

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Implementation Grant

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

DUE JUNE 1, 2016

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education	
Requesting Institution:	Black River Technical College	
Title of Project:	Training Tomorrow's Workers Today	
Project Partners:	1. See attached for complete list 2. 3. 4. 5.	6. 7. 8. 9. 10.
Requested Budget:	\$1,000,000.00	
Date Submitted:	31 May 2016	
Applicant Contact:	Angela Caldwell, Vice President Technical Education	
Applicant's Information:	P.O. Box 468 Pocahontas, AR 72455 870-248-4091 angelac@blackrivertech.edu	

Authorized Signatures for Institution

Black River Technical College

Lead Institution

Authorized Official



NEAC³ *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* Project Partner List

1. Arkansas Northeastern College
2. Arkansas State University-Newport
3. Greene County Industrial Training Consortium
4. American Rail Car
5. Pocahontas High School
6. Sloan Hendrix High School
7. Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board
8. ANC Secondary Technical Center
9. Armored Schools
10. Blytheville Public Schools
11. Corning High School
12. Gosnell School District
13. Greene County Tech School District
14. Harrisburg School District
15. Hoxie Public Schools
16. Manila Public Schools
17. Maynard Public Schools
18. Marmaduke Public Schools
19. Osceola Public Schools
20. Paragould School District
21. Rivercrest High School
22. Walnut Ridge High School
23. Loretta's Catering
24. Houseworth Hotels & Restaurants
25. PECO
26. PepsiCo (Frito Lay Division)
27. Five Rivers Medical Center
28. NEA Baptist Memorial Medical Center
29. Pocahontas Healthcare & Rehab
30. Randolph County Nursing Home
31. Big River Steel
32. General Cable
33. Hytrol
34. Paslode
35. Pocahontas Aluminum Company, Inc.
36. Tenaris
37. Unilever
38. Unity Health
39. St. Bernards Regional Medical Center

Act 1131 of 2015

Regional Workforce Implementation Grant Application

Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2016**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that only projects that were awarded a planning grant are eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED

20 Points

Proposals will include a thorough description of the labor needs, as determined by the Local Workforce Development Board, and specifically identify the skills gap employers face in the selected region and will continue to face in the future. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed program and/or equipment needed and how creation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

Essential Components:

- Regional data demonstrating the need for action - provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.
- Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs- clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations, and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas. **Applicants must also submit letters of support from at least two area employers for the proposal, citing need and outlining benefits for local industry.**
- Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals- describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Need (20 Pts)	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11–14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Arkansas' education system is in motion to address the needs of 21st century students and employers. The Smart Core curriculum is in place for all public high school students and policies have recently been put in place to improve career readiness and align Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs with the labor market. CTE and academic curricula are becoming integrated at the high school level. Furthermore, there is a growing body of evidence that CTE coursework requirements pay off, particularly for students with greater exposure to them. Considerable attention is being paid from many quarters to ensure Arkansas' future workforce is trained and ready.

The alignment of CTE coursework with the knowledge and skill demanded by industry is still a work in progress. Too few high school students have the opportunity to work towards the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) by taking Career Ready 101 with the KeyTrain curriculum and ACT Soft Skills Modules. There are more students graduating high school, but the percentage rate of those seeking post-secondary training has not kept up, according to a report of the Higher Education Coordinating Board in July, 2015. Remediation rates for northeast Arkansas' two-year colleges, while in decline, still exceed 60 percent for first-year college student the national rate estimated by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Programs of study at the post-secondary level require changes to become more closely aligned with employer demands and address the lack of student preparedness for college and career.

In northeast Arkansas, the three two-year colleges serving the region are uniquely positioned to be the link between growth industries and their need for qualified workers on one hand and an emerging workforce with the need for training, education, and workplace experience on the other. These two groups must each have their needs met for northeast Arkansas' economy to flourish. Because of this, these colleges formed the Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration (NEAC³) to support the vision of being a bridge for successfully transitioning students from high school, into training, and out into the work force.

The organization is comprised of Black River Technical College (BRTC), Arkansas State University-Newport (ASU-N), and Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC). It was created to ensure:

- the three colleges maintain strong relationships with employers, regional workforce alliances, and area public schools so that gaps in job candidate skills throughout the regional workforce pool can be responded to strategically with programs that are aligned to meet those needs, and
- that those programs are developed and maintained at high levels which meet national standards and are delivered efficiently and with effective support systems in place.

NEAC³ is launching *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today*, an initiative focused on addressing the training and workforce demands of northeast Arkansas' high-growth, in-demand occupations in the three industry sectors projected to have the highest growth in employment -- manufacturing, health services, and leisure and hospitality. Between now and 2022, these industry sectors are projected to have the highest gains in employment growth of all major industries in northeast Arkansas, according to the Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (NEAWDA) information at www.discoverarkansas.net. Nationally, these industry sectors rank in the top six in projected job vacancies due to new and replacement jobs, according to the Georgetown Public Policy Institute's

(GPPI) report *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020*. Table One demonstrates how these sectors outrank others in the region in terms of numeric and percentage growth.

**Table One: Northeast Arkansas Projected Industry Growth
2012-2022**

Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Total Employment, All Jobs	107,445	120,493	13,048	12.14
Natural Resources and Mining	2,159	2,394	235	10.88
Construction	3,103	3,460	357	11.50
Manufacturing	19,486	21,836	2,350	12.06
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	19,256	20,320	1,064	5.53
Information	826	804	-22	-2.66
Financial Activities	3,145	3,297	152	4.83
Professional and Business Services	7,320	8,127	807	11.02
Education and Health Services	25,309	29,936	4,627	18.28
Leisure and Hospitality	8,029	9,671	1,642	20.45
Other Services (Except Government)	2,709	3,087	378	13.95
Government (Excluding State/Local Education & Hospitals)	6,642	6,719	77	1.16

Source: www.discoverarkansas.net, Local Workforce Investment Areas Long-term Industry and Occupational Projections 2012-2022

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today will fulfill these industry workforce needs by preparing tomorrow's workers through activities including:

- the review, approval, and launch of new, revised, and enhanced programs of study and their curricula and the purchase of equipment in CP and TC programs in response to existing and anticipated needs in the region in these three industry sectors;
- the embedment of industry-recognized credentialing by third-parties into curricula as requirements for program completion to validate the training standards and competencies for graduates of these programs;
- the launch of opportunities for concurrent credit by high school students to streamline their continuum of education and expedite their transition into the workforce while fulfilling industry expectations for workforce knowledge, skills, and preparedness;
- the hiring of a Clinical Site Coordinator (CSC) to build relationships with area healthcare providers and arrange for clinical rotations for nursing students at ASU-N while coordinating those efforts with CSCs already in place at BRTC and ANC;
- raising awareness of and building support for career coach programming in the region, both where it is in place and in school districts not yet served, for the purpose of strengthening workforce and college preparedness through concentration and completion of CTE courses, including CR101, so that more workers in northeast Arkansas enroll in post-secondary training and education and become CRC certified.

According to the GPPI report, manufacturing is the largest industry in the United States, with an output of \$5 trillion in 2010, and will remain the largest in 2020. With an expected output of \$7.6 trillion, it is projected to be the second largest growth projected for any industry for the next decade. In northeast Arkansas, the NEAWDA projects a 12 percent growth in employment for manufacturing. The career cluster pathways impacted include Precision Metal Production; Production Design, Operations, and Maintenance; Electromechanical Installation and Maintenance; and Precision

Technology Processes. Occupations identified as high demand in these pathways include Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machinists, including operators, programmers, machine setters, and supervisors. Also in demand are industrial electricians, industrial maintenance technicians, sheet metal workers, tool and die makers, welders, and robotics technicians. The programs targeted for expansion and development at each college are such that students will graduate with knowledge and skills in advanced manufacturing that are transferrable to most of the 15 targeted industries identified by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission.

According to the NEAWDA, the northeast Arkansas Health Services career cluster will experience over 18 percent growth in employment, with exceptional demand for NEAC³ graduates in the Therapeutic Services, Diagnostics Services, Health Information, and Support Services career cluster pathways. These areas will have need for occupations such as home health aides, EMT paramedics, pharmacy technicians, nursing assistants, LPNs, respiratory therapists, medical and clinical lab technicians, billing and posting clerks, and medical transcriptionists, all of which can receive training at the partnering colleges.

NEAWDA expects the Leisure and Hospitality career cluster, which includes, restaurant, food, and hospitality services, to experience over 20 percent growth in employment, resulting in jobs for occupations such as chefs, line supervisors, food prep staff, and food service managers. Two of the three partnering colleges provide training for these occupations with each applying special focus to either the hospitality industry or nutrition, food service and dietetics in the health services industry.

Table Two lists the top ten growth sectors within these three industries and how they outpace others in projected net growth. Among the top ten northeast Arkansas industries in long-term net growth for employment, six of them fall within these three areas of focus.

Table Two: Northeast Arkansas Top Ten Growth Industries, 2012-2022
Ranked by Net Growth

Industry	2012 Base Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Net Growth	% Growth
Food Services and Drinking Places	7,018	8,657	1,639	23.35
Educational Services	10,537	11,921	1,384	13.13
Food Manufacturing	2,219	3,451	1,232	55.52
Social Assistance	3,645	4,797	1,152	31.60
Ambulatory Health Care Services	4,329	5,454	1,125	25.99
Administrative and Support Services	5,032	5,746	714	14.19
Primary Metal Manufacturing	3,941	4,645	704	17.86
Hospitals	4,345	4,878	533	12.27
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,453	2,886	433	17.65
Specialty Trade Contractors	1,974	2,290	316	16.01

Source: www.discoverarkansas.net, Local Workforce Investment Areas Long-term Industry and Occupational Projections 2012-2022

This projected need for qualified labor is further heightened by the fact that the number one challenge identified by the Northeast Arkansas Workforce investment Board (NEAWIB) in its 2012 to 2016 strategic plan is the "education/skills level of the workforce" in the region. By 2020, 65 percent of all new jobs in the United States will require at least some postsecondary education and training according the GPPI report. Community colleges are critical to the education and workforce pipeline if the demands of a 21st century economy are to be met. While there is considerable momentum at present to increase access to community colleges by more clearly communicating the value of a

community college education and removing financial barriers, increasing access alone is not sufficient. Support must be in place to increase college and career readiness.

There is a need, absent any outright requirement, to inspire students to focus their learning in a program of study in high school so that coursework builds a sequence of learning and knowledge toward a career field. A study by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute published in April, 2016 entitled *Career and Technical Education in High School: Does it Improve Student Outcomes?* examined Arkansas high school students and found that CTE concentrators have a 93 percent high school graduation rate, compared to 51 percent for those who do not concentrate in CTE courses. Concentrators are more likely to graduate high school by 21 percent compared to otherwise similar students and 28 percent more likely to enroll in college. The two-year college-going rate is especially high for students who concentrated in programs of study in Health Sciences and Manufacturing clusters, among others.

Clearly, helping students focus their learning early on channels them into extending their continuum of learning into high school graduation and higher levels of education and training. However, there is also a need for making certain students are equipped with communication skills, critical thinking skills, workplace discipline, and the ability to work with a team. In conversations with the region's employers, soft and basic/core skills are on everyone's list of qualities they look for in job candidates. This has been reiterated in employer feedback received by the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) and reported to its board as recently as April, 2016. At the regional level, this need was reinforced in interviews with area employers in the preparation of this application and in the survey of regional employers conducted as part of the preparation for this project's planning grant.

