

CATALYST

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH EDUCATION

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

New Approaches to Closing the Skills Gap 1

News in Brief 3

Health & Safety Training Options Keep Your Workforce Ready 4

Newberry County Campus Open for Spring Classes 5

readySC™ Blazing Trails in Innovation and Job Creation 6

Q&A with Brad Willingham — President of Bondex, Inc. 7

NEW APPROACHES TO

Closing the Skills Gap

Although the concept of the “Skills Gap” is getting increasing coverage in the news lately, it’s not a new issue. Piedmont Technical College is constantly working on new and better ways to deliver training that meets the needs of employers.

With increased investment in the Upstate and Midlands regions in South Carolina, competition for skilled workers is increasing, and some employers are reporting difficulty finding enough qualified candidates.

PTC is working directly with companies throughout its seven county service region to launch several new programs designed to help ensure a ready pipeline of skilled workers.



APPRENTICESHIPS, DUAL ENROLLMENT AND QUICK TRAINING

“When we hear companies talk about their pain points, they’re most frequently talking about machining and the kinds of skills taught in our Mechatronics program,” says Rusty Denning, associate vice president of Continuing Education and Economic Development at PTC.

In better economic times, many companies might have addressed some of this shortage by investing in more training, but cost containment has been a factor for most in the last few years. *(continued on page 2)*

PIEDMONT
Technical College

Your goals. Our mission.

With that in mind, PTC has recently developed an apprenticeship approach for Mechatronics.

“The apprenticeship is something we’re excited about,” says Denning. “Companies can put their workers through a full associate degree program at essentially no cost to the company, or to the employee.”

Denning says the college is already working successfully with several companies on the initiative.

PTC is also working closely with school districts to design a Dual Enrollment apprenticeship program in the Mechatronics area.

Dual Enrollment classes allow high school students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously. Coupled with an apprenticeship with companies in their region, students could graduate high school with a diploma, an associate degree and a great job waiting for them.

“The dual enrollment approach will create a steady supply of well-trained, prospective employees in our region,” Denning says.

“The apprenticeship is something we’re excited about,” says Denning. “Companies can put their workers through a full associate degree program at essentially no cost to the company, or to the employee.”

On the machining and CNC fronts, PTC has designed a program called QuickSkills that gets students up to speed for entry level employment in a matter of weeks.

Offered at the new PTC Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Laurens County, the QuickSkills program offers Assembly, Quality Assurance, and CNC tracks. All three credentials can be applied toward a higher level program at PTC when students are ready for more education.

WHAT IS MECHATRONICS?

Although the word “mechatronics” might be new to some, Denning says, employers are quick to recognize the program’s benefits once they see the curriculum.

Combining electronic, mechanical, robotics and information system technologies, this program provides graduates with the skill set needed for today’s automated manufacturing facilities.

Mechatronics graduates are multi-skilled technicians, with a working knowledge of hydraulics and pneumatics, robotics and automated controls, programmable controllers, process control and mechanical applications.

Each student in the program receives hands-on experience and computer simulated training with automated assembly line processes.

“If they’re not already familiar with the concept, people often say the program is exactly what their workers need after they’ve seen the coursework,” he says.

DESIGNED FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Developed under a collaboration of the five Upstate technical colleges, every aspect of the Mechatronics program has been put together in response to needs expressed by employers. The program meets industry standards as defined by BMW, Bosch, Fujifilm and Tyco, and students are trained on state-of-the-art mechatronics equipment from suppliers including Kuka Robot Group, Festo, US learning Systems and Siemens.

“While Mechatronics is a new approach in the United States,” said Kevin Boiter, Electro/Mechanical department head at PTC, “it’s been a widely accepted career in Europe since the nineties. The field started in the Upstate when BMW asked us for a common curriculum dealing with both mechanical and electrical concepts.”

The entire Mechatronics curriculum has been designed in partnership with the same industries students will work for after graduation.

“Our students are getting first-hand experience with the same kind of tasks they’ll need to handle on the job,” says Boiter. “When our students leave us, they’re fully prepared to go to work.”



News in Brief

NEW FORKLIFT CLASSES OFFERED AT CAM IN 2013



Beginning January 2013, Continuing Education will offer forklift classes monthly at the Center for Advanced Manufacturing in

Laurens County. These classes will allow individuals to obtain a 4000# sit down forklift license. Identical classes are also offered at the Piedmont Technical College Greenwood Campus.

