

Johnston CC Immerses Counselors in Advanced Technology Careers

Johnston Community College (JCC) is working to increase the number of high school students enrolled in its Advanced Technology programs. The Britt Advanced Technology Center at JCC offers computer-integrated machining, industrial systems technology and welding technology degrees using state-of-the-art equipment.

High school students can prepare for careers by taking JCC classes for free through the state's Career and College Promise (CCP), but enrollment in advanced technology pathways at JCC to date has been relatively low.

JCC recently received an Advanced Technology Education (ATE) grant from the National Science Foundation to increase the number of high school students enrolling in the computer-integrated machining, industrial systems technology, and welding technology programs.

One goal of the grant is to increase awareness among high school counselors about advanced technology careers. Because counselors are often the first stop for advice for students, JCC wanted to learn how much counselors knew about careers in advanced technology and if those counselors were recommending the advanced technology CCP classes to their advisees.

In June, JCC invited Johnston County high school counselors to participate in a two-day workshop at the Britt Advanced Technology Center to learn firsthand about advanced technology careers. The counselors earned professional development credit and a stipend for attending.

The professional development workshop included:

- learning about careers in welding, machining and industrial systems
- participating in hands-on experiences in welding, machining and robotics
- learning CAD drawing, how to weld, and how to program a CNC machine and an industrial robot

- fabricating an engraved hitch cover, a metal drink holder and a desk medallion
- touring Caterpillar's Building Construction Products Division facility and learning about the pre-apprenticeship program
- learning more about the need for and how to increase the number of women in manufacturing careers



The counselors brainstormed with JCC staff about barriers to students signing up for advanced technology classes. The counselors identified the need for more specific career-focused materials to provide students. The counselors suggested several ideas, including a series of short fast-action videos focusing on the careers and the college education needed to prepare for them.

After the workshop, counselors were energized and shared comments such as, "I would never have recommended CCP classes, but I will now," "I had no clue what machining was before today!" and "Getting the students into the lab to see the equipment is really important."

To learn more about JCC'S project, contact Dr. Deborah Porto at drporto@johnstoncc.edu

New NC Career Clusters Guide

Check out the 2015 **North Carolina Career Clusters Guide**, a great resource for both students and career changers. The guide is divided into three sections: 1) career exploration, 2) detailed information on each of the 16 career clusters, and 3) gaining career-related experience. [Download](#) the full Guide from the NC-NET website.