

Edgecombe Community College

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CareerFocus™



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CareerFocus™

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On the cover: Representing Edgecombe public safety are (front row, from left) Lee Darnell, Public Safety Coordinator, Edgecombe Community College; William Whitaker, Tarboro Fire Chief; Allen Dennie, Conetoe Fire Chief and President of the Edgecombe County Fire Association; (second row) Mike Catagnus, Edgecombe Sheriff's Office Communications Director; James Knight, Edgecombe Sheriff; Lt. Bill Braswell, Tarboro Police Department Interim Chief; (back) Chad Eason, Edgecombe County Rescue Squad Paramedic and Interim Chief; Sgt. Al Braxton, Tarboro Police Department; and Butch Beach, Edgecombe Fire Marshal.

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Public Safety Programs Expanding

Online components are being added to training



by J. Eric Eckard

Lee Darnell wishes the Internet had been around when he was going to school in the early 1990s, training to be a law enforcement officer and paramedic.

Instead of having instant access to course work at various schools across the country, Darnell, 41, spent countless hours on the phone trying to find schools that offered specialized continuing education classes so he could stay certified and advance his career. Then, after finding that school, he often had to commute for hours to take the class.

That's why it's important to Darnell, Edgecombe Community College's coordinator for public safety programs, to try to find a way to help students stay current in law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services.

"Public safety is all about teamwork," Darnell says. "Whether it's two police working on the street or a college working with local law enforcement agencies or fire departments, it's about teamwork."

"There's a brotherhood in public safety. If we don't take care of each other, people can get hurt."



Students learn how to dismantle a wrecked vehicle using a variety of different tools so trapped patients can be removed safely and quickly.

Since Darnell took over the public safety program at Edgecombe a year ago, he has been pushing for more hybrid courses – part online and part classroom. He hopes to add hybrid and online options in each of his program areas to offer students more flexibility.

Presently, Edgecombe offers hybrid classes for EMTs and EMT-Intermediates. In the fall, the college is reviving its paramedic training, and an initial paramedic certification hybrid course will be available. Hybrid firefighter and technical rescue classes are offered every semester.

"We teach the basics online, and then bring the students onto campus for hands-on training, typically about once a month," Darnell says. "We've had a lot of success with online classes in fire and EMS."

EMT students spend most of the 203-hour class online, but they meet on campus one Saturday a month during the semester. The EMT-Intermediate class is 305 hours, and students meet a full weekend each month during the semester.

Hybrid classes offer flexibility, financial savings, and the ability to pull from a wider range of instructors. However, Darnell adds, "Not everyone is comfortable



Edgecombe instructors introduce the basic concepts of modern technical rescue equipment to students from across North Carolina, with the assistance of the Rocky Mount Fire Department.

with an online environment, so we also offer traditional face-to-face classes."

From an agency perspective, officers and firefighters are required to take continuing education classes each year. Often agencies have to pay overtime to get them through the class.

"If it's done online, they can go at their own pace and possibly save overtime pay," Darnell says. "Also, it's easier to bring in a fresh point of view because we can use online instructors from other areas."

Edgecombe offers classes for K-9 training, detention officers, and continuing education for law enforcement officers. Though none of these are set up with a hybrid element, Darnell wants to change that. He also is exploring new state-of-the-art program areas to help strengthen and support local law enforcement efforts.

"We're always looking for what local agencies need," Darnell says. "If agencies want more specialized training, we want to add that."

Whether it's a hybrid or traditional class, the college offers the most up-to-date training in the state. While conducting on-campus course work, public safety students have access to Edgecombe's state-of-the-art simulation facility that includes a patient care mannequin that can simulate seizures, labored

breathing, coughing, and other lifelike symptoms.

Firefighters learn modern firefighting, rescue, officer development, and fire department management skills. Law enforcement officers have a wide range of classes available at the college, including report writing, defensive tactics, basic investigation skills, and firearms training.

At the core of the training is developing and maintaining partnerships with local agencies, making the college public safety-friendly for them, Darnell says. He also wants to make Edgecombe Community College the go-to place for public safety students in the area.

"When I first started out, I had to travel to find classes," Darnell says. "If there's any way to prevent that, I want to do it."

"I want to keep our people here. I want to make it easier for our people and our agencies."

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Public Safety Coordinator following in his dad's footsteps

When Lee Darnell was a kid, growing up in Yadkin County, he remembers his dad answering calls for help in his community from behind the wheel of a hearse.

In the early days of first responders, there was no 911 system, and rescue squads were in their infancy – especially in rural areas of the state.