NEWLY REMODELED PTC EVENT CENTER

Piedmont Tech's newly remodeled Event Center provides affordable rental space for large corporate events. Improvements include a new kitchen area, audio station, classroom space, and an updated look. For more information about rental space at Piedmont Tech, contact Ben Higgins at 864-941-8408.

HIGHER ED SUMMIT SHARES PTC'S LEAN INITIATIVE

More than 35 representatives from colleges in the Carolinas as well as Georgia and Kentucky came together at Piedmont Technical College recently to learn how to improve the efficiency of their operations by implementing PTC's version of Lean. Lean is a system used widely in manufacturing to reduce cost, streamline processes and eliminate waste. PTC has received a nomination for the prestigious Bellwether Award for two years running for its Lean implementation in a college environment.

MARTIN ELECTED TO NATIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION POSITION

David Martin, program coordinator for funeral service at Piedmont Technical College, has been selected to serve as part of the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). Martin was selected to serve on the accreditation committee. Composed of funeral service faculty, practitioners and members of the public, the committee evaluates and certifies programs for accreditation throughout the United States.



Academic departments, colleges and universities which offer funeral service education programs are reviewed by this committee.

PROJECT GENESIS ADDRESSES EDUCATIONAL CRISIS

In the U.S., more than two-thirds of African American men who start college do not graduate within six years, which is the lowest college completion rate among both sexes and all racial/ethnic groups in higher education. Piedmont Technical College is working to address this problem in its service area through a program called Project Genesis. The Genesis program currently has 91 participants. The program consists of intensive case management, including academic monitoring/support, financial aid literacy/support, Individual Graduation Plans, Summer Bridge programs, contextual learning, career exploration, peer and civic mentoring programs.

GOODWILL JOB CONNECTION STUDENTS COMPLETE PIEDMONT TECH CNA COURSE

Six students recently completed Piedmont Technical College's CNA course as part of Goodwill's Job Connection program.

This program assists job seekers in connecting with potential employers. Goodwill Job Connection is new to the Greenwood area. The organization recently put the finishing touches on its 21,000 square foot facility located on Montague Avenue in Greenwood.



PTC AND PEBA HOST WORKSHOP FOR EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS

The Piedmont Education & Business Alliance recently hosted its tenth annual Guidance Standards and Career Development Workshop at Piedmont Technical College. The event drew more than 100 school counselors and career development professionals from 10 school districts in Abbeville, Clinton, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Ninety Six, Saluda and Ware Shoals.

The event was begun to allow schools, colleges and communities to collaborate on improving the implementation of the S.C. Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA).

Health & Safety TRAINING OPTIONS KEEP YOUR WORKFORCE READY



The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a total of 3,063,400 recordable non-fatal injuries and illnesses in the private industry setting in 2010.

Piedmont Technical College offers a wide range of health and safety training programs that can help ensure the safety and well-being of employees while on the job. Courses like CPR, AED, HAZWOPER, and First Aid are a must for most places of business and can have a huge impact on an organization's bottom line.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION TRAINING CENTER (AHA)

Piedmont Technical College serves as an AHA Training Center offering quality AHA classes to the public, in addition to educating AHA Instructors. AHA training includes: healthcare provider CPR, Heartsaver CPR/AED, and Heartsaver First Aid.

AHA courses are available separately, but are usually combined to meet employer needs. Individuals who complete the 8-hour combined American Heartsaver First Aid/CPR/AED course successfully earn a two-year certification from the American Heart Association.

AHA Basic Life Support Training (BLS) trains healthcare providers in CPR for victims of all ages. Completion of

this 8-hour course results in a two-year American Heart Association BLS certification.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONDER (FIRST RESPONDER)

Many corporations and healthcare organizations train employees and designated first responders so that they are able to provide appropriate action as part of their job or in the event of a workplace emergency. This 48-hour course prepares individuals to deal with injuries or sudden illnesses until Emergency Medical Services arrives.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

OSHA regulations require bloodborne pathogens training in organizations where employees may encounter occupational exposure to toxic and hazardous substances. Piedmont Tech's 3-hour bloodborne pathogens course reviews OSHA regulations with particular emphasis on recent changes.

FORKLIFT DRIVING & SAFETY TRAINING

Forklift safety training and driving instruction prepares employees to safely operate a 4000# powered lift vehicle. Forklift licenses are awarded to those who successfully complete this class.