As superintendents, principals, and secondary school teachers continue to adjust to an evolving K-12 culture, there is need for additional reinforcement, support, and information sharing of the resources two-year colleges can offer to better prepare students for college and careers. Northeast Arkansas currently has nine career coaches serving fourteen school districts across the region. The successes of the Arkansas College and Career Coach Program (ACCCP) are well documented. Not only has ACCCP met goals set for the five year period from 2009 to 2015, but according to the ACE Executive Summary for ACCCP, the program has exceeded those goals set for the program's performance measures for college going rates, ACT scores, remediation rates, and applications for financial aid. That being said, over half the school districts in the region serve students who are not beneficiaries of the career coach program. Moreover,

- students do not have the additional encouragement needed to concentrate in and complete CTE courses and may receive little recognition when they do so;
- they may attend schools where CTE courses are not always in alignment with cluster pathways that match the top growth industry opportunities in the region;
- they are less likely to use Career Ready 101 (CR101) as a supplemental resource to develop soft skills;
- students may not have access to or be encouraged to attend summer learning opportunities such as career cluster camps where students are exposed to career pathway options; and
- they may not have access to a technical center which provides exposure to other career options.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today launches a new level of dialogue and strategic use of resources for responding to needs, building trust, and opening doors for maximizing investments in northeast Arkansas' future workforce.

SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN**25 Points**

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program as well as the following Essential Components:

- Detailed project timeline and overview- provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the project.
- Measurable objectives for each phase of the project- detail the metrics utilized throughout the project to track how credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers will be provided.
- Project governance and accountability plan- clearly describe the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director; and identify members of a project steering committee that will maintain oversight throughout the project period.
- Pathways articulation and support- clearly describe the educational pathway(s) and support services that will be developed, or existing pathways that will be enhanced, to meet the identified workforce needs. Pathways should incorporate all appropriate student outcomes from short-term industry-recognized credentials through the highest certificate or degree programs appropriate to the identified career goals and include career step-out points at the completion of each credential.
- Role of equipment request- required only for those proposals seeking equipment purchases. Outline how equipment purchase will specifically address local labor market needs; provide detailed description of equipment, educational value of equipment in preparing workforce, and justification for purchase.

NOTE: Equipment may not be purchased during the planning phase

- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through implementation of the plan and strategies to measure and report achievement of those outcomes. Priority will be given to programs which prepare candidates for high wage jobs or which create capacity to move candidates from unemployment to employment.
- Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program. At a minimum, the plan must include a detailed project timeline and overview, measurable objectives for each phase of the project, a project governance and accountability plan, pathways articulation and support, the role of any equipment requested, and a performance assessment.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Plan (25 Pts)	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Table 1. NEAC³ Training Tomorrow's Workers Today (TTWT) Project Timeline

July, 2016	Notice of Approval and Permission to Proceed NEAC ³ Announces TTWT Project Director Position
Phase I Begins August, 2016	1 st Funding Disbursement (25%) Project Director Hired High School Incentive Program Begins 17 of 24 New or Enhanced Programs Launch at NEAC ³ Partner Schools New Clinical Site Coordinator Starts at ASU-N
September, 2016	Steering Committee Meets with New Project Director
October, 2016	1 st Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee Adoption of NEAC ³ By-laws
November, 2016	70 Percent of Industry-recognized Accreditations in Place
December, 2016	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
January, 2017	2 nd Funding Disbursement (25%) Four Additional NEAC ³ Programs Launch (18 through 21 out of 24) CRC Emphasis with Employers and Students Begins 2 nd Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee
March, 2017	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
April, 2017	3 rd Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee
May, 2017	100 Percent of Industry-recognized Accreditations in Place
Phase II Begins June, 2017	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
July, 2017	4 th Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee Summer Career Cluster Camps Across NEAC ³ Service Area
August, 2017	3 rd Funding Disbursement (25%) Three Additional NEAC ³ Programs Begin (22 through 24 out of 24)
September, 2017	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director Interim Report Due to ADHE
October, 2017	5 th Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee High-lights of Interim Report Presented to NEAC ³ Partnership
December, 2017	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
January, 2018	4 th Funding Disbursement (25%) 6 th Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee
March, 2018	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director

April, 2018	7 th Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee
May, 2018	Update and Distribution of Survey to Regional Employers
June, 2018	Quarterly Report Due to Project Director
July, 2018	8 th Quarterly Meeting of NEAC ³ Steering Committee Summer Career Cluster Camps Across NEAC ³ Service Area
August, 2018	NEAC ³ Survey Findings Distributed Project High-lights Report Presented to NEAC ³ Partnership Implementation Grant Project Ends

Measurable Objectives for Each Phase of the Project.

Phase One. Phase One of *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will focus on the development, enhancement, expansion, or launch of post-secondary academic programs in the manufacturing, health science and food career clusters. Phase One will also include the planning and launch of programs and activities at the K-12 level that prepare students for success in these programs and in their career of choice. Objectives and metrics will include the following:

Objective One. Create seamless career pathways in twenty-four academic programs at the secondary and post-secondary partner institutions in response to projected industry growth and in-demand skills and competencies as identified by industry in the region and by the Northeast Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. Program changes and approvals will be completed for implementation beginning in August, 2016.

The three partnering post-secondary institutions will complete program planning, curriculum selection and revision, and will receive institutional and state approvals for eight Certificates of Proficiency (CP), six Technical Certificates (TC), five AAS degrees in the targeted career pathways, and one new program offering prerequisites for LPN qualification to address the workforce needs in manufacturing production and maintenance career pathways, health services career pathway, and the restaurants, food and beverage services career pathway. These programs include:

Table 2. New and Enhanced Career Pathways for Targeted Industries

Status	Begins	Certificate/Program	K-12	NEAC ³ Partner
Revised	Fall, 2016	AAS, General Technology		BRTC-Pocahontas
Revised	Fall, 2016	AAS, Industrial Maintenance		BRTC-Pocahontas
New	Fall, 2016	TC, Welding Technology	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
	Fall, 2017		✓	BRTC-Paragould
New	Fall, 2016	TC, Machine Tool Technology	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
	Fall, 2017		✓	BRTC-Paragould
New	Fall, 2016	TC, Industrial Electricity Electronics	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
	Fall, 2017		✓	BRTC-Paragould
New	Fall, 2016	CP, Nursing Assistant	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
	Fall, 2016			BRTC-Paragould
New	Fall, 2016	CP, Phlebotomy	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
New	Fall, 2016	CP, EMT	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
New	Fall, 2016	Prerequisites for LPN	✓	BRTC-Pocahontas
Revised	Fall, 2016	CP, Hospitality Services		ASU-N Jonesboro
New	Fall, 2016	CP, Industrial Maintenance		ASU-N Jonesboro
Revised	Fall, 2016	CP, CNC Operator	✓	ASU-N at NEACTC
New	Fall, 2016	TC, CNC Programmer/Set Up		ASU-N Jonesboro
New	Spring, 2017	AAS, CNC Machining		ASU-N Jonesboro

Revised	Spring, 2017	CP, Advanced Manufacturing	✓	ANC
New	Spring, 2017	TC, Advanced Manufacturing	✓	ANC
Revised	Spring, 2017	AAS, Advanced Manufacturing		ANC
Revised	Fall, 2016	CP, Welding	✓	ANC
Revised	Fall, 2016	TC, Welding	✓	ANC
Revised	Fall, 2016	AAS Welding		ANC

These programs have been targeted by NEAC³ partners for the *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* project as part of an on-going formal process of meetings with each institution's technical advisory council made up of regional industry employers. In addition to regular face-to-face meetings and plant visits, information gathering and feedback has benefited from the use of electronic surveys and polling. Each institution's educational design team has incorporated this information into specific career pathways founded upon a study of successful educational models for these programs and developed as part of a formal curriculum development process.

These formal processes have been supplemented by one-on-one contact with industry leaders to identify competencies employees must know to perform their jobs successfully. This process has been successful because of staff background and experience working in industry and the historically strong industry relationships developed around the region's on-going successful collaborations. These include:

- The Greene County Industrial Training Consortium (GCITC), a consortium of business, education, and industry which draws its membership from a three-county region (Greene, Craighead, and Randolph). GCITC is an NEAC³ partner and has contributed over \$13,500 dollars annually over the last two years to support technical training for high school students;
- Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), a coalition of five community colleges including two NEAC³ partners (ANC and ASU-N), which has successfully brought \$66.5 million in technical education investments into east Arkansas. Of this, approximately \$10 million has been directly invested in the NEAC³ region for manufacturing, health science, and food career clusters.
- The ACT Work Ready Communities initiative funded by the Delta Regional Authority was launched in Fall, 2015 by East Arkansas Planning and Development District (EAPDD) and is focused on four counties in the region (Craighead, Lawrence, Mississippi, and Randolph) in partnership with the NEAC³ post-secondary institutions. It advocates for CRC credentialing and its use by business and industry in the pre-employment hiring process. It is led at the county level by a mix of industry, education, workforce, and economic development leadership. As of May, 2016, 3,888 individuals have achieved a bronze, silver, or gold CRC certification in the region.
- The Arkansas Rural Nursing Education Consortium (ARNEC), a coalition of eight community colleges, two of which are NEAC³ partners (ASU-N and BRTC). For eleven years, ARNEC has worked with hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes to provide nursing students with real-world clinical experience and equip them for meeting the workforce needs of the state's health care providers. Today, ARNEC administers the state's largest RN training program and had 86.6 percent of its students pass the national licensure exam during the reporting period ending June, 2015.

Objective Two. Enhance the value of the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) among regional employers and secondary educators as objective proof that individuals have acquired the necessary workplace skills to be successful as employees. *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will implement a two-pronged approach beginning in January, 2017 which targets employers and educators to increase CRC credentialing by secondary and post-secondary students.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today Steering Committee members will target NEAC³ project partners in their service area for adoption of the use of NCRC as a tool in hiring. It will also educate new or potential NEAC³ partners regarding the value of NCRC in their business hiring practices. According to the web sites of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and the Work Ready Communities initiative, 38 employers in the region use the NCRC as part of their hiring process. Of these, eleven are manufacturers. NEAC³ has already recruited five NEAC³ industry partners to use NCRC to screen job candidates. This number is expected to rise as *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* is launched and the value of NCRC training and credentialing is demonstrated and understood.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today will incorporate the ACT CRC training and testing at the post-secondary level to close skill gaps frequently noted by hiring managers. To increase NCRC credentialing and strengthen career and college preparedness, NEAC³ post-secondary partners will embed NCRC and soft skill training modules into coursework requirements for the targeted pathways. This expanded use of ACT CRC and soft skill modules will be required for fulfillment of all NEAC³ CP, TC and AA programs in manufacturing, health science and food. Soft skill modules will include:

- Interpersonal and business communication;
- Problem solving and critical thinking;
- Working productively in a team;
- Customer Service, and
- Developing good work habits and workplace discipline.

At the K-12 level, *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will strengthen the existing continuum of career pathways for high school students across the region by advocating for CTE concentration and completion, promoting the alignment of CTE courses with regional industry needs, encouraging enrollment in CR101 courses, and advocating for the use of CR101 modules in all other CTE courses apart from the career orientation class. This will support the transition of students from high school into post-secondary programs of study or their career of choice and prepare them for NCRC testing.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today will support career coach programs in schools where they exist by working with them to influence CTE planning teams' support for CTE and for CR101 so that more students are prepared with soft skills and to take the NCRC test upon qualifying. Likewise, *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will work through its CTE Deans and Secondary Technical Liaisons to develop relationships with school districts not currently working with career coaches. Beginning in August, 2016 all high schools will be offered resources for incentivizing students to concentrate and complete CTE, to take CR101, and to transition into post-secondary education. Appropriate incentives will be decided by each college and may include badging, gift cards, and other forms of student recognition as they achieve successful completion of various qualifying modules.

Objective Three. Introduce third-party, industry-recognized credentialing opportunities for secondary and post-secondary students to demonstrate that specific technical skills meet industry established standards and to help candidates stand out from their competition when applying for jobs. Seventy percent of certifications for the targeted academic programs will be in place no later than November, 2016 with 100 percent in place by May, 2017.

The NEAC³ educational and industry partners have identified six industry-recognized, national certifications in addition to the NCRC that will assess and document knowledge and skills across a variety of competency levels for students taking courses in the targeted career pathways. Certifications have been selected in consultation with industry for the level of skill needed at each program certificate level.