“This was before rescue squads became like they are today,” Darnell says. “My dad worked for a funeral home, and they would take the hearse for emergency calls.

“I remember going to the funeral home one night with my mom and sleeping. There’s nothing like growing up, sleeping in a funeral home.”

Darnell’s father later transitioned to law enforcement, serving as police officer, police chief, and sheriff’s lieutenant until he retired about a decade ago.

Those early days of watching his dad help people first as a surrogate ambulance driver and then as a law enforcement officer led Darnell to follow in his father’s footsteps.

After 20-plus years of working in the field and the classroom,



Lee Darnell, coordinator of public safety, stands in his response boat while working as a water-borne paramedic on the Gulf of Mexico during the BP oil spill several years ago.

teaching law enforcement and EMT training, Darnell heads up the public safety programs at Edgecombe Community College. He credits his dad for where he is today.

During a five-month period in 1991, Darnell graduated from schools with certifications as both a paramedic and law enforcement officer. He worked in both fields in

western North Carolina, serving as a paramedic and police chief of Arlington, where his father also had been chief, and Yadkin County Sheriff’s Office, where his father had been a deputy.

With an MBA and degrees in emergency medical science and health care, Darnell has designed and taught EMS and law enforcement courses,

as well as courses in health care administration, business administration, and leadership for two decades.

Darnell also has played a law officer and medical worker on stage, on television, and in movies. He calls it a hobby, but he has started a fledgling production company, and he’s working on a script.

“I did theatre as a child,” Darnell says. “But at 16. I walked away. Then it jumped back on me 12 years ago.”

Darnell answered a call for extras for “The Ultimate Gift,” which was filmed in Charlotte. He played a funeral mourner, and a few months later, he had an agent.

Over the years, he’s worked with Abigail Breslin, Michael Landon Jr., Tyler Perry, Jason Sudeikis, Dale Earnhardt Jr., and Danica Patrick.

He just finished filming a movie in Winston-Salem called “Susie,” which features Jon Provost, who played Timmy in the old Lassie TV series. Naturally, Darnell plays a court bailiff.

“It all goes back to my dad,” Darnell says. “You do what you know. It’s just who you are.”

– J. Eric Eckard

Security cameras heighten campus safety

Off-duty police officers regularly patrol the Rocky Mount and Tarboro campuses, but extra security measures have taken shape in recent years.

Security cameras have been installed to help monitor the campuses – 29 cameras on the Tarboro campus and 13 cameras on the Rocky Mount campus.

According to Neil Baker, director of computer services, up to seven cameras will be installed on each campus next year, depending on available funds.

All activity captured by the cameras is recorded and saved,

enabling analysts to review the video later.

Cameras are just one of the security measures the college has implemented. Lighting has been added, and some landscaping has been removed in an effort to make the campuses more open and visible.

In addition, faculty and staff undergo regular training to be more aware of suspicious behavior, and safety and security are discussed in detail during student orientations.

In 2008, college personnel and local emergency responders from Edgecombe County, Tarboro, and

Rocky Mount met on the Tarboro campus to sign memorandums of understanding and to review the college’s Emergency Response Plan.

The group has continued to meet once or twice a year. Janice Tolson, director of human resources, coordinates the group. “The local emergency personnel advise us on revisions that need to be made to our Emergency Response Plan so that it stays up-to-date on emergency policies and procedures,” Tolson says.

“In 2008 Edgecombe County helped us set up a Reverse 911 service so that when we have an

alert we can get it out quickly to our full-time employees’ home and cell phones.”

Also, employees and students can opt into the college’s emergency notification alert system. They automatically receive e-mails and can elect to get text messages.

“It’s an ongoing process,” Baker says. “We not only want to secure the campuses, but provide as much safety for our students and whoever else comes to our campuses.”

– Mary Tom Bass

New Initiatives in Criminal Justice Under Way

by Mary Tom Bass

A native New Yorker is bringing his police smarts to Edgecombe's criminal justice program, making the courses more accessible and providing students with real-world understanding.

Rick Basile, who has been involved in law enforcement, public safety, and education for the past 35 years, joined the Edgecombe faculty last fall. Since then, he has been tweaking the curriculum to emphasize policing operations. "I'm trying to target

law enforcement and corrections personnel," he says.

Previously, Basile served as chair of criminal justice at Bryant and Stratton College in Syracuse, NY. "The students here are very similar to students in Syracuse," he says. "They are multi-taskers who are balancing full-time jobs with family responsibilities.

"I've done it, and I know it's hard. My message to students is: 'I'll work with you.'"

