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**Precision Machining Trainees are graduating into a hot job market in Franklin County**

**(Greenfield, MA)** On May 19, six adult precision machining trainees participating in the Manufacturing Skills Initiative (MSI) at Greenfield Community College completed GCC’s 12-week CNC Operator training program and entered a very hot job market. The graduates range in age from 23 to 51 and are shifting gears to start new careers in precision machining at BETE Fog Nozzle and Kennametal in Greenfield, G.S. Precision in Brattleboro VT, and Abbot Medical in Westford, MA. Five of them accepted employment offers ranging from $19 - $24.50 per hour before even completing the training.

These six MSI graduates are the latest of over 200 students who have enrolled in the semester-long 240-hour CNC training since the program launched in 2013. MSI training helps career changers re-skill for good jobs in advanced manufacturing. It begins with four weeks of classroom training in Foundational Manufacturing skills – industrial blueprint reading, precision measurement using calipers, micrometers and gages, OSHA safety and shop math, along with homework lessons using an online program called Tooling University. Those who complete the 4-week Foundational training are eligible to move on to an 8-week hands-on training in both manual and computer-numerical-control (CNC) machining. They use mills and lathes to cut and shape complex metal parts at the Franklin County Technical School’s machine shop.

The adult training program runs Monday – Thursday from 4 – 9 pm at the Franklin County Tech School’s machine shop. After the FCTS high school day students are finished, the shop gets double duty training adults in the evenings on its state of the art Haas CNC machines.

According to Rebecca Bialecki, Executive Director of the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board, “There is very strong demand for skilled machinists in the Pioneer Valley and beyond. The tech school graduates 7 – 9 seniors from the machine shop program each year, and the MSI program is enrolling another 12- 15 adults at present. But with many skilled machinists retiring there is a need for more skilled workers – employers like VSS Inc. and the L.S. Starrett Company are now expanding their own in-house machining training programs.”

Over the past nine years and 200+ students, the CNC training program has maintained a 92% completion rate and an 86% job placement rate. The other good news for participants is that nearly 100% of them have been able to enroll in the $6,000 CNC training at zero cost out of their own pockets, thanks to state and federal workforce training grant funding, which pays the full tuition cost for eligible candidates

The next 4-week Foundational Manufacturing training program begins on June 27 and will prepare a new crop of adult trainees (age 18 or over) for the CNC training starting in the Fall. The entry point for applicants is a monthly 1-hour online Manufacturing Training Information & Application session. The next Info Session takes place on Monday, June 6 at 3pm. To sign up, participants can register at the GCC manufacturing page: <https://gcc.mass.edu/manufacturing> or call the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center at (413) 774-4361.

MSI is a training partnership between Greenfield Community College, the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board & Career Center, the Franklin County Technical School and several dozen area manufacturing companies. MSI’s adult trainees can get a quick start in entry level production, assembly and warehouse jobs with just 4 weeks of training, or start down the path to a skilled precision machining career with the 12-week CNC Operator training.

For more information, contact Andrew Baker, Manufacturing Program Manager at the MassHIre Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board at (413) 376-5459.

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PHOTO: At left is GCC’s Manufacturing Program Lead Instructor, Caileb Milton with 5 of his 6 students: Keith Johnson (Orange), Tyler Deyo (Surry, NH), Matthew Nichols (Athol), Alex Montanaro (Greenfield), Mike Palumbo (Gill) on right.

 