



NC Community Colleges
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Dr. R. Scott Ralls, President

PRESS RELEASE

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NC Community Colleges to Implement Manufacturing Skills Certification System *Forsyth Technical Community College First to Offer Curriculum*

RALEIGH – The North Carolina Community College System has been designated to lead, plan, and implement a post secondary education program that would include the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System. Forsyth Technical Community College is forging the way in this initiative and will serve as the state’s first community college to offer curriculum specifically geared toward meeting the certification system standards.

“The fact that North Carolina’s community colleges are among only four other community and technical education institutions across the nation chosen to develop and implement this certification system speaks to the confidence NAM already has in our technical education programs,” says NCCCS President, Dr. Scott Ralls. “As we move forward in rolling out this curriculum, first at Forsyth Tech, and then across the state, we will continue in our mission of providing the most up to date training in advanced manufacturing.”

The manufacturing Skills Certification System focuses on the core skills needed for entry level positions within the advanced manufacturing sector, ranging from metal working and biomanufacturing to welding and industrial automation. The certification system is set up in a way that would allow students to qualify for multiple, nationally recognized credentials as they work toward an associate’s degree in one of the related advanced manufacturing fields of study. Forsyth

Tech will launch its implementation of the certification system within the machining, industrial systems technology and mechanical engineering programs. Once Forsyth Tech has developed a curriculum around the certification system, the college will act as a mentor to other NC Community Colleges as the program is introduced across the state.

"The NAM-endorsed certification program, which features nationally recognized "stackable" credentials, will be integrated into the manufacturing curriculum at Forsyth Tech as early as this fall. This process will enhance the skill levels of students preparing for careers in manufacturing. It will provide employers with a higher-level of confidence that their workforce of the future will be well-prepared to meet the challenges of a more advanced manufacturing environment."

The program will be funded through money awarded from a \$1.5 million grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The foundation will split the money between four community and technical institutions across the nation.

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