Since Basile understands firsthand the challenges of adult learners, he is adding online courses each semester to give students more options. "Online

course delivery will help those law enforcement personnel who rotate shifts and would never be able to attend a traditional class. Their work schedule wouldn't allow it."

Currently, criminal law and juvenile justice courses are offered online. In several years, Basile would like to see criminal justice offered as a fully online program, while retaining the traditional classroom program.

Edgecombe offers a two-year degree program (74 credit hours) in criminal justice as well as a two-semester certificate program (12 credit hours).

Students are taught by faculty who hold criminal justice academic credentials and have experience with either corrections or law enforcement agencies.

Criminal justice students number between 200 and 300 in any given semester. Basile and four adjunct instructors are the primary faculty. "Everyone who teaches here is or has been a practitioner in a criminal justice field," he says.

"They have real-world experience, because students remember principles and ideals better if you give them real-world examples."

To give students a fresh perspective, he began a Criminal Justice Club during spring semester. The club is open to criminal justice majors and those interested in criminal justice, and its membership numbers about 20.

Club members have gone on site visits, including a trip in May to the Fountain Correctional Center for Women in Rocky Mount. The tour was set up by Vivian Brake, a criminal justice adjunct instructor and a deputy superintendent at Fountain.

According to Basile, "No part of the prison was off limits, and students got a true picture of what prison life is all about. An especially moving part of the tour was two brief talks by inmates who are part of the prison's Think Smart program.



Rick Basile, criminal justice program chair, joined the Edgecombe faculty in fall 2011. He has been involved in law enforcement, public safety, and education for the past 35 years and has taught in higher education for more than 20 years. He spent about 12 years serving as chief of police in Ithaca, NY, and Ellenville, NY.

"The inmates were extremely frank in their discussion of prison life and what it means to miss major events in their family's life. Our students were genuinely affected by their testimony."

The new club will be taking similar tours of various criminal justice facilities, inviting guest speakers to address the club, and participating in community activities, such as volunteering for the Edgecombe Relay for Life and American Heart Association Heart Walk.

"I want students to get in the mindset that they work for the community and have to give back," Basile says.

"This is a great school, one of the gems of the North Carolina Community College System. I inherited a really fine program, but I think we can finetune it and make it better."

Alive@25 reinforces good driving habits

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle accidents are the No. 1 cause of deaths in the U.S. for those between the ages of 16 and 24.

To help drivers reach their 25th birthday, Edgecombe Community College offers a defensive driving class called Alive@25.

"It's designed for young drivers between the ages of 16 and 24," says Brady Abrams, instructor for the class and longtime Edgecombe County deputy. "If a young driver gets a traffic violation, then the district attorney can refer them to the course. If they complete the course, that violation can be reduced or dismissed."

The D.A. only refers first-time offenders who receive citations for such violations as speeding, careless and reckless driving, and running a stop sign.

Although most of the students taking the four-hour class are referred by the D.A., Abrams says the class is open to anyone.

"Some high schools require students to take it before they

issue parking permits," he says. "And some parents want their kids to go through it to get some additional training."

The class focuses on such issues as the dangers of driving and texting, having too many friends in the car, following distances, and stopping distances.

"It teaches formulas for safe driving," Abrams explains. "Like going from 60 mph to 75 mph saves about a minute or so a mile in time, but it increases your risk of death by 8 percent."

Since Edgecombe began offering the nationwide program three years ago, almost 400 students have taken the class. In this state, it's sponsored by the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina.

"Students are really interested in the content of the course," Abrams says, "especially the videos of other young drivers who have lost friends, telling their stories.

"It's coming from kids their own age, not just an old guy like me."

— J. Eric Eckard

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Geospatial Certificate for Law Enforcement in the Works

by J. Eric Eckard

In the 1990s, New York City police began using geographic information systems to map high-crime areas in the city. The GIS-based mapping system showed trends in criminal activity, allowing police to target those areas in an effort to reduce crime.

Over an eight-year period after New York implemented the mapping system in a new overall accountability process, murders dropped by nearly one-half.

“It worked,” says Rick Basile, retired police chief of Ithaca, NY, and former police lieutenant in Albany, NY. “If you have real-time

crime maps, you can make real-time changes.”

Basile, who now is program chair of criminal justice at Edgecombe Community College, is helping develop a curriculum that teaches law enforcement officers about geospatial technology.

Geospatial technology deals with the capture, management, and analysis of data that contains a location component. Google Earth, floodplain mapping, archaeological analysis, and school bus routing are just a few applications connected to geospatial technology.

