

BC3 announces 11 online programs geared to aid manufacturers

Nov. 24, 2020

(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College has designed online training programs in partnership with a Cleveland organization that will enable manufacturers to develop or enhance technical skills, and workers displaced as a result of COVID-19 to explore topics in an industry that employs more than 40,000 people across eight western Pennsylvania counties.

Individuals can now register with BC3 to attend any of the 11 noncredit business and industrial safety training programs the college's Workforce Development division created in concert with Tooling U-SME, said Maria Chvala, coordinator of industrial safety training at BC3. Tooling U-SME is an educational technology organization.

Qualified in-state businesses can be eligible for workforce training grants available as a result of BC3's partnership in the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania, said Kathy Strobel, coordinator of business training at BC3.

BC3 developed programs in additive manufacturing; cyber safety; hydraulics and pneumatics levels 1, 2 and 3; industrial safety; leadership skills; lean, which introduces the principles of reducing waste and improving efficiency; quality overview; safety overview; and shop floor safety.

Each program costs \$400 and contains 10 approximately one-hour courses presented in a video format.

"They're self-paced," Chvala said of the courses. "There isn't a time limit. If you start this class today, it doesn't need to be finished tomorrow."

The online format allows individuals to study at their convenience, Strobel said.

"They can train from home," Strobel said. "They can train from work. Wherever they need to do it."

3 difficulty levels available

Courses within each program are available in beginner, intermediate or advanced levels of difficulty. Each course, regardless of its level of difficulty, starts with a pre-training knowledge assessment and ends with a post-training knowledge assessment, Chvala said.

Those who complete a program receive a certificate from BC3, Chvala said.

Businesses can work with BC3 to establish a grade needed by employees to earn the certificate, Chvala said, and displaced workers and others can pursue certificates while learning about topics in a different field.

Programs might appeal to those who think, “I’ve always wanted to get into something other than what I was doing,” Chvala said. “This is a good introduction for them to see if this is something they really want to pursue.”

Businesses or individuals can also tailor a program based on their needs by requesting that BC3 substitute courses, Strobel said.

“Companies have the ability to choose the right training packages for themselves,” Strobel said. “The big thing is the quality of the classes and the flexibility that it offers.”

Manufacturing as of September employed the highest number of workers in Elk and Jefferson counties, and a collective 10,578, according to an October report from the state Department of Labor and Industry’s Center for Workforce Information and Analysis. Manufacturing employed the second-highest number of workers in Armstrong, Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties, and a total of 25,889; and the fourth-highest number of workers in Clarion and Clearfield counties, a collective 4,319.

For more information or to register, visit bc3.edu/toolingu