OSHA 10-HOUR & 30-HOUR GENERAL INDUSTRY TRAINING

The 10-hour OSHA class is intended for entry level workers, while the 30-hour class is more appropriate for supervisors or workers with some safety responsibility.

DOT HAZMAT TRAINING

Hazmat training is required within 90-days for new employees; it must be repeated every three years and periodically as rules change.

WASTEWATER TRAINING

Wastewater training provides education in wastewater treatment based around physical, chemical and biological treatment of wastewater streams. Our instructors review and discuss the current best practices of treating waste streams to comply with EPA regulations. This training can be customized to meet any organization's wastewater training needs.

CONFINED SPACE TRAINING FOR GENERAL INDUSTRY

Every year hundreds of workers suffer needless injuries, some fatal due to inadequate (or non-existent) confined space entry programs. Confined Space rescue training helps workers prepare for and operate around dangerous confined spaces. Rescue training also prepares workers to take steps in the event of an accident.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT TRAINING (PPE)

PTC instructor-led PPE training can be customized to align with any industry's standard procedures. The Piedmont Technical College Video Consortium also contains various training videos for general industry that can enhance an organization's ability to provide effective and applicable PPE training for the protection and safety of its employees.

Piedmont Technical College's program managers are available to custom-design a training solution that helps ensure the safety of the employers and employees that we serve. This is only a partial listing of available course offerings. Additional training opportunities are available. To inquire about our Health & Safety programs, contact Deborah Hoffman at (864) 941-8426.

Newberry County Campus

OPEN FOR SPRING CLASSES

The newly constructed Newberry County Campus opened to the public on January 2.

"All of us at Piedmont Technical College would like to thank the citizens of Newberry County for their support of this project," said Jennifer Wilbanks, dean of county campuses at PTC. "I think everyone will be very happy with the campus when they see it."

Spring classes began in the new, LEED-certified facility on January 16th, and the college will host an open house on February 28th, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

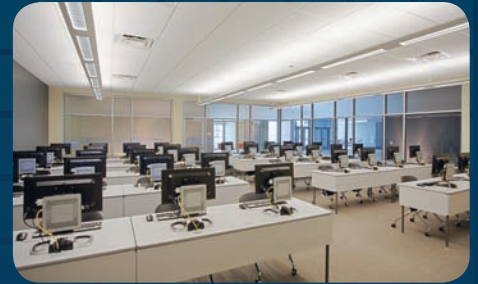
The new space arrives as enrollment in Newberry continues to grow. Newberry Campus enrollment continues to outpace other counties in PTC's service area, with an 8.8 percent increase to 727 students in the Fall term. 404 of those students are only attending at the Newberry Campus.

The Newberry Campus enrollment has grown by 71 percent since 2006, which makes Newberry one of our fastest growing campus locations.

Spring classes began in the new, LEED-certified facility on January 16th, and the college will host an open house on February 28th, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

"We are excited about the new campus in Newberry, and it gives us a lot more flexibility with the kinds of programs we can offer," Wilbanks said.

Offerings in Newberry currently include associate degrees in Business, Early Care and Education, Administrative Office Technology, Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Veterinary Technology, along with a range of certificate offerings for quick training.



The Veterinary Technology program is the only one of its kind in the midlands region of South Carolina.

The college is also currently conducting a needs analysis to add additional programs at the campus. "We've met with representatives from several companies in the county, and our Continuing Ed division is currently working closely with others to help meet their needs. Anyone who wants to sit down and discuss training needs with us shouldn't hesitate to give us a call," said Wilbanks.

readySC™

Blazing Trails in Innovation and Job Creation

readySC, a division of the South Carolina Technical College System that works closely with Piedmont Technical College to meet the needs of new and existing industry, always finds itself ahead of the pack when it comes to cutting-edge technologies in recruiting and training. In fact, the program has been at the forefront of state economic development training programs across the nation for the past 50 years.



In 1961, when readySC was established as Special Schools, it was the first of its kind – an economic development incentive for organizations looking to locate or expand in South Carolina. Special Schools provided these organizations with a trained workforce. Over the years, the level and complexity of skills

required by companies has changed dramatically, but the overall goal remains constant. readySC strives to make certain our client organizations have the right people with the right knowledge, skills and abilities in place at the right time for a quick and successful start-up.

Since its inception, readySC has worked with a variety of start-up and expansion projects. From the early days managing the start-up of a textile mill to that of a major OEM automotive manufacturing facility and more recently the expansion of a commercial airplane manufacturer, readySC has worked with these organizations to identify the skills necessary for successful operations and delivered a recruiting and training strategy to match. In addition to working with such manufacturing companies as Boeing, BMW, ZF and First Quality, readySC has helped a number of key customer call centers and distribution centers open operations in the state.