Basile says the relatively new technology is a boon for law enforcement.

“When I did crime-mapping, we used colored push pins on a map

on a wall,” he explains. “Now we can use computer-generated maps with overlays that show different types of information. This is a perfect marriage.”

Edgecombe already offers a geospatial technology certificate program that focuses on the information technology aspect. In the fall, a new two-year degree program in geospatial technology will begin, and it will include some law enforcement aspects.

Basile, Wes Hill, program chair of information technology studies, and others are developing a certificate program in geospatial technology designed exclusively for law enforcement officers.

“The technology of using mapping and data together has really

ballooned in the last 15 years,” Hill says. “You can load the data of every crime in a city into a computer, and you can see a better graphic of where crimes are happening.”

The new certificate program for police personnel would include both law enforcement and GIS courses, and the program would most likely benefit supervisors and investigators.

“If you know what’s happening right now, you can do something about it right now,” Basile says. “You can do surveillance, send in undercover officers or add extra patrols – whatever response is necessary after you’ve analyzed the data.

“That’s why this is so important.”

College Celebrating 45 Years Flash mob gets the party started

An ice cream social turned into an unexpected celebration in March as a flash mob helped jump start the 45th anniversary celebration of the college’s founding.

Students, faculty, and staff had been invited to Mobley Atrium in the Fleming Building



From left are ECC dance instructor Dirk Lumbard and Steven Thomason, a student at East Carolina University.

for ice cream and to hear a few words from ECC President Dr. Deborah Lamm. While the crowd milled about, enjoying their cool treat, a woman in the crowd began to sing. And then another, and then another joined in, singing about Edgecombe to the tune of “I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing.”

When the song ended, an old-fashioned ice-cream man in a straw boater and red bow tie began tap dancing. He was joined by more dancers. When the tap dance ended, a group of students began a modern dance routine. The college was witnessing its first flash mob.

“We wanted to do something fun, entertaining, and different,” says Dr. Lamm. “I think everyone enjoyed it.”

The event kicked off the college’s 45th anniversary celebration. The State Board of Education, by authority of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, established Edgecombe Technical Institute on October 5, 1967.

The anniversary celebration will end with an event on Friday, October 5, to coincide with the founding of the school.

Anniversary events will include the dedication of a new wetlands trail on the Tarboro campus, the dedication of a book on the history of the



Mobley Atrium was the site of a flash mob in March. The event kicked off the 45th anniversary celebration of the founding of Edgecombe Community College, which was established on October 5, 1967.

college, and a ceremony at the Norfleet House, a historical home on the Tarboro campus that is being renovated by historic preservation students.

– Mary Tom Bass

Feature

Health Occupations Programs Increase to Keep Pace with Demand

by J. Eric Eckard

The number of the 55-and-older crowd is expected to rise about 30 percent over the next two decades.

Consequently, all eyes will be focused on Baby Boomers as they

hit retirement age in the worlds of housing, finance, public safety, transportation, and of course, health care.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the health care industry will add the most jobs in the coming years.

To help meet the demand for health care workers, Edgecombe Community College has revamped its Division of Health Occupations, adding several new classes and tweaking many already in place.

“Programs at Edgecombe have increased and have become more convenient in order to meet the training needs of the community and to place more individuals in the workforce,” says Laura Clark, coordinator of health occupations.

Health Coach

Edgecombe expects to be the first community college in North Carolina to offer a health coach

course, a 96-hour class that will focus on ensuring proper treatment is followed after a patient is released from a hospital or doctor’s office.

“The goal is for anyone to take this class – lay people in churches or community centers who might not have traditional medical training,” Clark says.

The course will focus on management and prevention of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke prevention, oral care, foot care, and dietary management. Often, a patient discharged from the hospital receives extensive information about diet and exercise and warning signs about their health. Unfortunately, the layperson often does not understand this information.

The college is receiving \$20,000 in grant funds to assist with the implementation of the health coach program. Edgecombe has partnered with the Brody School of Medicine in Greenville on the project. Classes are expected to begin in the fall.

Home Care Aide

Jobs for home care aides are predicted to grow by 70 percent between now and 2020, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Home care is becoming huge as many people are being sent home after hospitalization and need assistance with medical care,” Clark says.

The course will teach nurse aides how to help patients and support systems adapt to being home and being cared for in the home. Four schools are piloting this program in North Carolina. Edgecombe plans to offer this course after the pilot programs are completed.

Geriatric Aide

Six students completed the college’s first geriatric aide class in May, and all are now on the geriatric aide registry.

