

Chet Burton
For the LVN

August 6, 2015

Chet Burton: WNC working to meet the needs for Nevada's future



Western Nevada College President Chet Burton poses on the Carson campus.

Western Nevada College's Applied Industrial Technology program has been in the news lately. A lot.

Not only because it's a great program designed to put Nevadans to work in the growing technical business environment, but because our community is rallying around AIT and what it means to prepare Nevadans for careers that are going to strengthen our local communities and state economy.

The college has recently received a number of grants to expand the AIT program and its facilities. More than \$200,000 has been gifted to the program through private and federal funds, thanks to the tireless work of the WNC Foundation and the generosity of our community.

These gifts will help build an advanced industrial robotics lab with 3D modeling and automation, and expand our current facility by creating a realistic manufacturing line from raw material through a finished product to provide students with hands-on technical training in a real-world environment.

Manufacturing sector jobs are projected to increase by 30 percent in the next five years. Nevada

manufacturing currently employs 55,000 people, with an expected 19 percent increase over 10 years. The economic impact to our state is expected to be in the billions of dollars. Nevada needs skilled workers.

WNC serves the fourth largest population of higher education students in the state, and 39 percent of those students are in the industrial technology career certification and degree paths. These students will help meet the needs of companies like Tesla and others who will follow if we can supply the skilled workforce they demand.

WNC serves more than 5,000 students each semester through three campuses in Carson City, Fallon and Minden/Gardnerville covering five counties and an 8,000 square-mile service area.

This fall we are accepting a number of Jump Start College students from 14 regional high schools, where they will have the opportunity to graduate from high school with a certificate in applied technology from a nationally accredited program and 18 college credits toward an advanced certificate or associate of arts degree.

We are extremely proud of the AIT program and our other degree and certificate programs including nursing, graphic communications, and construction technology that prepare our students for skilled jobs that require college coursework and professional certification.

We are also proud of our students and our community for helping to fill the gap left by the recession and recent legislative session. Our funding has been cut by 42 percent since 2007, and the support of this community, the federal government and local philanthropic organizations are helping us get over that hurdle.

The college, with the WNC Foundation, will continue to seek additional funding through a number of avenues in the coming months to continue to grow and expand these valuable programs.

We are expanding to meet the demands of Nevada's future economy. Together, we can put the community back into community college.

Chet Burton is WNC President and chief fundraising officer on behalf of WNC Foundation.

Top Video Headlines

of 3



©2005 - 2015 Swift Communications, Inc.