

QCC highlights high demand careers at virtual community event

WORCESTER — More than 20 community leaders learned what the most in demand careers were and how Quinsigamond Community College was there to support their organizations and their constituents. At a recent virtual community event, QCC staff highlighted some of the top healthcare, manufacturing and information technology (IT) careers and the programs that QCC offers in these areas.

"It is imperative we offer the tools and information to best advise our community organizations on what types of high demand careers are available, and how to get them trained as quickly and efficiently as possible," said Director of Community Engagement, Déborah L. González, Ph.D. "QCC's focus is on providing the practical skills that can help students improve their skill sets, find employment, and embark on a career path."

During a virtual presentation by the College, representatives from QCC's Workforce Development and Continuing Education (CWDCE), as well as QCC's Admissions office discussed the pathways students can take to a better career and future.

CWDCE Program Manager Kathleen O'Connor addressed the variety of free programs that the College offers through the Snap to Work Program for those who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as the free programs offered through grant funding. She noted that these programs offer wrap-around services and some offer free

textbooks, assistance with transportation, childcare, some pay hourly stipends and some grant programs offer job placements.

El Buen Samaritano Food Program, Inc. Director of Operations Maricelis (Mari) Gonzalez said she feels the Snap to Work program opportunities would be very beneficial for her constituents, many of whom are receiving Snap benefits, while they look for employment.

"I do come across volunteers that in order to get Snap benefits, they have to commit to 20 hours (of volunteer work). I'm thinking instead of doing this, let's get them into a certificate program," Ms. Gonzalez said. "Look what we have in our own backyard. We have these free programs that can help people get to the next level ...I know QCC will get them to that next level."

Today, healthcare and social assistance are the largest employment sector (20.3 percent), with a wide spectrum of entry-level jobs and wage earning potential and multiple occupational pathways. In demand careers include CNAs, LPNs, RNs, Pharmacy Technicians and Direct Care Workers.

The Advanced Manufacturing sector also has a large need for workers such as CNC Machinists, Quality Control Technician and Production Workers. At QCC, students can use a variety of short-term educational pathways to begin a career in advanced manufacturing.

Many of the CWDCE programs are quick turnaround programs that

are low-cost and enable students to enter the workforce immediately, or continue in a credit-based certificate or degree program. The CWDCE also offers subscription-based, all-you-can-learn online modules that enable students to access over 500 unique online courses in Advanced Manufacturing or Microsoft 365. These training modules can be accessed from 30, 60, 90, 180, 365 days of unlimited use for a set rate.

"Students are in charge of their own learning pathway," Ms. O'Connor said. Professional and Technical Services careers also top the list with a current need for occupations such as Software/Web Developer, Cyber Security and Biomanufacturing Technicians.

A variety of CWDCE programs include IT career pathways. Students to take 18-week courses to become front-end software developers or back-end software developers, as well as a five-week Google IT Help Technician Certificate program. Additionally, for those students who wish to continue their education after a non-credit program, they can meet with QCC's Career Services and Credit for Prior Learning to learn how to get credit for their work.

QCC recognized the need to offer programs in Spanish and the CWDCE designed a Personal Care Homemaker Training program for students in both English and Spanish models. Students are eligible to work with an agency and they can choose to be paired with someone who is English or Spanish

speaking.

QCC's Associate Director of Admissions, Denise Haile, Ed.D. addressed the credit options available, highlighting the 120 degree and certificate programs, many of which are in the high demand, high pay areas of healthcare, manufacturing and IT. Examples of programs include Emergency Medical Assistant Certificate, Computer Systems Engineering Technology-Help Desk Technician Certificate to Associate degrees such as Manufacturing Technology-Applied Manufacturing Option.

Preparing students from employment is a key element in both credit and non-credit programs. From resume and cover letter workshops, to mock interview sessions, workplace and "dress for success" sessions, QCC ensures students are thoroughly prepared to enter the workforce.

Enrollment is currently underway for the Fall semester. Courses for credit and non-credit programs are available, days, nights, weekends and online. Visit www.QCC.edu/admissions to learn more.

Informational community events will continue to be held throughout the year with the next event set for September 29. The event will focus on student success resources.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.



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