The class focuses on topics such as behavioral and mental status changes, nutritional needs, safety, and mobility needs that are a result of the aging process. “It trains the nurse aide to recognize triggers that may contribute to problems with care in the geriatric environment and have a better understanding of geriatrics,” Clark explains.

Medication Aide

Edgecombe has been offering medication aide for some time, but the college has strengthened its medication aide curriculum in an effort to meet the demands of the community.

The 24-hour course is designed for non-licensed/certified personnel. It focuses on the six rights of medication administration – right patient, right dose, right time, right medication, right route, and right documentation – and safety issues surrounding medication administration.

Breastfeeding Basics

With numerous studies showing that breastfeeding pays huge benefits for babies and mothers, Edgecombe is adding a breastfeeding basics class to its curriculum. The class will have a three-tiered focus, according to Clark.

First, instructors will teach the importance of breastfeeding to residents of Edgecombe County who are interested in learning about breastfeeding and its benefits. The class also will offer nurses a path to continuing education in this arena with the goal of becoming an approved provider with North Carolina Nurse’s Association (NCNA). Eventually, Clark hopes the instruction may lead to national certification.

Hybrid Nurse Assistant

Edgecombe offers a new hybrid class for nurse assistants that combines online and face-to-face instruction to allow more flexibility for students and instructors.

“Students are on campus for eight to ten hours per week for skills check-offs, but the rest of the course work is done online,” Clark says. “Students also have 35 hours of clinical work at a health care facility.”

Typically a 16-week class, the hybrid nurse assistant class has been cut to eight to ten weeks.

Nurse Assistant testing site

In 2006, the state began requiring a competency evaluation for students who pass nurse aide courses. In January, Edgecombe was approved as a testing site for nurse aide certification on both campuses.

Phlebotomy testing site

After conducting phlebotomy testing for certification for years on a random basis, Edgecombe now offers these tests on a regular quarterly basis.



From left, phlebotomy instructor Velensiar Watson and student Victoria Griffin practice venipuncture in preparation for clinicals. The next phlebotomy class runs August 22 through February 20, 2013, and meets three days a week. Call 823-5166, ext. 322 or ext. 397.

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CEO of Bermuda Hospitals Started at Edgecombe

by J. Eric Eckard

Running the only urgent care centre, acute care, and mental health hospitals in Bermuda can be daunting. Daily decisions must be made on everything from medical care and patient satisfaction to construction and food services.

Venetta Pearman Symonds has been with Bermuda Hospitals Board for 32 years, moving up through the ranks until she took over as chief executive officer and president in April. Even though Symonds had been the deputy CEO for the past six years, she says there's still a bit of uncertainty in running a multi-million dollar operation that provides a vital service to an entire country.

Sometimes when that happens, she says she thinks back to Edgecombe Community College, where she received an associate degree in radiologic technology in 1978.

"Even now, when I doubt myself, I think back on that," the 54-year-old says, "It was my first experience at taking a giant step. It was big and new and scary, and I'm grateful for the whole experience."

"It changed how I think about myself."

The journey for the native Bermudian as a teenager to Edgecombe was pretty unique in the 1970s. Symonds had

traveled to the United States as a youngster, but she had never been to eastern North Carolina. Although many Bermudians studied overseas, few enrolled in community colleges.

Symonds knew what she wanted to do with her life: work with X-ray machines. After a summer job at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in Bermuda while in high school, she received a scholarship to study radiologic technology. The two caveats: she must attend an accredited school for the program and she must work for the hospital in Bermuda for four years after graduation.

Forty years ago, the evolution in computer technology was changing the X-ray industry dramatically. The American Society of Radiologic Technologists was pushing for stricter guidelines in schools, but a set of national standards was a decade away.

Finding an accredited school during a tumultuous time in the industry might have been difficult – especially without today's instant Internet searches. But, as in many cases, family and fate stepped in.

Symonds had family in eastern North Carolina. Her cousin, G.K. Butterfield, now a U.S. congressman, was a lawyer in Wilson in 1976 when she started searching for a school in the States.

Through the Butterfield connection, Symonds discovered that Edgecombe Community College offered an accredited certificate program in radiologic



"It was nice being in a small community college where I could get personal attention," says Venetta Pearman Symonds, CEO and president of Bermuda Hospitals Board and a 1978 graduate of Edgecombe Community College. "I was not one of a hundred students, and that enabled me to excel."

technology. She had family nearby to rely on so far from home, and North Carolina is due east of Bermuda and shares a similar climate. The decision was made: Symonds would come to America to study – at Edgecombe.

