

Clark College Automotive Technology holds Open House



Clark College Automotive Technology Open House

The Clark College Automotive Technology department welcomes prospective students and their families to its annual Open House on Wednesday, February 20, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

This

event is free and open to the public, though organizers ask guests to RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/clark-college-automotive-open-house-tickets-55283786293>.

It takes place in the college's automotive shop in Building AA-1 on Clark's main campus at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way. The closest parking is in Orange Lot 1.

For maps and directs visit www.clark.edu/maps. Light refreshments will be served.

Guests will be able to tour the program's 14,000 square-foot facility, meet with faculty and staff, connect with local dealership managers, and speak with professional technicians about career opportunities. They will also be able to learn about the college's Dealer Ready programs, which allow students to earn income and work experience through internships during the course of their degree program.

About the Clark College Automotive Technology Department

With a program history that spans more than 40 years, Clark College's Automotive Technology department has received community recognition for producing top-tier automotive technicians and for its focus on hands-on learning and partnerships with dealerships that include Toyota, Honda, Dick Hannah, and Audi.

Clark Gets Technical



High school students visit Clark's Automotive Technology program for a quick lesson under the hood during the 2015 Professional Technical Day.

Last Thursday 375 high school students visited Clark during its 24th annual Professional Technical Day, visiting with instructors in 18 different programs and finding out more about how to enter these fields themselves.

"Professional Technical Day is fantastic way to introduce local high school students, career counselors, teachers and administrators to the career technical educational opportunities that are available here at Clark College," says Genevieve Howard,



Students in Clark's Bakery program share their experiences with high school students during the 2015 Professional Technical Day.

Clark College Dean of Workforce, Career & Technical Education. "With the reduction of career technical education programs in the high schools, this is often the first exposure many students have to these career opportunities, and I think Clark faculty and staff do a great job of getting students excited and engaged around these opportunities."

The students came from 15 different high schools from the

Vancouver and Portland area, including Mountain View, Ft. Vancouver, Union, and Grant. Each student could pick two different program presentations during the half-day event. Popular programs included Automotive (and its highly regarded Toyoto T-TEN program), Welding, Bakery, Nursing/Dental Hygiene, Early Childhood Education, Business Technology, and Medical Office.



Area high school counselors and educators had a chance to hear about the future of technical careers from industry experts during Clark's 2015 Professional Technical Day.

In addition to the students, 45 counselors, teachers, and principals attended the event. They were given a full tour of the available programs, as well as the opportunity to hear a panel discussion with industry experts about job prospects and educational requirements for today's professional technical careers. Panelists were: Jim Lucey, human resources director of Linear Technology; Matt Houghton, general manager of Schurman Machine; Natalie Pacholl, training program specialist at SEH America; and Craig Baldwin, head of worldwide operations at nLight.

"At Professional Technical Day, high school students get a rare opportunity to interact with Clark College instructors and professors in hands-on learning environments that demonstrate the academic rigor and technical skill involved in career pathways such as: Welding Technology, Automotive Technology, Mechatronics, and Computer Networking, Science and Engineering," says Clark College Student Recruitment Specialist Jami Fordyce, who helped organize the event. "We

hope that students leave inspired and more confident than ever that college is part of their future, and that Clark College is a wonderful place to start.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Training Tomorrow's Workforce



Welding instructor Caleb White, *left*, shows students Grant Gwilliam and Cody Cook how to use a CNC plasma table, which is used in the computer-assisted cutting of metals. White has been active in developing new curriculum that teaches Clark students fabrication, a skill many local employers are seeking.

This summer, Clark is taking the next step in boosting our region's economy by introducing a new technical program and adjusting some existing programs to better meet the needs of today's employers.

Highlights of these changes include:

- A new Industrial Maintenance Technician (IMT) program that combines a selection of Clark's existing Mechatronics, Machining, and Welding courses to train students on how to provide preventive maintenance and repair support to manufacturing and other mechanical industries. Leaders from regional industry have indicated a strong need for qualified IMTs, and labor surveys show that the average annual wage for IMTs is \$43,000.
- Clark's Welding program is introducing all-new

curriculum that not only expands the variety of welding processes taught but teaches students how to use those processes in fabrication, a skill many local employers are seeking.

- Starting fall quarter 2014, Clark's Mechatronics and Machining programs will begin offering night classes to help accommodate the schedules of current industrial workers who need to expand their skill sets to meet the changing needs of modern industry.

Anyone interested in enrolling in these programs can visit www.clark.edu/gotech to learn more.

All these changes were made in direct consultation with local employers.



Damond Batties looks on while Nicole Doyle works in an argon purge chamber, which is used in welding air-sensitive materials like stainless steel and titanium that are common in modern industry.

"As the largest workforce training provider in Southwest Washington, Clark College continually meets the needs of the business community and ensures that students are equipped with high-demand, relevant skills, whether they are full-time students entering the workforce or incumbent workers developing new skills to improve the productivity of their employers," said Michelle Giovannozzi, Director of Corporate & Community Partnerships for Clark College Corporate & Continuing Education. "Over the last year, we partnered with regional manufacturers to develop the new Industrial Maintenance Technician program and the revised Welding

curriculum in order to support growth through the economic recovery and beyond.”

“The underlying driver for all of Clark College’s Career and Technical Education programs is to provide students with relevant and rigorous educational opportunities that give them the skills that meet the workforce demands for our local and regional industries,” said Genevieve Howard, who as Clark’s Dean of Workforce, Career & Technical Education oversees the college’s Mechatronics, Machining, and Welding programs, as well as such well-regarded programs as Computer-Aided Drafting & Design and Automotive Technology.

Clark College has long served as the premier resource for training skilled technicians who meet the needs of this region’s industry. Through advisory committees and regular outreach, the college has developed partnerships that allow it to respond quickly to the needs of local employers. These new changes are part of that practice—a practice that has made the college Southwest Washington’s best source for career and technical training.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley