



Eastern West Virginia
Community & Technical College

NEWS RELEASE

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EASTERN LAUNCHES ELECTROMECHANICAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Everywhere you turn these days in industry and business, electronics plays an increasingly essential role. In communications and transportation, in energy and manufacturing, in homeland security and national defense, electronics drives the transmitters, generators, pneumatics, robotics and automated control systems that make things work. And employers across that entire spectrum need high-wage technicians to install, maintain, repair and upgrade all the equipment.

To prepare area residents to take advantage of those opportunities, Eastern WV Community and Technical College will launch a new program in Electromechanical Technology. "According to the US Department of Labor, job opportunities are the best for workers who get one or two years' training in a community college or vocational program," said Larry Bloom, Eastern's Academic Program Director for Industrial Technologies.

"And just approved by the state last month, our program includes training in electricity, electronics, pneumatics, hydraulics, machinery, and computerized control systems." To purchase equipment and software, and to train and hire instructors for the program, Eastern received a Technical Program Development grant of \$220-thousand from the WV Council for Community and Technical College Education.

Thirteen area business and organizations, including manufacturers, processors, high-tech and utility firms, hospitals and school systems, wrote letters in support of Eastern's grant application. "These are all local employers who have identified needs for employees with this kind of training and knowledge," Bloom emphasized, "and who told the state that we need this program in the Potomac Highlands."

Electromechanical technicians who work in the Cumberland, MD and nearby WV counties earn a yearly salary of more than \$40-thousand, according to the government's Bureau of Labor Statistics. "That's about four-thousand dollars per year better than the average statewide pay in those jobs," Bloom noted, "but not quite as good as the national average."

Although the technical courses in the Eastern program will not begin until next fall, learners can get an early jump in their studies by registering now for refresher classes in English and math that will enable them to start college-level writing and industrial math courses next fall. "Those who don't need the refresher classes," Bloom urged, "are welcome to register now for the required classes in writing and computer fundamentals."

To determine the level of knowledge and skill in writing and math that each individual learner brings to the college, those interested should make an appointment with Eastern's admissions counselors (by calling 434-8000, or toll-free: 877-982-2322).

Eastern's program will allow learners to complete courses grouped in skill sets designed to meet technical skill needs in electromechanical technology, or to earn a two-

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semester certificate in the field. “And anyone who completes one or more skill sets, can readily apply those credits towards completing the certificate,” Bloom said.

The college also plans to have an associate degree program in electromechanical technology in place by next fall, he added.

For more information about Eastern’s program in electromechanical technology, its financial aid opportunities and additional programs of study and workforce and education, call 434-8000, or toll free: 877-982-2322. Or check the College’s website: “www.eastern.wvnet.edu”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.