"It was wonderful," Symonds says. "G.K. and his wife embraced me. He'd pick me up on the weekends and take me to Wilson for family dinners."

"Although [Edgecombe wasn't] geared up to serve international students at the time, I loved it. It was nice being in a small

community college where I could get personal attention."

She lived in a YWCA room in Rocky Mount for two years. Only 18 and admittedly "young and naive," Symonds experienced culture shock in eastern North Carolina. Most only knew of her homeland from the notorious Bermuda Triangle tales, and many believed she was from "up north" because of her accent.

"But it was a safe environment," Symonds says.

She studied, spent time with family, and studied some more. Then came one of those life lessons that pops up when least expected. After a couple of less-than-stellar grades, Symonds says she was frustrated and grumbled about it to her instructor.

"He told me that I was getting it. He said understanding is better than memorizing, and that resonated with me. That's what that one-on-one interaction did for me. I was not one of a hundred students, and that enabled me to excel."

"I was proud when I graduated, and I think I was named most outstanding student in my class."

"While I am incredibly proud of Venetta's achievements, I cannot say that I am terribly surprised," says her cousin, Congressman G.K. Butterfield. "When I reflect on how as a teenager Venetta willingly left everything familiar to her in Bermuda for the opportunity to study at Edgecombe Community College, I knew that her courage and determination would take her very far in life. At that time, she did what few young people would and, as a result, she has experienced tremendous success."

"It all starts with one step," Symonds says. "Edgecombe Community College was part of that first step."

"When I reflect on how as a teenager Venetta willingly left everything familiar to her in Bermuda for the opportunity to study at Edgecombe Community College, I knew that her courage and determination would take her very far in life."

– Congressman G.K. Butterfield

Feature

ECC Offers Unique Certification for Child Care Workers

by J. Eric Eckard

For years, the child care industry in North Carolina has been hamstrung. Low wages coupled with high stress situations have led to high turnover rates.

In 2010, the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals implemented a certification program for child care workers in an attempt to strengthen the industry.

Though the state does not yet require child care workers to obtain Early Educator Certification, Edgecombe offers several continuing education classes that lead to certification.

“The Institute is trying to raise the level of professionalism in the industry,” says Dr. Kristi Snuggs, vice president of instruction. “They want it to mimic the licensure of a school teacher.”

“These are the first continuing education classes of their type at the college, and there has been a tremendous response,” says Joyce Hathaway, early childhood

instructor. “The students have embraced these classes and have asked for more.”

Edgecombe is one of only several community colleges in the region that offers the certificate program.

Child care providers have expressed interest in classes in nutrition, relationships with families, and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, a rating indicator for facilities and daycare programs. “We are developing a number of new courses to try to meet the needs of child care providers,” Hathaway says.

A variety of evening classes will be held fall semester, included these that begin in August: Children with Special Needs; Family Matters Partnerships; Connecting the Dots: DAP, Observation, Assessment, and Curriculum Planning; and Creating a Safe, Healthy Learning Environment. Classes begin at 6 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. on the Rocky Mount and Tarboro campuses.

While the debate continues on whether the Early Educator Certification should be required by the state, child care workers



From left, Kim Webb, Danielle Roberson, and Tyler Watson work on an assignment during an Early Educator Certification class at New Beginnings Child Care in Tarboro.

still have to be credentialed and complete a certain number of in-service training hours. The Edgecombe classes count toward this in-service training. Certification also is required for funding from some agencies.

For more information:

Early Educator Certification
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What Will College Get You?

Statistics capture some of the benefits college graduates enjoy

FINANCIAL

Median earnings

- High school graduates: \$33,800
- Associate's degree: \$42,000
- Bachelor's degree: \$55,700

Source: The Census Bureau, 2009

Unemployment

- High school graduates: 10.3%
- Associate's degree: 7%
- Bachelor's degree: 5.4%

Source: 2009 Bureau of Labor Statistics

HEALTH

Employer-Provided Health Insurance

- High school graduates: 50%
- Associate's degree: 68%

Source: Economic Policy Institute, 2010

Life Expectancy

- Age 75 – Life expectancy today of a 25-year-old with 12 years of education
- Age 82 – Life expectancy today of a 25-year-old with at least some college education

Source: 2008 Harvard Medical School Study

PERSONAL

The importance workers place on feeling that their work is important and provides a sense of accomplishment:

- High school graduates: 56%
- Some college or Associate's degree: 56%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 79%

Source: Education Pays 2012

Happiness Index

A higher number indicates a greater level of reported happiness.