Recommendations made reflect the current and emerging industry requirements for workforce in the region. They include:

Table 3. Third-Party, Industry-Recognized Credentials

OSHA 10	OSHA 10 certification will reduce industry's need for on-the-job training by promoting a culture of safety and tailoring topics to specific industry needs with peer-led, participatory, hands-on training in English, Spanish, or other languages.
CPR/First Aid	OSHA-compliant, comprehensive training will meet OSHA First Aid standards for occupational first aid and CPR training.
NIMS (National Institute for Metal Working Skills)	NIMS-accredited training and testing of metal working skills will provide industry with a NIMS-credentialed work force to fulfill national industry standards requirements for operations.
AHLEI (American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute)	The Guest Service Gold certification offers training and recognition for implementing and achieving best practices in guest services delivery.
NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research)	NCCER for construction, welding, and other skills tailored to area industry demands.
AWS (American Welding Society)	AWS certification will recognize and document expertise and knowledge in specific welding-related disciplines including, inspectors, supervisors, educators, radiographic interpreters, welding engineers and fabricators.
NCRC (National Career Readiness Certificate)	NCRC is based upon the WorkKeys® assessments and demonstrates to employers that an individual possesses the basic workplace skills required for 21st century jobs. A CRC allows an individual to show prospective employers they possess the basic skills employers seek. It verifies job candidates can handle tasks such as reading instructions and directions, working with figures, and finding information - tasks common in today's workplace.

Training for these credentials will include their seamless integration at the secondary level in partnership with career coaches, CTE instructors, and career and technical centers where credentialing is available to students under 18 years of age. For example:

- BRTC will launch TOPSS, Technical Opportunities and Pathways for Secondary Students, offering two career pathways in health services and three in industrial technology for high school juniors and seniors at five high schools in the BRTC service area – Pocahontas, Sloan-Hendrix (S-H), Greene County Tech (GCT), Paragould, and Marmaduke. Over four semesters, depending on their chosen career pathway, students can achieve their CP in a health profession or a TC in industrial technology and become certified in OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, NCCER, and AWS, while also preparing to test for the NCRC upon turning 18;
- ASU-N will launch revisions to its CP level program of study for CNC Operators at the NEA Career and Technical Center in Fall, 2016. This revised two-semester program of study for high school juniors and seniors will mirror the new CP CNC Operator program at the ASU-N Jonesboro campus so that students in either program qualify for the CP and four NIMS certifications embedded in the curriculum. These NIMS certifications include:
 - Measurement, Materials and Safety,
 - Job Planning, Benchwork and Layout,
 - CNC Turning: Operations, and

- CNC Milling: Operations.
- ANC will offer secondary students from five high schools concurrent credit towards a CP and/or a TC certificate in two career pathways, Welding and Advanced Manufacturing. Students in the ANC service area will also become certified in NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, the AWS for welding, and will qualify to test for the NCRC upon turning 18.

The targeted programs which have had third-party credentials embedded in them and their secondary school partners, where applicable, are as follows:

Table 4. Targeted Programs with Embedded Credentials

Certificate/Program		Credentials Embedded	Post-secondary Institution
Secondary Level Concurrent Programs			
High School/Tech Center			
Pocahontas, S-H, GCT, Paragould, Marmaduke	TC, Welding Technology	NCRC, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, NCCER, AWS	BRTC-Pocahontas BRTC-Paragould
Pocahontas, S-H, GCT, Paragould, Marmaduke	TC, Machine Tool Technology	NCRC, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, NCCER	BRTC-Pocahontas BRTC-Paragould
Pocahontas, S-H, GCT, Paragould, Marmaduke	TC, Industrial Electricity Electronics	NCRC, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid	BRTC-Pocahontas BRTC-Paragould
Pocahontas, S-H, GCT, Paragould, Marmaduke	CP, Nursing Assistant	NCRC, CPR/First Aid	BRTC-Pocahontas BRTC-Paragould
Pocahontas, S-H	CP, Phlebotomy	NCRC	BRTC-Pocahontas
Pocahontas, S-H	CP, EMT	NCRC	BRTC-Pocahontas
Pocahontas, S-H	Prerequisites for LPN	NCRC	BRTC-Pocahontas
NEACTC	CP, CNC Operator	4 NIMS	ASU-N Jonesboro
NEACTC	Concurrent credit towards CP, Hospitality Services		ASU-N Jonesboro
ANCTC	Concurrent credit towards CP and/or TC Advanced Manufacturing	NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid	ANC
ANCTC	Concurrent credit towards CP and/or TC, Welding Technology	NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, AWS	ANC
Post-secondary Level Programs			
AAS, Industrial Maintenance		NCCER	BRTC-Pocahontas
AAS, General Technology			BRTC-Pocahontas
CP, Hospitality Services		AHLEI	ASU-N Jonesboro
CP, Industrial Maintenance		NCCER	ASU-N Jonesboro
CP, CNC Operator		4 NIMS	ASU-N Jonesboro
TC, CNC Programmer/Set Up		NCRC, 4 NIMS	ASU-N Jonesboro
AAS, CNC Machining			ASU-N Jonesboro
CP, Advanced Manufacturing		NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid	ANC
TC, Advanced Manufacturing		NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid	ANC
AAS, Advanced Manufacturing		NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid	ANC

CP, Welding Technology	NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, AWS	ANC
TC, Welding Technology	NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, AWS	ANC
AAS, Welding Technology	NCRC, NCCER OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, AWS	ANC

Objective Four. *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will incorporate measures that reduce barriers to program enrollment and completion and which also address the needs of non-traditional students resulting in increased enrollment, retention, and certificate completion.

The three partnering colleges each have existing wrap around services to support enrollment, retention, completion, and overall success for students seeking to develop skills, fulfill industry expectations, and juggle the obligations of work and family. Academic learning and success is supported by:

- tutoring assistance,
- ACT and COMPASS placement testing,
- services for older students returning to school for further training or to acquire a GED,
- licensed psychologists offering mental health services, and
- study skills, time management, and stress management assistance.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today will leverage other grant resources to provide these and additional support services such as career exploration, career planning and advising, pre-assessment remediation, tuition, childcare, and transportation assistance, and job placement services.

Each institution will also leverage other grant resources to provide nine career coaches who will be to facilitate college readiness, career exploration, credential attainment, and work based learning opportunities. A career coach works in the BRTC service area, four work with ASU-N in Poinsett and Jackson Counties, and four are located at five high schools in the ANC service area. Career coaches working with CTE instructors in the high schools, at the NEA Career and Technical Center, and at the ANC Technical Center, will develop and implement new strategies to increase the awareness of the value of credential attainment. This grant will provide funds to support new strategies to increase awareness of and value for credential attainment, including incentivizing and celebrating achievements.

Barriers for students in pursuing further education and training can include their limited availability due to employment and associated shift schedules. ASU-N will develop hybrid and e-learning options in advanced manufacturing which include self-paced coursework along with classes scheduled around shift schedules. Students will be identified by talking with plant managers to determine interest and identify candidates, followed by one-on-one recruitment of employees. Incentives will generally be offered by employers, either by paying for tuition directly or by paying employees for their time spent in class as though they were on the job. These measures will help meet the high, unmet demand for qualified personnel in industrial maintenance among industries in the Jonesboro area.

The ASU-N and BRTC ARNEC registered nursing program is a hybrid on-line course format using the CIV platform for course delivery which has reduced on-campus class time by 50 percent. It has been successful in helping working students in rural areas overcome geographic barriers to continuing their training. ASU-N intends to hire a full time Clinical Site Coordinator (CSC) in August, 2016 to serve as liaison with industry in establishing additional clinical rotation sites for RN, LPN, and Allied Health students. The CSC will also solicit feedback from industry regarding student skills and performance so that adjustments to classroom instruction can be made. This additional option for receiving industry

input is expected to improve student performance and raise pass rates for students taking the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN) on the first attempt.

This faculty position will allow ASU-N nursing faculty to focus exclusively on instruction and will facilitate improved coordination within the institution for all health programs requiring clinical site rotations. RN students participate in clinical rotations every other weekend during their 11-month program and a clinical instructor is required to be present. The CSC will be a licensed RN and will be on call on those weekends that RN students are doing clinical practice in the event an additional clinical instructor is needed to provide the required level of supervision. This coordinator will also allow ASU-N to more effectively contribute to the regional peer group of CSCs formed in partnership with BRTC and ANC to provide support, contacts, and improved coordination of clinical site arrangements.

ANC will use grant resources to increase enrollment by marketing and promoting the Advanced Manufacturing career pathway with special attention to non-traditional students and special populations. This will include print materials to highlight new program components, access to the pathway at secondary and post-secondary levels, credential attainment opportunities, work based learning options, demand and salaries in the region, and the financial and support services available to help students succeed.

ANC will specifically add a new, institutionally funded, Success Navigator to assist post-secondary students in enrollment and completion. The Navigator will work closely with faith based and other community agencies to recruit and enroll the hardest to serve populations.

These activities, along with new career coaching strategies, align with the region's goal of certifying counties as ACT Work Ready Communities. This collaboration with DRA and EAPDD promotes the National Career Readiness Certificate as the measure for workforce readiness. In Mississippi County, the initiative is chaired by industry representatives from DENSO and Tenaris and includes partners from secondary and post-secondary education, the Department of Workforce Services, and the Great River Economic Development Foundation. With the launch of the ACT Work Ready Communities initiative six months ago, collaborative teams like this are being formed across the NEAC³ region to establish and grow credential attainment as a valued mechanism for economic development.

This comprehensive approach also supports the entire workforce continuum by including strategies to reach emerging workers from secondary schools, incumbent workers seeking advancement, unemployed workers seeking gainful employment, and business and industry who agree to recognize, recommend, and/or require this credential for employment.

Phase Two. Phase Two includes the launch of K-12 summer camps and the collection of outcome performance data from education partners for reporting to ADHE in September, 2017. The completion of one academic year of programming for most project initiatives will provide an opportunity to more closely monitor progress and make adjustments to ensure attainment of project outcomes. Phase Two will include the following objectives:

Objective One. Build upon an expressed interest in and need for summer programs by promoting summer career cluster camps in the region and incentivizing attendance as a means of closing the knowledge gap with students, educators, and school district decision-makers about industry career options in the region and the role and value of CTE and CR101 courses.

Two examples of summer camp offerings for students in the region are the Arkansas State Chamber-led

Young Manufacturers Academy and the UAMS MASH Camp. The Young Manufacturers Academy is designed to reach young people from grades 6 through 11 who are interested in technical professional careers in manufacturing. The Academy offers students the opportunity to explore the broad range of high-wage, in-demand careers that today's advanced manufacturing offers. This program uses an innovative approach to STEM-learning through authentic experiences that generate student engagement in hands-on experiences with manufacturing-related activities that are contemporary, driven by industry, and emphasize the importance of technology literacy, reasoning, and problem-solving proficiencies.

The UAMS MASH Camp allows rising high school juniors and seniors to shadow health professionals and attend workshops that let them explore career opportunities in the health care field. MASH students participate in dissections, CPR training, casting, and daily job-shadowing allowing first-hand experience in a variety of health care environments.

A repeated refrain in Arkansas High School to College Freshman Success Reports is the need for additional preparation of students at the high school level. The *America After 3PM* study of 2014 found that only 13 percent of Arkansas students participate in afterschool or summer programs – but 45 percent of those who do not participate expressed interest if no barriers to participation existed.

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today will begin promotion of summer camps among secondary educators and decision makers upon announcement of the Summer, 2017 and 2018 camps. Project partners will work with CTE Deans and Secondary Technical Liaisons to decide how best to apply resources to incentivize student attendance and reduce barriers to participation. Resources may also be applied to incentivize secondary teachers to attend professional development opportunities that link classroom learning to careers.

Objective Two. Update the survey previously conducted among ASU-N industry partners to track employee and job candidate preparedness and gaps in skills and knowledge across the NEAC³ region, while using the survey as a benchmark for ANC and BRTC industry partners.

