantage of our bulk training discount program.

COMMON COMPUTER COURSE OFFERINGS

Adobe Photoshop

Photoshop is the industry standard for high-end image editing. Crop, shadow, apply effects and reduce sizes for Web applications. Learn to work with layers and use PhotoShop's extensive tool set.

Computer Skills 101

In this series, participants are introduced to Microsoft Office applications. Participants will cover an introduction to Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft PowerPoint.

Computer Skills 201

Students will cover an intermediate level of Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft PowerPoint.

Creative Web Pages

In this class, students will explore the steps of the Web development process, learn the basics of user-centered design, organize information, find out how site design themes can be used for information delivery and review Web page design considerations.

Microsoft Outlook

Students will learn how to create and send a message, respond to a message, use folders to manage mail, schedule appointments, schedule meetings, manage contacts and contact information, create and edit tasks, and use notes.

Microsoft Access

Learn the basics of Access 2010 for your office. This course is a thorough exploration of databases from concepts to practical, time-saving applications. This is a hands-on course with emphasis on case-studies and real-world applications.

Microsoft Word

This in-depth course covers features and functions of Microsoft Word 2010. Participants will create and edit business letters, templates, create a memo and a simple report and the benefits of using mail merges in any business.

Microsoft Project

Microsoft Project is used by project managers to develop project plans, assign tasks, monitor and track progress. In this class, participants will learn how to create, modify, update and implement project plans using Microsoft Project 2007.

Microsoft Office

This course provides a wide variety of applications, projects and simulations for mastering basic skills in Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, FrontPage and Publisher. A hands-on course with many problem-solving projects and real-world applications.

Microsoft Publisher

This course is designed to teach students how to create specialized documents that include both text and graphic images. Students will see how to create newsletters, brochures, etc. Book is included.

QuickBooks

Students will learn to set up a company, organize office financials, customize forms, create reports, and create graphs. They will learn about tracking and paying sales tax and how to do payroll with QuickBooks.

Visual Basic

This course will help students get started with Visual Basic 2005. It provides students with step-by-step guidance to real-world programming tasks for developing Windows applications. Students will learn to master the Visual Basic language, create forms, learn graphics and maintain files.



For more information call
(800) 868-5528

For Continuing Education information
call **(864) 941-8400** to speak with
a PTC Business Solutions Provider.

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