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## **PCC instructors become certified to offer elite manufacturing training**

**PUEBLO** – Pueblo Community College has taken another major step to expand the role of its Economic and Workforce Development Division staff as the key driver of the economy in its service area.

Nine division instructors recently completed a three-day Manufacturing Skills Standards Council training program under MSSC Master Trainer Randal Saathoff to become the first such nationally-certified instructors in Colorado. They are now qualified to provide the MSSC training program throughout Southern Colorado. In addition, PCC has become the state's only certified MSSC Assessment Site.

MSSC is an industry-led training, assessment and certification system focused on the core skills and knowledge needed by the nation's production workers. The nationwide MSSC system, based on federally endorsed national standards, offers both entry-level and experienced workers the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of skills that are increasingly needed in the high-growth, technology-intensive jobs of the 21st century ([www.msscusa.org](http://www.msscusa.org)).

With the added staff training, PCC's Economic and Workforce Development division is now poised to take on expanded role in advanced manufacturing training in this region.

"The MSSC certification is the new industry standard throughout the nation for manufacturers," said John Vukich, who oversees the division. "As a certified instruction and assessment site, Pueblo Community College is on the forefront of addressing the critical workforce needs facing our local manufacturers."

The training of PCC's staff was funded as part of a \$2 million U.S. Department of Labor grant that PCC was awarded last April to help meet an acute regional need for skilled employees in the advanced manufacturing industry. PCC can now deliver job-readiness training and test the technical competencies of students and new employees as they prepare to enter the manufacturing industry.

PCC will assess individuals' core understanding of the key work activities and basic technical knowledge and skills needed in high-performance manufacturing, as defined by MSSC's industry-led production standards. These assessments also help measure basic computer, problem-solving and analytical skills and feature computer-based simulations of actual factory floor situations.

The aim of the program is to enable participants to qualify for jobs, improve work performance in their current positions and help facilitate opportunities for promotion. Training will impact production, maintenance and support staffs for the existing manufacturing sectors throughout Southern Colorado, where there is an acute need for skilled employees.

Over the three-year grant period, the project is expected to provide job readiness and technical skills training at no or minimal cost for up to 450 participants. Additionally, the project is expected to impact 1,300 individuals in Southern Colorado and affect both short- and long-term industry needs.

The initial contact for this training should be made to the Pueblo Workforce Center at (719) 553-4561 to help with work-readiness skills prior to entering the MSSC training. Training for the initial group will begin in February.

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*Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.*