In the survey, industries were asked to rate current employees and job candidates. Among the questions, industries were asked to:

- rate the professional skills that challenge their workforce or are lacking and
- rate basic employability skills that challenge their workforce or are lacking in job candidates.

The updated survey will incorporate specific questions relative to career readiness and job candidate qualities in the targeted career pathways. *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will distribute survey findings by August, 2018.

Project Governance and Accountability Plan.

NEAC³ will draft a set of by-laws for addressing governance issues, decision-making, and scheduling meetings on behalf of the *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* project. These by-laws, adopted in Fall, 2016, will build on the existing NEAC³ Memorandum of Understanding. Meetings will be held no less than quarterly and will focus on project administration, accountability, and the accrual, monitoring, and reporting of data and other information related to project outcomes. These meetings are exclusive of meetings designed to present outcomes and engage stakeholders across the region.

The *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* project shall be overseen by a Project Director to be named upon receiving the grant. The Project Director will be responsible for ensuring the project stays on schedule, that project partners share information and resources, that joint activities are arranged and

well publicized for the benefit of partners and other stakeholders, that the project is monitored for maximizing outcomes, that project data is collected and aggregated quarterly, and that reports and requests for information are submitted or responded to in a timely fashion.

Highlights of the interim report to ADHE due September 1, 2017 will be presented to NEAC³ partners as a means of sharing *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* success stories and promoting the value of working regionally to address workforce needs, particularly as those efforts impact outcomes relative to CTE concentration and completion, CRC credentialing, and successful transitions into the workforce or post-secondary education. Highlights will again be presented to the NEAC³ partners at the close of the project in 2018.

The project will draw on the existing NEAC³ network of industry, advisory councils, training consortiums, post-secondary consortiums, K-12 educational cooperatives, and other partners to identify and recruit additional partners for addressing workforce needs. The project Steering Committee will maintain oversight of the project and will be comprised of representatives from the three colleges. They will seek input and guidance from other NEAC³ partners as needed. Members of the *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* Steering Committee are:

Table 5. *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* Steering Committee

Name	College	Title
Angela Caldwell	BRTC	Vice President of Technical Education
Alan Decker	BRTC	Director of Corporate and Community Education - Paragould
Patti Blaxton	BRTC	Director of Corporate and Community Education - Pocahontas
Charley Appleby	ASU-N	Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development
Alan Keith	ASU-N	Instructor of Advanced Manufacturing
Kimberly Long	ASU-N	Dean of Students
Gene Bennett	ANC	Dean, Workforce and Economic Development
Sherri Bennett	ANC	Vice President for College Readiness

Pathways Articulation and Support.

The objectives of *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* will achieve their greatest successes if they are undergirded by a greater alignment of career pathways between K-12, post-secondary learning, and successful job performance in the region's industry. Streamlining concurrent enrollment to provide "stackable" credits for transitioning between high school and college will help students attain post-secondary credentials sooner and will make the transfer of credits easier as they progress. The result will be reduction in the duplication of courses or the need for additional courses, a learning continuum that accelerates the steady flow of skilled labor into industry, and a supportive environment that provides assessment, feedback, and clear direction as students make decisions about their next educational or career moves.

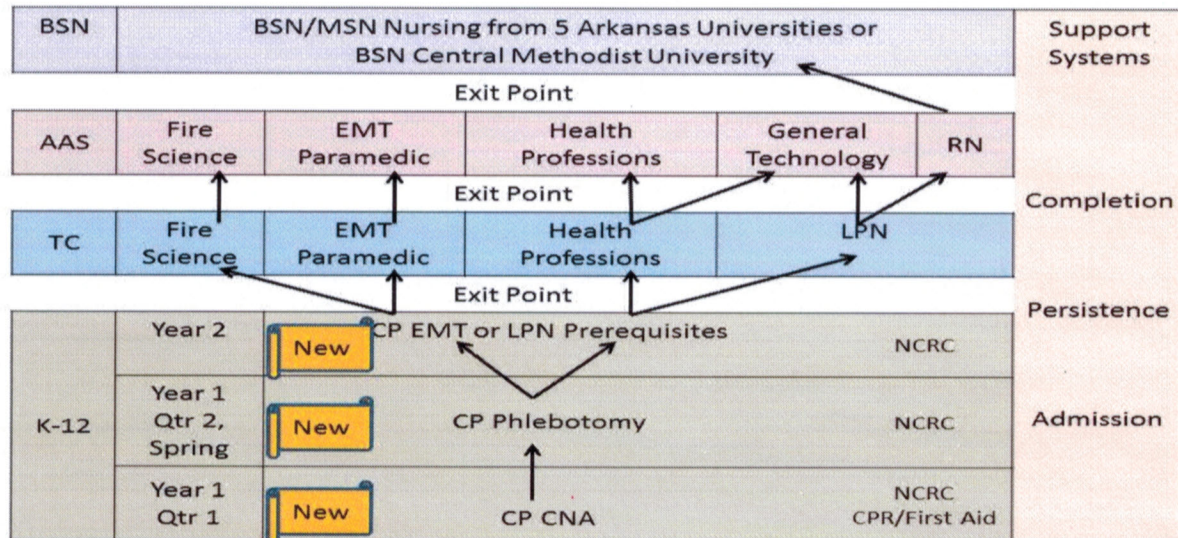
The pathways shown in Tables 6 through 10 and the programs of study they represent are aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards for critical functions and practices based on successful competency models. Together, employers and NEAC³ post-secondary institutions identified the most critical of these tasks and those which are most frequently performed along with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform them.

Competencies needed for each step in career progression have been incorporated into the curriculum for the programs listed below. Each program embeds instruction for achieving the industry-recognized credential or certificate associated with the pathway. As demonstrated, certificates are stacked to

progressively lead to another certificate or diploma. Students will be required to complete one or more third-party credentials to fulfill graduation requirements.

BRTC will offer two new pathways for K-12 in Health Careers and three new pathways in Industrial Technology for K-12 juniors and seniors. Both options of the Health Career pathways will offer students Year One tracks resulting in CPs as CNAs, Phlebotomists, and EMTs. Year Two of the first option will provide students a CP in EMT. Year Two of the second option will provide students the prerequisite 20 hours of coursework needed to apply for the LPN Technical Certificate. The Health Career pathways are illustrated here:

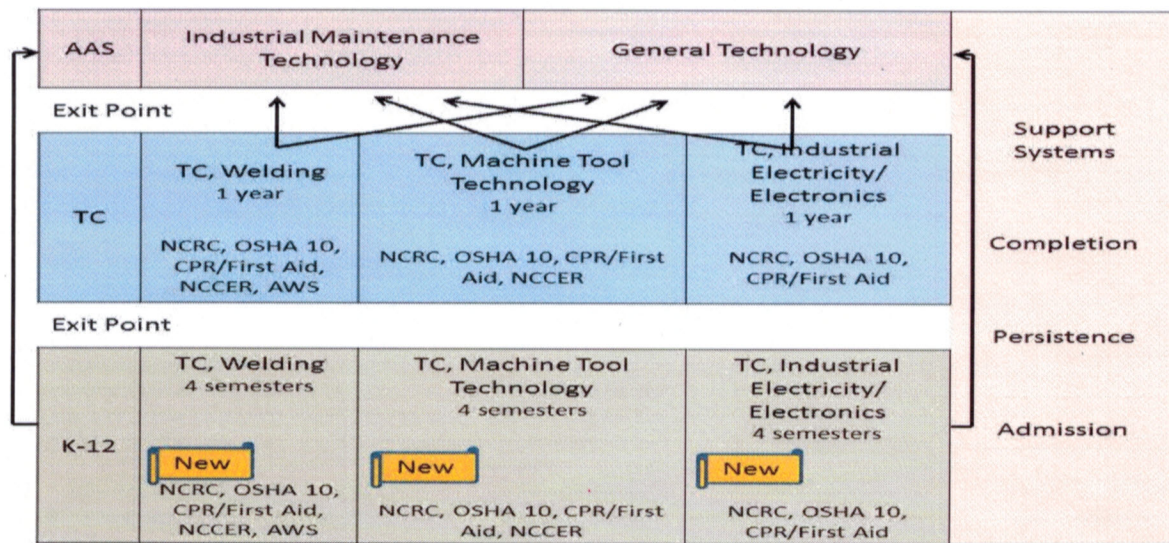
**Table 6. Black River Technical College-Pocahontas
Health Career Pathways**



BRTC's three new Industrial Technology pathways will consist of two years of instruction for K-12 juniors and seniors resulting in Technical Certificates in Welding Technology, Machine Tool Technology, or Industrial Electricity/Electronics. These certificates qualify students for entry into the AAS for General Technology program or the AAS in Industrial Maintenance Technology program.

The AAS in General Technology requires a focus in one of several major technical disciplines, including Nutrition and Food Service Management, Industrial Electricity/Electronics, Industrial Maintenance Technology, Machine Tool Technology, Welding, and six other disciplines. There are also AAS pathways for LPNs wishing to pursue a Health Profession AAS or an RN AAS, provided they are accepted into the program. Table 7 illustrates options for the three Industrial Technology pathways:

**Table 7. Black River Technical College-Paragould
Industrial Technology Pathways**



The BRTC AAS in Industrial Maintenance Technology program prepares students for work in industrial maintenance occupations. Students receive training in Machine Tool Technology, Electricity/Electronics, Hydraulics, Welding, and Supervisory Management Skills.

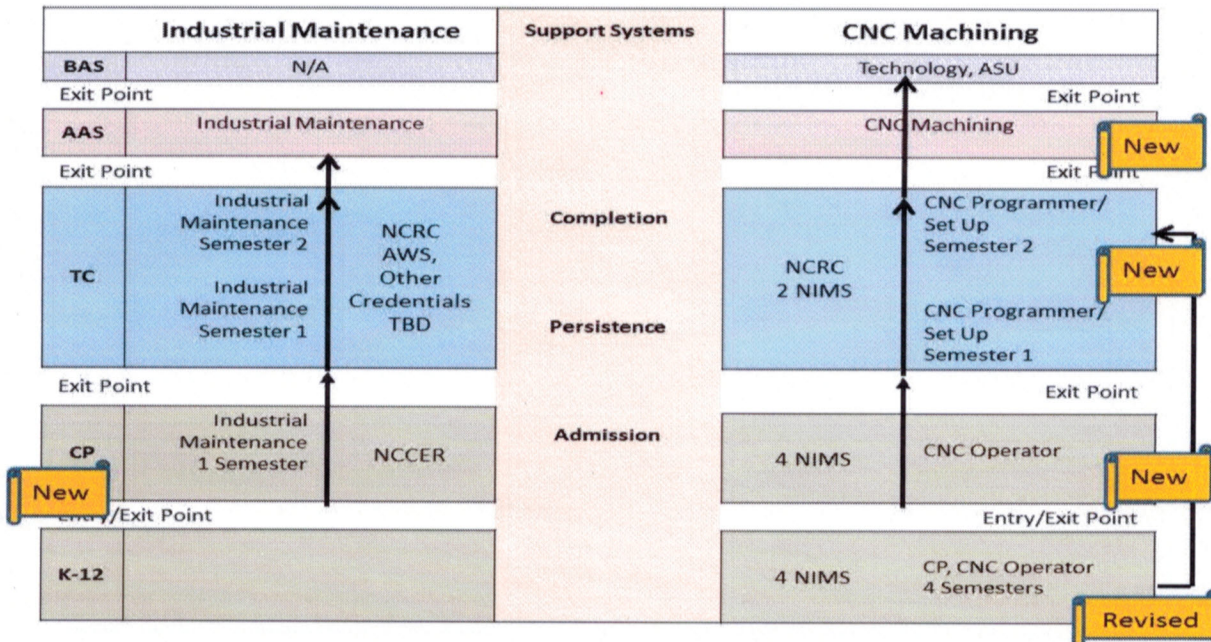
ASU-N will offer a new CP CNC Operator program over four semesters at the NEACTC. This is a 3-hour per day, 2-days per week program. Completion will give students a CP and four NIMS credentials. It will also qualify students for entry into the second semester of the new TC program for CNC Programmer/Set Up. This new TC program will embed two NIMS certifications. They are:

- CNC Turning: Programming Setup and Operations and
- CNC Milling: Programming Setup and Operations.