- High school or less: 31
- Some college: 35
- College graduate: 34
- Post college graduate: 36

Source: Harris Interactive Poll Annual Happiness Index 2010

SOCIAL

Voting Rates

- High school graduates: 57%
- Associate's degree: 71%
- Bachelor's degree: 76%

Source: The Census Bureau, 2008

Volunteering

- High school graduates: 19% (volunteered median of 48 hours/year)
- Some college or associate's degree: 30% (volunteered median of 50 hours/year)
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 43% (volunteered median of 54 hours/year)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009

Edgecombe Introduces Barbering Program

by J. Eric Eckard

When Sherita Evans was 17 years old, she started cutting kids' hair at a homeless shelter in Raleigh.

She wanted to help the younger children at the shelter who had fallen on hard times, because just like them, she also was living at the shelter.

Now, nearly 15 years later, Evans is back on her feet and returning to the passion she discovered as a teenager. She is enrolled in Edgecombe Community College's new barbering program.

"I found out about the program through a friend," Evans says. "I had never been to college. I dropped out of high school. I had my GED, I applied in December, was accepted in January, and I started classes in March. It literally happened overnight."

The barbering program came together quickly, too. College leaders began discussing adding it to the curriculum in summer 2011.

"We had students calling all the time asking if we had a barbering program," explains Carolyn Sherrill, barber/cosmetology coordinator and a cosmetology instructor. "Some of them would enroll in the cosmetology program and find out that it really wasn't what they wanted."

After announcing that a barbering program was in the works, Edgecombe received about 100 inquiries in four months. Twenty



Sherita Evans is taking barbering classes at Edgecombe Community College. Barbering, a new program that began in March, is offered through evening classes on the Rocky Mount campus.

students were accepted, and classes began the first week in March. "Right now we are at maximum student capacity, but we hope that in the future, as our programs grow, we can enlarge the facility," Sherrill says.

Edgecombe is one of two community colleges in North Carolina to offer both barbering and cosmetology programs at the same site. "Carteret Community

College beat us by two weeks," she notes.

Because barbering and cosmetology have two separate governing boards in North Carolina, classes for each cannot be held simultaneously in the same facility. At Edgecombe's Rocky Mount campus, when day cosmetology classes end, evening barbering classes begin.

Barbering classes meet 4-10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Students are trained in cutting hair, shaving, hair coloring, facial massages, and other barbering techniques and methods.

Graduates of the diploma program log more than 1,500 hours of college classes. Students who attend full time can complete the program in four semesters.

Although barbering is a predominately male field, Edgecombe's first class has two women, including Evans.

"I think I'm a person who goes beyond stereotypes," Evans says. "And I think barbering expands beyond clippers."

"I'm going to be the first person in my family to graduate from college. So, I say that whatever your passion is, have faith you can do it, and do it."

Cosmetology Programs at ECC

- Barbering Diploma
- Cosmetology Diploma
- Cosmetology Instructor Certificate
- Esthetics Certificate
- Esthetics Instructor Certificate
- Manicuring/Nail Certificate
- Manicuring/Nail Instructor Certificate

For more information:

Barbering
 Carolyn Sherrill
 Barber/Cosmetology
 Coordinator
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 sherrillc@edgecombe.edu

Manufacturing Training Evolving at Warp Speed Thanks to \$1.2 Million Grant

by Mary Tom Bass

The largest grant Edgecombe Community College has ever received is a rocket-sized shot in the arm to training programs in manufacturing.

Last fall, Edgecombe was one of ten community colleges in North Carolina to receive a share of an \$18.8 million federal grant for job training and workforce development in manufacturing.

The grant was awarded to the North Carolina Advanced Manufacturing Alliance, a consortium of the ten community colleges created to focus on training displaced workers for high quality jobs.

Edgecombe received \$1,225,408 – the largest grant ever awarded to the college.

A majority of the grant has gone toward purchasing new equipment for teaching and learning in manufacturing. Also, the college has hired additional personnel to manage the grant: Dr. Paul Petersen, project manager/



Dr. Paul Petersen (center), project manager, and students Jamel McGuire (left) and Mark Ness examine an instrumentation control panel, one of the new pieces of equipment purchased with NC Advanced Manufacturing Alliance grant funds.



Dr. Stan Garren (left), dean of business and technologies, works with students Ricky Slade (center) and Lennis Bess to program a robot to load a CNC vertical mill. “I can’t tell you how excited we are by the new opportunities that lie ahead for our students because of the NC Manufacturing Alliance grant,” Dr. Garren says.

instructor; and Shari Dickens, recruiter/success manager.