The quality work consistently produced by the program has not gone unnoticed. This year readySC earned a

2012 CiCi Award from Trade & Industry Development for outstanding achievement in economic development. In addition, the International Economic Development Council recognized the program with an Excellence in Economic Development Gold Award.

readySC is one of the state's top incentives for companies creating new jobs with competitive wages and benefits. In fact, more than 85 percent of companies who've made the decision to relocate to South Carolina rank readySC's services as playing a significant role in their ultimate decision to move here.

Over the past 50 years, readySC has trained more than 270,000 individuals for jobs in our state for over 2,000 different companies. Just last year the program trained 4,200 individuals for a variety of industries. Today, readySC is working approximately 110 active projects. These projects cover the spectrum from our state's most-to least-developed counties. What's more, the reach is statewide. readySC's current training roster includes candidates from each of South Carolina's 46 counties. readySC also hosts an online application system that advertises all training opportunities with active projects. Just last year, www.sctechjobs.com processed nearly 40,000 applications.

readySC is a flagship program for the System. As such, the program plans to continue to blaze trails when it comes to innovation and job creation in South Carolina.





Brad Willingham
President/Bondex, Inc.

SINCE 1961:

- OVER 271,000 INDIVIDUALS TRAINED
- MORE THAN 2000 COMPANIES SERVED

RECENT PROJECTS IN PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE'S SERVICE AREA INCLUDE:

- ZF TRANSMISSIONS
- BONDEX
- FLAME SPRAY
- NASMYTH PRECISION PRODUCTS
- ASTEN JOHNSON
- DALKOTECH, INC.
- FEHRER AUTOMOTIVE
- NORBORD
- SPF USA
- CENTER MANUFACTURING SC, INC.
- URBAN OUTFITTERS

Q: What training option did your company choose?

With pre-hire screening and training, we were able to pool a large group of possible new hires. readySC pre-screened, then we selected 12 candidates for 4 night/4 hour training courses. From these courses we were able to assess the candidates' capabilities, interaction skills, and leadership skills in order to select a group of seven new hires. We believe all this has allowed us to better select and screen new hires for our plant expansion.

Q: Why did you choose readySC™ as your training provider?

Prior to expansion we searched for what assistance we could receive from the State of South Carolina in order to better prepare for and succeed in our expansion. This was one of a couple of different assistance offers we received. Finding and selecting new hires is critical to the success of a new or existing company and this assistance helped us to get a good group of new employees.

Q: What is the most valuable aspect of your partnership with readySC™?

The training program was tailored to the skill sets we were searching for in our new employees. Being able to see how they performed in these skills was critical so we get the right people. Also the classroom setting allowed us to see how they worked together and which ones exhibited future leadership skills — which is very difficult to assess in a one on one interview.

The ongoing dialogue, follow up, and proactive approach from readySC staff helped make this a success.

Q: How was your training customized to meet your company's needs?

After a couple of different meetings to identify the needed skills, readySC put together a training package for us to review that addressed our needs. It was a very creative package and one that also was engaging and not intimidating to the people participating.

Training was held at PTC in Edgefield, which is very close to our plant site, as well as conveniently located for Bondex and our prospective group of new employees. Also we have organized a future HAZWOPER course for subsequent testing at PTC which will be very convenient for the next phase.

Q: What long-term benefits do you foresee this training having on your business as a whole?

Employees are critical to any company's success. It is very important that you get the best people you can and the best training you can with new employees.

It's easy for companies to half-heartedly do something like this as they are busy and time is short, but readySC's proactive approach helped make sure it was done right. This is something you rarely see. I'd encourage anyone to call Susan Heath at readySC. You will not be disappointed.



Your goals. Our mission.

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**Center for Advanced
Manufacturing**
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Laurens, South Carolina
(864) 682-3702

Edgefield County Campus
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Edgefield, South Carolina
(803) 637-5388

Greenwood Campus
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Greenwood, South Carolina
(864) 941-8324

Laurens County Campus
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Clinton, South Carolina
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McCormick County Campus
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McCormick, South Carolina
(864) 852-3191

Newberry County Campus
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Newberry, South Carolina
(803) 276-9000

Saluda County Campus
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Saluda, South Carolina
(864) 445-3144

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