Furthermore, the new AAS in CNC Machining provides students with a bridge between the TC level CNC Machining program and a BAS degree offered at a four-year university like Arkansas State University.

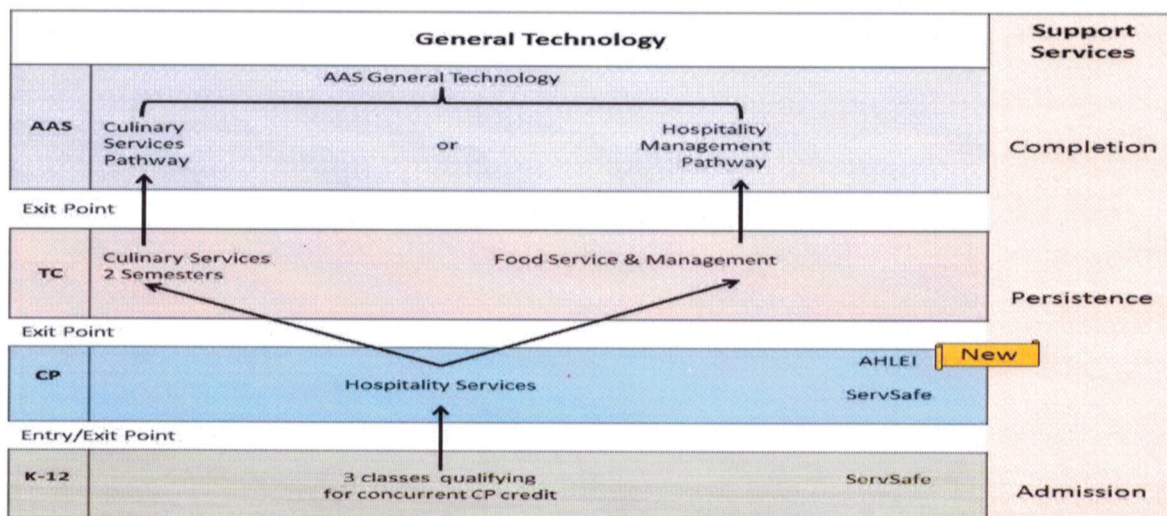
The Industrial Maintenance and CNC Machining pathways are illustrated as follows:

**Table 8: ASU-N Jonesboro Campus
Industrial Maintenance and CNC Machining Pathways**



The ASU-N Hospitality Services program offers high school juniors and seniors three classes: Culinary Arts, Food Production, Management and Services, and Hospitality Management at the NEACTC. These courses qualify towards a CP in Hospitality Services. Students receive certifications including ServSafe, and National Certifications of Guest Services Professional, Front Desk Representative, and Restaurant Service. At the CP level, the Hospitality Services program will embed the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) Guest Service Gold certification program into coursework for all students. The two pathways leading to an AAS degree in General Technology are as follows:

**Table 9. ASU-N Jonesboro
Culinary Services and Hospitality Management Pathways**



ANC will revise the Advanced Manufacturing career pathway to reflect a seamless alignment from secondary to post-secondary programming. This revision will include new course content identified by industry experts through online surveys, advisory committee meetings, and a DACUM process. The pathway currently has only a CP and AAS in Advanced Manufacturing, but this revision will include addition of a TC credential in order to provide greater flexibility with more exit and entrance points for students. Currently, ANC Technical Center students can complete a CP in Advanced Manufacturing, and then can enter the AAS program and complete in three semesters. Adding the TC to the spectrum will allow students to achieve a step credential after only one semester following high school. ANC also anticipates adding an industry recognized credential to this pathway, but the exact credential has yet to be determined. All students in this pathway will also have the opportunity to achieve credential attainments in NCRC, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, and NCCER.

ANC's Welding Technology pathway will be revised to incorporate competency-based placement and delivery of instruction to assess skill attainment more efficiently and effectively.

**Table 10. Arkansas Northeastern College
Advanced Manufacturing and Welding Technology Pathways**

AAS	Advanced Manufacturing NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid Revised	Welding Technology NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid, AWS Revised	Support Systems
Exit Point	↑	↑	Completion
TC	Advanced Manufacturing NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid Revised	Welding Technology NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid, AWS Revised	
Exit Point	↑	↑	Persistence
CP	Advanced Manufacturing NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid New	Welding Technology NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid, AWS Revised	
Entry/Exit Point	↑	↑	Admission
K-12	Multiple classes qualifying for concurrent credit towards a CP and/or a TC NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid Revised	Multiple classes qualifying for concurrent credit towards a CP and/or a TC NCRC, NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR-First Aid, AWS Revised	

Support systems play a fundamental role in communicating the career pathway options to students, helping them overcome barriers to success, and assisting in their preparation for program requirements. At entry points, support systems include articulation agreements between high schools and community colleges and between community colleges and four-year universities. Transportation may be provided for certain populations of students, and a variety of accommodations for the disabled or for those needing flexible training times, including self-paced coursework, are made.

Encouraging students to stay in school and persevere in their coursework also requires academic support services such as tutoring, remediation, and drop-out prevention programs. Other services, such as accelerated programs, college and career advisement services, internships, and individualized learning plans, help students reach their career goals.

Upon or near the completion of a student's studies, support systems are critical to employment assistance such as resume preparation and interviewing techniques, job matching and placement, or

continued career and education planning.

These systems will come into play as students are introduced to the new career pathways being launched through *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today*. Performance of these support systems will be reviewed by NEAC³ partners to determine whether adjustments are required after programs have been in place for a period of time. Future NEAC³ initiatives may consider injection of resources into enhancing support systems, but not at this time.

Role of Equipment Request.

- BRTC equipment will provide for the expansion of the Industrial Technology programs on the Paragould campus.
- ASU-N equipment purchased for the Industrial Maintenance programs will consist of two to four simulators purchased to train CP level students in a variety of maintenance-related testing and trouble-shooting scenarios.
- ASU-N equipment for the commercial kitchen classroom will consist of knife roll sets, commercial-grade mixers, and small kitchen utensils, such as strainers, bowls, grinders, and food presentation supplies.
- ANC will purchase an on-line package of software for training in the trouble-shooting of equipment, allowing ANC instruction to be more flexible and mobile. Purchase of a license will provide ANC a password-protected, customized virtual environment that can be accessed from any location, allowing ANC to take training on-site to industry. This mobility and ease of access reduces economic and logistic barriers that actual equipment costs and scheduling can create. Trainers will also be purchased to allow hands-on experience in learning and responding to various manufacturing scenarios.

Performance Assessment.

Outcomes for the project have been identified as follows along with strategies for measuring and reporting them. Reports will be collected quarterly by the Project Director from each post-secondary partner using a standardized reporting form. Data from these quarterly reports will be aggregated and reported to the Steering Committee in its quarterly meetings.

Table 11. Project Outcomes and Strategies for Measuring and Reporting Achievement

Measurable Project Outcomes	Strategies to Measure and Report Outcome Achievement
K-12/Secondary Level	
Student participation in and satisfactory completion of CRC career readiness training	CRC badging and recognition; Comparison of pre- and post-TTWT project implementation
Percentage of CTE senior concentrators and completers in coursework aligned with targeted sectors	Concentrator data for seniors collected from CTE teachers; Completers tested and collected by each college
Students earning certifications by third-parties in targeted sectors	Tested and collected by each college
Post-Secondary Level	
Student enrollment and proficiency in targeted concurrent enrollment programs	Semester to semester comparison of pre- and post-TTWT project implementation
Student enrollment and proficiency in targeted career pathways	Semester to semester comparison with pre-TTWT data
Student participation in and satisfactory	Workforce Services documentation of CRC

completion of CRC career readiness training	testing; Comparison of pre- and post-TTWT project implementation
Student certifications by third-parties	Tested and collected by each college
Nontraditional student CRC credentialing	Perkins data
College-going rate by program	ADE High School Report Card
Industry Level	
NEAC ³ partners and other employers who recognize or require NCRC in the hiring process	ACT Work Ready Communities data
Overall job candidate preparedness	Updated industry survey

SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP**20 Points**

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, in a meaningful role.

Essential Components:

- Detailed description of role of each partner in implementation of the project- describe how each partner will carry out components of the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project; describe the integration of each role into the overall project; and describe the process for implementing fully articulated pathways from K-12 through a baccalaureate degree, as appropriate.
- Capabilities of each partner in ensuring project success- discuss the unique strengths of each partner in executing planned proposal; describe how each partner is qualified to participate in the proposed project and how each partners strengthens the overall partnership.
- Consideration of all potential partners in the region – describe the process for identifying each selected partner, including the consideration of regional community colleges, universities, public schools, education service cooperatives, businesses and industries, career and technical education programs, multidistrict vocational centers, and private partnerships.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Role of Each Partner in Project Implementation

The NEAC³ partnership is comprised of the three community colleges in the region, area employers, and K-12 educators and leaders of school districts in the region. The roles and responsibilities of each in ensuring the project's successful performance are described below:

Table 1: NEAC³ Responsible Parties: Roles and Tasks

Responsible Party	Role	Tasks
Steering Committee (BRTC, ASU-N, ANC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee member Liaison with industry and K-12 for project feedback, partnership-building, industry needs and trends Coordinator of strategic K-12 relationship development Monitor of project performance Information and resource sharing with Steering Committee partners Project governance in accordance with by-laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview and hire the project director; Fulfill functions of Steering Committee members as jointly established or reflected in by-laws; Ensure career coaches and their supervisors, CTE deans, and secondary technical liaisons funded by their institution are informed of <i>Training Tomorrow's Workers Today</i> and are regularly updated and informed of the project's objectives and activities that may support and impact their own work and performance so as to maximize resources and outcomes; Collect data and submit quarterly reports in a timely fashion Research and make recommendations to NEAC³ partners for next steps in developing NEAC³ initiatives in the region based on project performance, national and regional employment projections, and anticipated future workforce needs
BRTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead applicant, grant administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with ADHE on project Supervise Project Director; provide office, meeting space
	Angela Caldwell, Vice President, Technical Education will serve as interim project director until a director is hired in August, 2016, and will serve as BRTC representative on the NEAC ³ Steering Committee in the role of Chairperson.	
ASU-N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of survey update and distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide office, meeting space for Project Director Oversee design, update, and distribution of the updated survey to regional employers in May, 2018.
	Charley Appleby, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development will serve as Vice Chair of the Steering Committee.	
ANC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisor on career coaching initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide office, meeting space for Project Director Make recommendations for events, resources, or initiatives to be advocated for or introduced by career coaches in the region
	Gene Bennett, Dean, Workforce and Economic Development will serve as 2 nd Vice Chair of the Steering Committee.	
Regional Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisors to Steering Committee regarding project initiatives, performance, and workforce needs and preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in NEAC³ meetings, industry advisory councils, regional training consortiums Provide feedback on project performance Participate in project activities as appropriate Participate in project survey Assist in identification of new NEAC³ industry partners
K-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisors to Steering Committee regarding project initiatives, performance, and opportunities for partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide meeting space as needed Provide forums for reporting project activities and outcomes Promote project activities and incentive opportunities to students or educators as appropriate Provide access to educators for collecting feedback and information sharing

The process for implementing a fully articulated pathway from K-12 through an AAS or baccalaureate degree begins with identifying major industry employers in the region and recruiting them to serve on college advisory councils. Advisory councils are, without question, key to identifying how industry workforce needs are unique and specific to regional and sub-regional areas, given the industry clusters and specializations within a region.

Advisory councils and their members constitute a valuable resource as post-secondary institutions embark on identifying or developing curriculum with the use of industry focus groups. The participation by industry in focus groups, including high-performing employees, is invaluable in identifying job-related duties and tasks for developing occupational profiles and training needs of both new and veteran workers.

