



For Immediate Release
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Hillsborough Community College Brandon Campus Graduates High-Tech Manufacturing Production Technicians

Tampa – This past Friday the Hillsborough Community College Brandon Campus held graduation ceremony and job fair for its second class of students attending HCC’s new “Manufacturing Fundamentals” training program.

“The students and Tampa Bay Area manufacturers are thrilled with the program,” Dr. Eric Roe, principal investigator of the Employ Florida Banner Center for Manufacturing at HCC Brandon, said. “It aligns with the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council, or MSSC, “Production Technician” certification. Both nationally and industry-recognized, the certification is going to have a vast impact on Florida’s manufacturing community and its workforce and the state’s economy.

“The certification is a new and essential tool to help raise the bar for manufacturing production technician education and training. The technicians we graduated today now have a high-tech foundation with which to improve their productivity and provide a major contribution to the expansion of Florida’s manufacturing industries.”

Funded by a Workforce Florida grant, the Employ Florida Banner Center for Manufacturing is a public-private consortium. The five partner community colleges and manufacturing companies in the consortium developed the new training program this year and delivered it to a cohort of 122 students in five counties. The program is aligned with the new MSSC production technician competencies:

manufacturing production and processes, safety, maintenance awareness, and quality and continuous improvement.

“This is a major breakthrough for Florida’s high-stakes manufacturing industries,” Dr. Carlos Soto, HCC Brandon Campus President, said. “The manufacturing companies who are members of the Banner Center consortium have supported us in the development and delivery of this new training program. Now, they will be able to reap the benefits of this effort.”

Representatives from Tampa Bay Area manufacturing companies attended Friday’s post-graduation ceremony job fair. There to meet the newly trained technicians and initiate recruitment efforts to fill entry-level production technician vacancies, they acknowledged the importance of the Banner Center training program and the graduates who were about to become part of Florida’s manufacturing workforce.

Sarah Odom, human resource manager, Tampa Bay Steel, said, “When we are hiring, we seek candidates with this training and background. This is the second time I attended a Banner Center job fair. I’m looking forward to more.”

“I think it is wonderful being at the Banner Center’s job fair, watching the educational system, employers and prospective employees working together,” LoAn Nguyen, employment manager, Cox Target Media, remarked. “When the three work together, it is a perfect pipeline.”

“It is important for employees to come to us with a basic knowledge of production,” Ellen Donegan, recruiting specialist, Tampa Armature Works, said. “The Banner Center students have worked hard for the training and shown their willingness to learn and inspiration to start a career and be successful.”

JoAnn Winn, employment manager, National Gypsum Company, said, “Our company places great value on technicians, like the Banner Center graduates, that have training and basic knowledge of the manufacturing industry.”

Friday's graduates join the other partner community college's graduates to become Florida's newly trained and certified "industrial athletes of the future."

For more information about the Banner Center and its training programs, contact Edward Allen, manager, Employ Florida Banner Center for Manufacturing at (813) 259-6574 or email: eallen6@hccfl.edu.

Hillsborough Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, Telephone 404-679-4501) to award associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

Hillsborough Community College serves more than 40,000 students on campuses on Dale Mabry Highway and in Ybor City, Plant City and Brandon. HCC also serves students at learning centers on MacDill Air Force Base and in Ruskin. HCC was the recipient of the 2006 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Equity award.