

Advanced Manufacturing Technician Program Appeals to Students and Addresses Industry Needs

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HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (May 23, 2014) – Proving that when good ideas are shared, great things can happen, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Alabama has partnered to launch a new, innovative education-to-work initiative with Calhoun Community College to further enhance Alabama’s future work force for years to come.

The initiative, called the Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT) program, is designed as an innovative manufacturing degree that will span five semesters of classroom instruction while providing paid, hands-on experience at world-class manufacturing facilities. Students will earn enough pay (starting at \$13.55 per hour) to cover their educational expenses and the opportunity to graduate debt free. Graduates will hold an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Advanced Manufacturing degree.

The effort includes a collaborative known as the Alabama Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (AL FAME) and is designed to partner with area manufacturing companies that are interested in participating in the workforce development initiative.

The goal of the AMT program is to close the gap of unfilled skilled technician jobs in Alabama and across the country. “‘Skilled technician’ is currently the #1 unfilled job opening in the U.S. according to the National Association of Manufacturers. As technology increases, so does the need for skilled technicians at our facility. The AMT program will create and maintain a qualified pipeline of skilled technicians by preparing students to be fully job ready for a multi-skilled maintenance position at the end of a two year program,” said Jim Bolte, president of Toyota Alabama. “This not only benefits Toyota, but helps to address the workforce needs of manufacturers regionally.”

Partnering with local community colleges and area manufacturers, Toyota has established AMT programs in 7 states with over 100 current students. This number is likely to double as new students begin the program this year.

Applications for the AMT program are now being accepted. The first group of AMT students will begin the work portion of the program in June and classes at Calhoun will begin in August. The multi-disciplinary curriculum includes courses in electricity, fluid power, mechanics, fabrication, robotics and problem solving. Students will attend classes two full days a week at Calhoun and work three full days a week at their sponsor company.

The program will emphasize attendance, initiative, diligence, verbal and written communication, interpersonal skills and professionalism.

“Manufacturing companies are seeking employees with the high level of experience and training offered by the AMT program,” said Scott Russo, maintenance manager at Toyota Alabama. “While not guaranteed a full-time job following graduation, graduates could be hired by their sponsor company, continue their education in engineering, technology or business, or pursue employment opportunities in the open job market.”

“Toyota has been a wonderful community partner for many years, and we are so very excited to have the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with the company to educate, train and prepare our students for these very high skilled, high wage advanced manufacturing jobs,” commented Calhoun President Dr. Marilyn Beck.

Prospective students must complete an application for admission to Calhoun Community College, as well as the AMT program application. Additional information and application forms are now available at www.calhoun.edu/amt

Students will be accepted based on academic success as measured through grades, class rank, math capabilities and the ability to work in a team and problem-solving environment.