Advisory council members are a primary resource to validate and vet these findings through various peer-review processes. They also provide opportunity for review and analysis of findings by their management. This offers both industry and post-secondary institutions the opportunity to synthesize what workers have said with what they expect and believe the job should encompass. Finally, industry advisory councils contribute to the analysis of job tasks in further defining a job. The final occupation profile and analysis provide a unique blueprint for development of a curriculum across a spectrum of certificate and degree levels.

Capabilities of Each Partner in Ensuring Project Success

Each industry and educational institution that has agreed to partner in NEAC³ draws on their unique place and role in their community in contributing to *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today*. The expertise each possesses as unique institutions has informed the objectives and activities that will ensure project success. Each is a leader in their own right either as employers or educators; their community relationships and spheres of influence are powerful assets for effecting change locally and at the regional level. The existing forums and alliances in which they have and should continue to invest, remain important for partnering, resource sharing, and working within sectors. They keep innovation grounded in reality and from leaping too far in front.

At the same time, working across sectors and outside traditional boundaries makes them vanguards and pace setters which will, over time, serve to close knowledge gaps, break down institutional silos, and open doors for new and increasingly innovative partnerships. *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* is a first step in bringing innovative change to workforce training in northeast Arkansas. It challenges each partner to think beyond the immediacy of institutional to-do lists and priorities to work outside their traditional spheres in cross-sector, cross-continuum partnerships to bring about transformation in how northeast Arkansas positions its people and the region for economic success.

Potential Partners in the Region

Increasingly complex sets of skills are needed to qualify for positions in demand across the region. The clustering of industry, whether steel in Mississippi County, healthcare in Jonesboro, or food-processing in Craighead and Randolph Counties, has created, and will continue to create, demand and competition for qualified workers. This also presents opportunity for related business and industry to add their voice to the value of credential attainment as a strategy for economic growth and success.

Additional partners to the NEAC³ will be identified, considered, and included based on:

- a willingness to participate in planning, project activities, and information sharing;
- a desire to cooperate at a regional level;
- an openness to learning about and putting into practice successful strategies for career

pathway development across the educational continuum;

- a willingness to commit staff and other resources to building successful pathway models.

New partners will also be identified as the three targeted industry sectors grow in the region. For example, five, possibly six, new hotels and two convention centers are being built in Jonesboro. Each facility will include at least one new restaurant. This growth will boost employment and internship opportunities for students and graduates of the ASU-N culinary, food service management, and hospitality services programs. One of these, the Embassy Suites at the ASU Convention Center, will support Arkansas State University's new hospitality management degree program, offering opportunity for continuing a student's career pathway at the baccalaureate level.

The Health Sciences industry sector will also see expanded opportunities for engaging new partners with the opening later in 2016 of the Arkansas Continued Care Hospital. Arkansas Continued Care will offer extended care to patients needing care prior to returning home or going to a nursing home or rehab facility. The nearest facilities currently offering extended care services are in Searcy and Memphis.

In December, 2015, St. Bernards Regional Medical Center announced a \$130 million expansion which includes a new 5-story surgical and intensive care tower, the expansion of its cancer and heart care centers, and a new emergency department. Project completion is anticipated at the end of 2018. St. Bernards already partners with BRTC and ASU-N through ARNEC, the rural nursing coalition, for the placement of nursing students into clinical rotations and is already a NEAC³ partner.

These expansions will offer addition clinical practice and employment opportunities for graduates across the spectrum of Health Science programs including nurses, dietitians, and food service professionals.

ASU-N partners with 27 clinical sites across its service area for placement nursing students in clinical rotations over the course of their training. Included in this partnership is Unity Healthcare for clinical placement of nursing students in Newport and Searcy hospitals. With Unity's impending purchase of outlying clinics in the region, there will be multiple opportunities for new clinical rotations and new relationship building in healthcare across the region. Many rural clinics hire students who have served in rotations at their clinic upon their graduation. This further strengthens the relationship between the provider and the college.

SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN**15 Points**

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan that maximizes efficient use of existing resources and a completed budget template.

Essential Components:

- Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities- detailed discussion of how each component of the grant budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the program.
- Local match of at least 10% of the total request, with a maximum cap of \$50,000- all proposals will include a plan for local funding to match 10% of the total grant proposal. For example, a grant requesting \$400,000 in funding would be required to provide \$40,000 in matching funds. However, the local match is capped at \$50,000, meaning grants in excess of \$500,000 will have the same match as a \$500,000 project.

Note: With a submitted written commitment and payment guarantee from an industry partner, internship wages paid during the initial twenty-four (24) months of this program may be used to offset the local match amount on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Additionally, wages paid to incumbent workers of the employer while enrolled in academic training may be deducted from the match as well. Any entity wishing to utilize this method of funding the match must include the appropriate documentation with their proposal and, if selected for funding, will be monitored to ensure compliance.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Budget Plan (15 Pts)	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0-6 Pts)

Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail

Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

Program Leadership Support Costs

Personnel costs will include:

- \$50,000 per year for a total of \$100,000 will be applied towards the *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* Project Director salary and benefits.
- \$20,000 per year (\$15,500 in salary plus \$4,500 in benefits per year) for a total of \$40,000 will provide a CRC Proctor for BRTC.
- \$50,000 per year applied to the salary of an ASU-N Clinical Site Coordinator to coordinate the required clinical rotations of RN, LPN and Allied Health students.
- \$20,000 per year (\$15,500 salary, \$4,500 in benefits per year) for a total of \$40,000 will provide a staff position at ANC to implement and administer grant investments and activities related to the development and enhancement of ANC's advanced manufacturing and welding programs. This position will also be responsible for data tracking and reporting, evaluation of initiatives, and other grant responsibilities relative to the performance of ANC's initiatives.

Travel costs will include:

- \$4,000 per year will be applied to ANC travel costs to support staff travel for grant related activities and professional development.

Other costs will include:

- \$500 per year for other ANC program support costs will be applied to consortium meetings and related meals.

Other Direct Costs

Materials and Supplies

- \$1,200 will be applied in Year One by BRTC for supplies.
- BRTC will also apply \$14,300 per year for a total of \$28,600 to third-party certifications, including CPR/First Aid, OSHA 10, and NIMS. BRTC will certify 192, 120, and 60 persons respectively in each over the next two years.
- \$5,000 per year for a total of \$10,000 will cover the cost of providing membership and curriculum materials for the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) certification program for ASU-N students.
- \$10,000 per year for a total of \$20,000 will cover the cost of supplies and tools which require periodic replacement in the ASU-N targeted programs.
- \$4,000 per year for a total of \$8,000 will provide ANC consumable supplies for grant activities.

Publication Costs

- \$4,500 per year for a total of \$9,000 will cover ANC publication costs for print, media, and marketing outreach.

Other

- \$114,500 in Year One and \$115,700 for a total of \$230,200 will provide BRTC with equipment

to expand its Paragould campus. Equipment purchased will include: HAAS CNC mills and lathes, electrical trainers, and welding equipment.

- \$85,000 per year will be applied to the cost of two to four new Amatrol simulation trainers to be purchased by ASU-N for the Industrial Maintenance program.
- \$117,000 per year for a total of \$234,000 will be dedicated by ANC to the purchase of e-learning software, virtual trainers, table-top trainers, and curriculum. It will also support career coach activities to provide incentives to promote credential attainment and college readiness in K-12 and post-secondary levels. Funds will also be used to host career cluster camps.

Cost Sharing

- Medical equipment valued at \$30,000 has been donated to BRTC by Randolph County Nursing Home for expansion of its nursing and allied health programs
- Benefits of \$12,500 per year for a total of \$25,000 towards the Clinical Site Coordinator position will comprise ASU-N's cost-sharing contribution
- Tenaris has agreed to donate \$150,000 towards classroom furniture, fixtures, and equipment for new classrooms and labs at the new ANC Allied Technologies Building.

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input.

Requesting Institution:	Black River Technical College
Title of Project:	Training Tomorrow's Workers Today

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. Personnel/Stipend	\$280,000.00
2. Travel	\$8,000.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	\$1,000.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs (consortium meetings & meals)	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$289,000.00

B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. Materials and Supplies	\$67,800.00
2. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	\$9,000.00
3. Consultant Services	\$0.00
4. Other (Explain Below)	\$634,200.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs (Equipment)	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	\$711,000.00

C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B)

\$1,000,000.00

D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to \$50,000)

\$205,000.00

Total Requested Implementation Grant Budget

\$1,205,000.00

Other Notes

Other costs include consortium meeting and meal expenses and training equipment and software.

SECTION 5 - SUSTAINABILITY**20 Points**

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the twenty-four (24) month implementation period. Equipment requests will clearly specify how purchased equipment will continue to be linked to addressing labor and workforce needs beyond the grant period.

Essential Components:

- Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month implementation grant funding period- describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period; outline the roles and funding sources of each partner after the grant period.
- Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period;
- Identify availability of long-term resources to maintain and/or repair any equipment requested.
- Describe plan for redistribution of equipment to meet additional workforce needs once the employer needs addressed by the proposal have been satisfied.

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Sustainability (20 Pts)	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Plan for Sustaining the Program

Training Tomorrow's Workers Today offers NEAC³ the opportunity to demonstrate how resources applied to building bridges with northeast Arkansas K-12 school districts will develop into a self-sustaining pipeline for training the next generation of workers. Offering programs at the K-12 level with clear pathways for continued training and increased support for career coaches will help create and sustain student enrollment in programs aligned with careers in high-demand, high-wage occupations in the region's three targeted industries.

Continued support from several quarters is necessary; one program alone is no silver bullet. Each of the targeted programs of study at each community college will be sustained beyond the 24 months of the implementation grant period by student enrollment, tuition, and fees. Program budgets are based on credit-bearing tuition rates established by the board of trustees of each institution. Programs are budgeted for and monitored for performance on an annual basis. Credentialing will continue to become embedded across programs and will be monitored for its alignment with industry workforce demands.

Each post-secondary partner is committed to the support of its ACE career coach program. The K-12 initiatives begun during the implementation grant cycle – advocating for CTE, CR101, and better alignment of CTE with region workforce will continue after the implementation grant period through relationships developed with school district leaders and under the on-going work and advocacy by career coaches, CTE deans, and secondary technical liaisons. New career coaches will be funded jointly and through various existing funding sources in partnership with ACE, local school districts, and the NEAC³ community college partners.

K-12 programs taking place at the NEA Career & Technical Center, the ANC Secondary Technical Center, and on the various college campuses will have instructors paid for by using pass through monies from ACE. Additional costs for student enrollment and transportation will continue to be paid by the school district on a per student basis.

Tools and resources will be sought for professional development opportunities for educators and resources for introducing students to career options, whether summer programs or incentives for participation and achievement, are on-going priorities.

The programs prioritized and selected by *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* are in demand by industry and by students. These programs are designed and structured to further reduce barriers students may have to enrollment, certificate completion, and college readiness. The growth of these programs will be further enhanced by the fact that some instruction is conducted using hybrid, internet-based delivery methods which ease scheduling and logistical barriers. Furthermore, allowing multiple start dates in a program over an academic year facilitates additional growth.

At the post-secondary level, third-party certifications will be paid for by student fees or will be included in tuition. At the K-12 level, incentive programs for achievement towards certifications and for summer camp attendance and will be pursued through the regional alliances and coalitions, industries, chambers of commerce, and foundations. These organizations appreciate the training

and skills that are the ultimate outcome of the experience and exposure to career choices these camps offer K-12 students. NEAC³ will continue to communicate the successful outcomes of these camps and the successes of the career coach program as a means of further gaining support by industry and the private sector for continuing and building access to these resources in the region.

