



Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority
723 Railroad St. * Elko, NV 89801 *775-738-2100
www.eceda.com

GBC Career and Technical Education programs win additional accreditation

October 31, 2012 *Elko Daily Free Press*

ELKO — Most of the state of Nevada understands and appreciates the value and skill of graduates of the Career and Technical Education programs offered by Great Basin College. Beyond the state line, however, that reputation may not resonate as loudly.

Enter the National Center for Construction Education and Research, or NCCER. GBC's CTE programs were recently accredited by the organization.

NCCER is an organization committed to building a safe, productive and sustainable workforce of craft professionals. According to GBC Dean of Applied Sciences Bret Murphy, NCCER sets a curriculum standard that is recognized by industry nationwide.

“When we graduate students from our technical programs, along with their GBC diploma, they will now have a credential from NCCER that attests to the curriculum they followed and the standards they achieved,” Murphy said. “It is recognized around the country, and adds to the value of students’ technical training with us.”

NCCER requires that training programs like GBC's have a sponsoring member partner. GBC found a partner close to home. TIC Construction, with a satellite office in Carlin, is a heavy industrial general contractor. Turns out, TIC's founder was one of a small group of general contractors who established the NCCER to assure themselves of a sustainable workforce. Rob MacCarthy, a principal in TIC's local office, said the contractors saw a need for standardized training about 20 years ago.

“We wanted an open, merit shop, and we needed a training standard in order to compete with union houses, which were providing training,” MacCarthy said.

The original group of contractors was committed to a quality training program, and each provided \$1 million to initiate the NCCER training programs. The group hired a specialist in technical training programming to create the original curriculum and began training.

GBC has been following the NCCER model for some time. Teaching students in many of its CTE programs in two to three week modular units, GBC is able to accelerate students' progress. Many CTE programs are completed to the associate degree level in 48 very intense weeks. For comparison, the traditional academic year is just 36 weeks. Students receive training, acquire a skill and are awarded a credential of value recognized by President Obama's Complete College America initiative. They now can have a transcript created with NCCER, providing a further credential that is not only



Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority
723 Railroad St. * Elko, NV 89801 * 775-738-2100
www.eceda.com

recognized locally, but has meaning and value with construction firms across the country.

NCCER also convenes a Construction Users Round Table, known as CURT. CURT is an organization of construction company owners who help to set curriculum. The rigorous curriculum provides quality assurance for employees. When they hire a technician with an NCCER credential, they know they have hired an employee who has proven he or she will perform at an accountable standard.

GBC is now recognized as an NCCER Accredited Training Education Facility. TIC, GBC's Accredited Training Sponsor, works closely with the college to assure its adherence to the NCCER standards. Steve Garcia, a professor in the college's Electrical Technology Program, recently returned from an NCCER training program, being qualified as Master Trainer. As a Master Trainer, he can train his faculty colleagues who are then certified as Craft Trainers in their particular field of expertise.

Garcia noted that GBC programs are not only offered in Elko. "We are also using the NCCER curriculum at our training site in Round Mountain. And, we use the curriculum online as well. In addition, we can blend the face-to-face instruction in our labs with online instruction," he said. Access to quality training is an integral part of GBC's overall mission, and it is recognized in the NCCER partnership.

Great Basin College has been providing training in career and technical areas of study for nearly five decades. Programs in electrical, welding, mill maintenance and diesel technology provide students with the skills required for good jobs in Nevada's mining industry. Students are often recognized for their achievements in national competitions, including SKILLS USA. GBC's CTE programs have job placement rates in excess of 90 percent.