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13 manufacturing trainees graduate from GCC program

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TURNERS FALLS — Greenfield Mayor William Martin presented 13 graduates of a local machinist training program with two key pieces of advice Friday.

“If you have an idea, do it. ... Be the entrepreneur you want to be,” Martin said. “(And) take the opportunity for learning that’s all around us.”

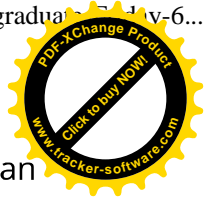
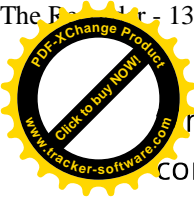
After hundreds of hours of in-person and online lessons, the students of the seventh cohort of the Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline — Computer Numerical Control (AMP-CNC) training program can reap the fruits of their labor, receiving their graduation certificates as well as congratulatory citations from Governor Charlie Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.

More than 30 people attended the 4 p.m. graduation ceremony, which was held in Franklin County Technical School’s cafeteria.

Each student completed the 15-week 300-hour AMP-CNC training program run by Greenfield Community College (GCC) in partnership with the Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board (FHREB), the Franklin Hampshire Career Center (FHCC), Franklin County Technical School and area machining companies. The adult training program uses the technical school’s machine shop in the evenings after the high school day concludes.

This cohort’s graduates are Ryan Autry of Northampton, Steven Brendel of Wendell, Mitchell Daskevich of Athol, Matthew Foskett of Orange, Kiel Guptill of Greenfield, Matthew Haller of Northampton, Jennifer Jarvis of Shelburne, Elsie Jordan of Turners Falls, Henry Kaiser of Charlemont, Celso Lopez of Amherst, Gideon Morse of Amherst, Tina Page of Greenfield and Jason Taylor of Greenfield.

Six of the graduates already have job offers and the rest will be applying for jobs as entry-level computer numerical control (CNC) operators at precision machining companies throughout the Pioneer Valley.



The 15-week AMP-CNC program gets a trainee to the front door of a machining company as an entry-level CNC operator at an average starting wage of about \$15.50 an hour," FHREB Director Patricia Crosby is quoted as saying in a FHREB press release. "Those who stick with it and keep building skills can be making \$25 to \$35 per hour in three to five years. Skilled machinists are very much in demand in the Pioneer Valley, in nearby Vermont and New Hampshire, and all across the country."

"The money is out there and the demand is out there," Richard Martin, Franklin County Technical School's superintendent, said during the ceremony. "That's very exciting."

The training program was developed in 2013 by GCC and area employers to conform to industry standards developed by the Manufacturing Advancement Center Workforce Innovation Collaborative (MACWIC), a training center out of Worcester. The program is currently offered at no tuition cost to qualified applicants, thanks to two federal Department of Labor grants managed by FHREB and GCC.

"The AMP-CNC program has been going strong for over three years now and has consistently maintained job placement rates of 70 percent to 85 percent for every cohort we have graduated," Alyce Stiles, dean of Workforce Development and Community Education at GCC, is quoted as saying in the release.

The next training cohort begins on Jan. 23, 2017. Those interested in applying can sign up to attend one of the monthly information sessions by calling (413) 774-4361 or registering online at www.gcc.mass.edu/manufacturing.