Plan for Maintaining Communications and Resource Sharing

The partners have already benefited from more frequent communication and information and resource sharing. NEAC³ will maintain the Steering Committee appointed to the *Training Tomorrow's Workers Today* project to further address industry workforce needs and collectively decide future initiatives that are best addressed with a regional approach. For example the partners will:

- Share information or needs that can be responded to effectively with low-cost inter-college resource-sharing;
- Identify ways institutional strengths can contribute to regional strategies;
- Plan additional initiatives where collaboration is justified and lends strength to finding good solutions;
- Support additional peer groups of college staff and faculty for improved coordination of programs that have region-wide industry impact;
- Strengthen relationships with industry and K-12 by demonstrating value.

Table 1. Resources Available for Sustaining Programs After 24-month Grant Period

Funding Request	Impacted Programs	Students to be Enrolled	Staff and Faculty	Partner Role	Funding Sources
BRTC Nursing & Allied Health Certifications	LPN-Pocahontas	28 x 3 classes/year	9 FT 20-30 Clinical Adjuncts	Primary role in identifying and implementing planning efforts for future strategic initiatives appropriate for NEAC ³ focus	Tuition and fees; State, federal, local or other grants
	RN-Pocahontas	48/year			
	EMT-Pocahontas	20 x 4 classes/year	1 FT 2 PT		
	Fire Science-Pocahontas	15/year	1 FT 4 Adjunct		
CRC Proctor for all Targeted Programs	CNA	24/year Greene Co. 24/year Randolph Co.	2 FT 4 Adjunct		
	Dietetic	16 Year 1 8 Year 2	2 FT		
	TC Welding	22/year			
BRTC Industrial Technology Equipment, Certifications, Supplies	TC Machine Tool Technology	22/year			
	TC Industrial Electricity/Electronics	22/year			
ASU-N Nursing & Allied Health Clinical Site Coordinator	RN Newport	40 / year	9 FT 17 adjunct	Coordinate rotations w/ other NEAC ³ clinical site coordinators	Tuition and fees; State, federal, local, or other grants
	LPN Newport	32 / year			
	LPN Jonesboro	38 / year			
	LPN Marked Tree	16 / year			

ASU-N Industrial Maintenance Equipment, Supplies	IM CP K-12 IM CP	10-15/year 20/year	3 FT	Primary resource for curriculum development and revisions for IM and CNC across region	Minimal financial outlay due to In-house IM expertise
ASU-N Culinary & Food Services Supplies and Certification	TC, AAS Culinary TC, AAS Food Services Management CP, Hospitality Services	20-25	2 FT	Primary role in identifying and communicating culinary and food service workforce needs to NEAC ³ for future initiatives	Grants and donations for equipment needs Student fees for certification
ANC Advanced Manufacturing Software, Equipment, Outreach, Supplies, Administrator	Advanced Manufacturing and Welding Technology Pathways	100/year	5 FT	Primary role in identifying and communicating automation workforce needs to NEAC ³ for future initiatives	Tuition and fees; State, federal, local, or other grants; Industry support

Redistribution of Equipment

Equipment purchased through the grant for the advanced manufacturing, industrial maintenance, and industrial electricity programs is intended to be installed permanently due to insurance, warranty, and general mobility limitations and will be assembled and installed in place on the campuses. In most cases, it is technical equipment requiring training and safety precautions and is intended to remain in place.

Demand for equipment which might be moveable is anticipated to be so great that transport to other locations is unfeasible. Flex schedules to accommodate non-traditional students will result in labs and courses being available over extended time periods outside and beyond the traditional time frame for classroom work to be performed. Many non-traditional students in manufacturing will be receiving their training at the request of their current employer. Their tuition, in many cases, will be paid for by their employer. These courses will require the full complement of equipment so as to provide the same quality of training other students receive, further reducing the likelihood of mobility as a feasible option.

A notable exception is the software simulation programs which are web-based. These training tools lend themselves to use from any location – campus, industry, or elsewhere – as long as a computer and internet access are available. Use will be subject to licensing agreements, but make resource-sharing a more viable option for the NEAC³ partners as future workforce training needs are identified across the region.

SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2016Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu*Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded a planning grant.***IMPLEMENTATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC**

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11–14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Program Plan	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13–15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10–12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7–9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Budget Plan	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13–15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10–12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7–9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	15 Pts
Sustainability	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15–17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11–14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Total Points Possible					100 Pts

Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration
NEAC³



K-12 PARTNER LETTERS

POCAHONTAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
"PREPARING TODAY FOR TOMORROW"
DARYL BLAXTON, SUPERINTENDENT

2300 NORTH PARK STREET
POCAHONTAS, AR 72455
PHONE: 870-892-4573
FAX: 870-892-8857
www.nesc.k12.ar.us



Dr. Eric A. Turner, President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey, Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell, President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell, Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support of the Workforce Initiative Act Grant in the Implementation phase for Black River Technical College who is serving as the lead institution for this initiative as they partner with Arkansas Northeastern College and Arkansas State University-Newport. These three colleges have combined to establish the Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration (NEAC³) to serve the our region in establishing pathways for preparing a more seamless pathway for students as they work to become ready to enter postsecondary education or a career upon graduation from high school.

In supporting this regional workforce grant as this will help us achieve our district's goal of "Preparing Today for Tomorrow". We have worked very closely with BRTC this past year during the planning phase of this grant to establish two pathways for our students to pursue while in their junior and senior year of high school that will allow them to graduate with credentials recognized by business and industry, a technical certificate, and skills that will allow immediate entry into the workplace or the ability to continue their education toward an Associate degree. This program has been approved as a pilot by Arkansas Career Education for our district. The program has been branded as TOPSS (Technical Opportunities and Pathways for Secondary Students) and will help us meet the identified pathways of this implementation grant initiative.

We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. For that reason, we are pleased to learn that this pathway will include the Career Readiness Certificate as a credential for future TOPSS graduates. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

We look forward our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region. This grant in the implementation phase will allow our facility to continue to have access to a prepared pool of qualified applicants. We appreciate consideration of this investment in our community and in the three institutions that are committed to continually providing quality educational opportunities to this Northeast Arkansas region.

Sincerely,



Daryl Blaxton
Superintendent of Schools

Board Members: Dr. Michael Davis, President; Chuck Andrews, Vice President; Judy McClain, Secretary; James Ray Chester, Victor Stone

SLOAN-HENDRIX SCHOOL DISTRICT

Marty Moore, Principal
High School
Phone: 870-869-2361
Fax: 870-869-2363

P.O. Box 1080 #1 Greyhound Circle
Imboden, Arkansas 72434
Phone: 870-869-2384
Fax: 870-869-2364

Ligie Waddell, Principal
Elementary/Middle School
Phone: 870-869-2101
Fax: 870-869-2365

Clifford Rorex, Superintendent

May 20, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell
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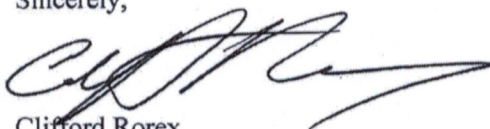
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Sincerely,



Clifford Rorex
Superintendent of Schools

Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration
NEAC³



INDUSTRY PARTNER LETTERS

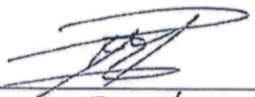
Arkansas Northeastern College
Center for Allied Technologies
Pledge Agreement

The Tenaris Corporation hereby pledges an amount of \$ 150,000 to be paid in two installments of \$75,000 each over a period of two years. In recognition of this generous pledge and donation, the

Arkansas Northeastern College will name the following facility features after the donor:

- Tenaris Mechanical Laboratory
- Tenaris General Classroom 1
- Tenaris General Classroom 2
- Tenaris Conference Room

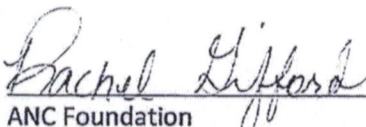
The naming recognition has no specific term and carries with it no special privileges related to facility usage, the provision of training and educational services, or any other service provided by the Arkansas Northeastern College or ANC Foundation, now or in the future. Additionally, the naming recognition affords the donor no measure of control over facility usage decisions, now or in the future.

Tenaris 
Donor Roberto De Hoyos

9-30-2015
Date


Arkansas Northeastern College

10/7/15
Date


ANC Foundation

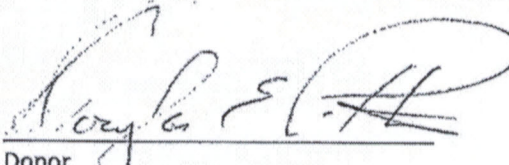
10/7/15

Arkansas Northeastern College
Center for Allied Technologies
Pledge Agreement

DENSO North America Foundation hereby pledges an amount of \$150,000 to be paid in three installments of \$50,000 each over a period of three years. In recognition of this generous pledge and donation, the Arkansas Northeastern College will name the following facility features after the donor:

- DENSO Computer Laboratory/Library
- DENSO Manufacturing Classroom/Laboratory

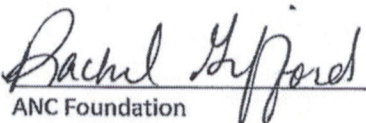
The naming recognition has no specific term and carries with it no special privileges related to facility usage, the provision of training and educational services, or any other service provided by the Arkansas Northeastern College or ANC Foundation, now or in the future. Additionally, the naming recognition affords the donor no measure of control over facility usage decisions, now or in the future.


Donor

10/2/15
Date


Arkansas Northeastern College

10/2/15
Date


ANC Foundation

10-2-15
Date



**Hilton
Garden Inn®**

2840 S Caraway * Jonesboro, AR 72401

870.931.7727

5/17/2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

- Hilton Garden Inn is a hotel in Jonesboro, Arkansas.
- The Hilton Garden Inn hires for reservations, maintenance, food/beverage outlets, banquets, and sales.

We are pleased to provide you with a letter of support for this regional workforce grant because

- It will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates in occupations critical to our success. More qualified candidates will
 - Improve our screening and hiring process
 - Reduce turnover due to poor performance
 - Improve our employees' NOCTI pass rates (*if applicable*)
 - Other reasons related to qualifications listed above
- The industry-recognized certifications students will ensure that people we hire meet industry standards for knowledge and skills
- These targeted programs help us create a career path for our employees and help us promote from within
- We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline.
- We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

We look forward our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region.

Sincerely,

Kandi Baker
Director of Marketing



May 16, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

The Nutritional Services department at St. Bernards Medical Center employees 65-75 food service employees here in Northeast Arkansas. It is a great asset to us if the employee has gone through the hospitality training.

I am pleased to provide you with a letter of support for this regional workforce grant because it will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates in occupations critical to our success. More qualified candidates will mean reduced turnover rates due to poor performances and will improve the quality of employees that we have on staff. This targeted program helps us create a career path for our employees and help us promote from within. I am committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

I look forward to our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region.

Sincerely,

Stacy Hindman, MS, RD, LD
Director of Nutritional Services
St. Bernards Medical Center
225 East Jackson Avenue
Jonesboro, AR 72401
870-207-4520



May 18, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Greetings from Nice-Pak Products Inc. We are a global company with facilities in Arkansas, Indiana, New York, Germany and England. We manufacture wet wipes for a variety of uses including babies, surface cleaning, makeup removal and moist toilet tissue. Worldwide we employee 2,500 people with 220 of those employed in Jonesboro. Nice-Pak hires maintenance personal that need to have specific education and training which this program can provide. Specifically things like fabrication, bearings and belts, welding, motors, drives, sensors both analog and digital, PLC's, electrical circuits, understand and read both mechanical and electrical drawings, motor wiring, a general understanding of OSHA relating to the tasks maintenance performs. Both U.S. and Metric units of measure including knowledge of the calculating equivalents. Troubleshooting equipment to both repair it and understand the root cause of the issue. These are just some of the things Nice-Pak would like this program to provide future Nice-Pak maintenance employees.

Nice-Pak is pleased to provide you with a letter of support for this regional workforce grant because it will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates in occupations critical to our success. In this region of Arkansas we have found it difficult to find candidates with the kind of education and training Nice-Pak desires for its maintenance employees. The industry-recognized certifications students will acquire in PLC's, safety, welding and others will ensure that people we hire meet industry standards for knowledge and skills. These targeted programs help us create a career path for our employees and help us promote from within. We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

Nice-Pak looks forward to a continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region.

Sincerely,

Paul Sakowski
Engineering & Maintenance Manager
Nice-Pak Products Inc.
Jonesboro Facility



May 18, 2016

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Anchor Packaging, Inc. operates a total of four locations in Northeast Arkansas. Three of these locations are production plants and the fourth is a combination of warehouse, distribution, and auto packaging. Anchor has a workforce of approximately 900 employees in NE Arkansas and we have an on-going need for production labor and skilled support, including industrial maintenance and industrial engineering. Our current needs being addressed by Arkansas State University-Newport (ASU-N) are in the industrial maintenance area as well as additional training for our production supervisors and leads.

Anchor Packaging, Inc. requires that the candidates for our maintenance department take the Industrial Maintenance NOCTI assessment and score within the national average in order to be considered for employment. We do depend on the schools in the area, such as ASU-N to adequately prepare students to be successful with this assessment.

We also count on the programs such as the one at ASU-N to develop individuals that will come into the workforce with strong work ethics that will help in reducing turnover and enhance work performance. For our production employees, our qualifications include strong work ethics and a desire to learn.

In addition, Anchor also relies on ASU-N to help in developing members of our workforce as they grow in their roles and advance within our organization. Strong work ethics as well as proven leadership abilities are necessary qualifications for our staff members that are advancing their management careers.

We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

We look forward our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in Northeast Arkansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Don Wagster', is written over a horizontal line.

Don Wagster
Director of Human Resources



First On Any Menu.

PO Box 988/4114 Highway 67 S
Pocahontas, Ar. 72455
870-202-7040

May 24, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dear Dr. Turner:

Peco Foods, a poultry processing company, recently opened in Randolph and Clay counties in Northeast Arkansas, supports the collaborative effort of the NEAC3. At present, we employ 300 workers and plan to employ 1200 by the end of 2017.

Many of the occupations we hire are as follows: general labor, quality assurance, maintenance, production management, purchasing, human resources, hatchery production, feed mill operator, LPN, and truck driver. The qualities which make our employees successful include: communication skills, the ability to learn, attention to detail, being team-oriented, being dependable, and drug-free. Some of the qualifications for hiring would include certifications in industrial maintenance, and electronics/electricity (for positions in our Maintenance Department).

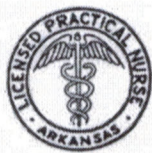
Peco Foods is pleased to provide you with a letter of support for the NEAC3 Regional Workforce Grant because it will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates in occupations critical to our success. More qualified candidates will improve our screening and hiring process and reduce turnover due to poor performance.

The industry-recognized certifications students will acquire, such as OSHA 10-Hour General Industry and CPR/First Aid, will ensure that people we hire meet industry standards for knowledge and skills. These targeted programs help us create a career path for our employees and help us promote from within.

We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce. We look forward our continued partnership with you and appreciate the effort of NEAC3 to build a strong workforce in our region.

Sincerely,

Kerry Roemer
Human Resources Director
Peco Foods, Inc.



ALPNA

Arkansas Licensed Practical Nurses' Association

Tammy L. Arnold, President
Arkansas Licensed Practical Nurses' Assoc.
105 Pool Drive, Batesville, Ar 72501

May 24, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner, President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72435

Dr. Sandra Massey, Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr James Shemwell, President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell, Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

I am Tammy Arnold, the President of the "Arkansas Licensed Practical Nurses' Association" We are an organization to help Arkansas LPN's stay informed about issues that affect us. ALPNA promotes contacts on national, state and local levels with groups interested in the improvement and extension of quality nursing service. ALPNA also continues to establish and maintain high standards of integrity, honor and character among LPNs. The organization serves to promote and protect their welfare and advance their educational standards.

Arkansas Licensed Practical Nurses' Association is pleased to provide you with a letter of support for this regional workforce grant, because it will provide more educational opportunities for achieving many more nurses in this nursing shortage environment. These nursing students will be licensed by The State Board of Nursing after successful completion of their courses and State Board Testing. The State Board of Nursing does background checks and therefore we have assurance that we have quality nurses that can be encouraged to pursue higher education nursing. ALPNA is committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

We look forward to our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region.

Sincerely,

Tammy L. Arnold

Tammy L. Arnold, President
Arkansas Licensed Practical Nurses' Association

Tammy L. Arnold, President 105 Pool Drive, Batesville, AR 72501 Phone: 870-698-1602
Jerry R. Natale, Secretary, 3108 Lilac Street, Pine Bluff, AR 71603 Phone: 870-671-4353
Janie Bouscher, Treasurer, #4 Pollard Lane, DeWitt, AR 72042 Phone: 870-509-2119



HARRIS MEDICAL CENTER

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Unity Health Harris Medical Center is located in Newport Arkansas and employs approximately 260 individuals at this campus alone. System wide we employ 2,200 associates in multiple fields, specialties, and locations. While we do hire a wide range of job specialties, our biggest need and highest turn-over areas are in the medical side: nurses, certified assistants, techs, respiratory therapy, etc. In order to obtain these positions these fields require state licensure for many, and must be held accountable by a board that oversees their profession.

We are pleased to provide a letter of support for this regional workforce grant because it will increase our access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates in occupations critical to our success. Providing more qualified candidates will reduce turnover due to poor performance, improve NCLEX/PN pass rates, and will maintain the rate of improving healthcare for our patients as it continues on its upward pace across the country. Our industry-recognized certifications students will acquire, such as Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Certified Nursing Assistant, will ensure that people we hire meet industry standards for knowledge and skills.

We are committed to working with you to ensure our untrained understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce. We have an obligation to the state to provide fair and equal employment for all individuals and to maintain that responsibility. We also have an obligation to the state to provide safe and adequate care to our consumers with a high level of skill and ability. All of which this position will help perform and provide to this, and multiple other local/regional employers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Capps", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeremy D. Capps RN, BSN
Medical Services Director

HARRIS MEDICAL CENTER

1205 McLain St
Newport, AR 72112
P 870.523.8911 | F 870.523.0225

www.Unity-Health.org

FIVE RIVERS

MEDICAL CENTER

May 20, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Five Rivers Medical Center is an acute care hospital in Pocahontas, Arkansas. As a rural hospital it is imperative that we have ready access to qualified health care professionals. We have relied on the allied health programs at BRTC for staffing in nursing, respiratory, phlebotomy, and nutritional services departments in our facility. The hospital is utilized by Black River Technical College for clinical rotations for these allied health programs.

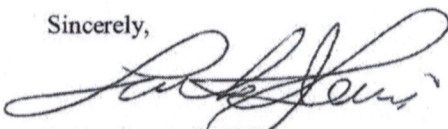
It is my honor to write this letter of continued support for the Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration which includes Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University-Newport, and Black River Technical College. In supporting this regional workforce grant as this will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates that are critical to our continued success. More qualified candidates will improve our screening and hiring process, reduce turnover due to poor performance and improve our ability to serve our residents and their families. The healthcare pathway also helps us to provide a career path for our current employees who wish to advance their education and training which allows us to also promote from within our facility.

We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. For that reason, we are pleased to learn that this pathway will include the Career Readiness Certificate as a credential for future BRTC graduates. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

BRTC has been a resource for our facility for many years. We turn to the college for specialty training, such as the Spanish for Healthcare Professionals class recently provided to assist us with preparation for demographic changes in our community. We also serve on advisory committees for the allied health program

We look forward our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region. This grant in the implementation phase will allow our facility to continue to have access to a prepared pool of qualified applicants. We appreciate consideration of this investment in our community and in the three institutions that are committed to continually providing quality educational opportunities to this Northeast Arkansas region.

Sincerely,



Luther Lewis, FACHE
CEO

May 20, 2016



Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Pocahontas Healthcare and Rehab is a long term care facility in Pocahontas, Arkansas which is licensed to provide services for up to 97 residents on a daily basis. We have 85 employees that includes 43 Certified Nursing Assistants, 16 Licensed Practical Nurses, and 10 Registered Nurses. Our facility is utilized by Black River Technical College for clinical rotations for these programs and other allied health programs at the college.

It is my honor to write this letter of continued support for the Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration which includes Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University-Newport, and Black River Technical College. In supporting this regional workforce grant as this will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates that are critical to our continued success. More qualified candidates will improve our screening and hiring process, reduce turnover due to poor performance and improve our ability to serve our residents and their families. The healthcare pathway also helps us to provide a career path for our current employees who wish to advance their education and training which allows us to also promote from within our facility.

We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. For that reason, we are pleased to learn that this pathway will include the Career Readiness Certificate as a credential for future BRTC graduates. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

BRTC has been a resource for our facility for many years. We turn to the college for specialty training, such as the Spanish for Healthcare Professionals class recently provided to assist us with preparation for demographic changes in our community. We also serve on advisory committees for the allied health program and often provide sponsorship for students that have enrolled in the Nursing Assistant Program.

We look forward to our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region. This grant in the implementation phase will allow our facility to continue to have access to a prepared pool of qualified applicants. We appreciate consideration of this investment in our community and in the three institutions that are committed to continually providing quality educational opportunities to this Northeast Arkansas region.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Fort, RN
Administrator

RANDOLPH HOME

500 Camp Road
Pocahontas, Arkansas 72455
870-892-5214
renh@randolphhome.com

May 20, 2016

Dr. Eric A. Turner
President
Black River Technical College
1410 Highway 304 East
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Dr. James Shemwell
President
Arkansas Northeastern College
2501 South Division Street
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Dr. Sandra Massey
Chancellor
Arkansas State University-Newport
7648 Victory Blvd
Newport, AR 72112

Dr. Brett Powell
Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Randolph County Nursing Home is a 140 bed long term care facility in Pocahontas, Arkansas. We have 210 employees that includes 123 Certified Nursing Assistants, 19 Licensed Practical Nurses, and 18 Registered Nurses. Our facility is utilized by Black River Technical College for clinical rotations for these programs and other allied health programs at the college.

It is my honor to write this letter of continued support for the Northeast Arkansas Community College Collaboration which includes Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University-Newport, and Black River Technical College. In supporting this regional workforce grant as this will help us have access to a broader pool of qualified job candidates that are critical to our continued success. More qualified candidates will improve our screening and hiring process, reduce turnover due to poor performance and improve our ability to serve our residents and their families. The healthcare pathway also helps us to provide a career path for our current employees who wish to advance their education and training which allows us to also promote from within our facility.

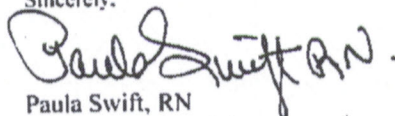
We understand the success of our employees begins at the K-12 level with training in customer service, communications, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and workplace discipline. For that reason, we are pleased to learn that this pathway will include the Career Readiness Certificate as a credential for future BRTC graduates. We are committed to working with you to ensure our young people understand and meet the expectations for today's workforce.

BRTC has been a resource for our facility for many years. We turn to the college for specialty training, such as the Spanish for Healthcare Professionals class recently provided to assist us with preparation for demographic changes in our community. We also serve on advisory committees for the allied health program and often provide sponsorship for students that have enrolled in the Nursing Assistant Program.

We are pleased to provide the BRTC with an equipment donation of beds, bedside tables, wheelchairs and other pieces of equipment that were not moved into our new facility which supports this grant initiative. This donation will allow them to expand training opportunities in the healthcare sector and has an estimated value of \$30,000.00.

We look forward our continued partnership with you in building a strong workforce in our region. This grant in the implementation phase will allow our facility to continue to have access to a prepared pool of qualified applicants. We appreciate consideration of this investment in our community and in the three institutions that are committed to continually providing quality educational opportunities to this Northeast Arkansas region.

Sincerely,



Paula Swift, RN
Administrator