Edgecombe offers four manufacturing-related programs: industrial systems, electrical/electronics, manufacturing, and mechanical drafting.

“This grant is enabling a total overhaul of manufacturing education at ECC” says Dr. Stan Garren, dean of business and technologies.

High-tech equipment purchases include a computer numerical control 5-axis vertical mill, a CNC 3-axis lathe, new industrial controllers, industrial grade robots, and industrial training equipment. A large purchase of manufacturing software – the same software used in industry – is on order.

“Three companies in the area say they will be adding a significant number of employees over the next three years,” Dr. Petersen says. “These are high tech jobs that require a certain skill set. This grant is letting us do our job, which is preparing students for success in the workplace.”

Dr. Petersen, an engineer and educator for 41 years, says his goal is to have 20-25 students in the program. Another goal is paid internships within industry for a majority of students.

“We are recruiting students from three markets,” he explains. “The first is displaced workers. Hopefully we can reach out and get some of these individuals and retrain them. The second group is those who want to gain a skill set in order to get a job, such as high school students.

“The third market is employees who are working in industry who want to improve their skill sets for promotion.”

Local industry is already on board. “Sara Lee is automating their processes,” Dr. Petersen says. “They are sending their employees here to learn how to be technicians rather than just operators.”

As he explains, “The jobs are out there. About 2.5 million jobs in industry are open, but they require technical skills. CSX, for example, has 5,600 job openings. These jobs pay well, but they can’t find people

Who’s in the NC Advanced Manufacturing Alliance?

The \$18.8 million federal grant for job training and workforce development in manufacturing is being shared by the following community colleges:

- Robeson CC (lead institution)
- Asheville-Buncombe Technical CC
- Beaufort County CC
- Craven CC
- Davidson County CC
- Edgecombe CC
- Fayetteville Technical CC
- Haywood CC
- Nash CC
- Surry CC

with the right skills or work ethic. We also have 60 positions open locally with the same problem – they cannot find qualified people.”

Technology is an important component of the grant. Students in the program will receive iPads for mobile learning programs, giving them access to online applications and training simulations via iTunes University.

“Manufacturing is nothing like it was 20 to 30 years ago,” Dr. Petersen says. “Students think it’s dusty, dirty work in a dark building, and it’s not. Manufacturing has become a very sophisticated, very high tech industry.”

For more information:

NC Manufacturing Alliance
Shari Dickens
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or
Dr. Paul Petersen
Project Manager/Instructor
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College Is a State Leader in Job Skills Assessment

by J. Eric Eckard

Edgecombe County ranks in the Top 10 of the 100 North Carolina counties for Career Readiness Certificates awarded.

With more businesses and industries recognizing the importance of hiring workers with a proficiency in basic reading and math skills, Edgecombe Community College is helping lead the way in supplying a quality workforce for the state.

“There are more than 500 employers in North Carolina that support the WorkKeys (and Career Readiness Certificate) programs,” says Dr. Randi Dikeman, dean of corporate and community development at the college.

WorkKeys is a workplace skills assessment system developed in the 1980s for businesses to analyze the skills employees need to be successful in the workplace. After its inception, many states and regions developed Career Readiness Certificate programs to help assess and train workers in up to nine skill areas, such as reading for information, applied math, and locating information.

Three years ago, Edgecombe began offering a prep class to teach the real-world skills that are laid out in WorkKeys called Ready, Set CRC. The course was taught by Sylvia Hinton-Grant and was offered through the college’s human resources development program.



CRC Coordinator Sylvia Hinton-Grant (standing) helps Lucy Ricks with a question during the CRC registration process. Ricks, 72, a New Yorker for the past 45 years who recently relocated to Rocky Mount, plans to enter Edgecombe’s nurse assistant program. Each of the three CRC assessments takes about 45 minutes to complete. Students can retake the tests if they want to improve their scores.

Hinton-Grant has moved on to new responsibilities as the CRC coordinator, but the Ready, Set CRC prep class still meets regularly. To learn more about the course, contact Lori Winstead, HRD coordinator, at 823-5166, ext. 272.

Last year, in 2011, the college moved into the Top 10 of number of CRCs awarded.

Dr. Dikeman credits three factors for the college’s fast-paced lead in

its CRC program. Incentive grants from North Carolina’s Eastern Region helped fund assessments, job profiles for businesses, and skills training for the CRC.

“We’ve been able to access those funds,” he explains. “Another reason is that in Edgecombe, we’ve had several employers that have supported the use of WorkKeys in hiring new employees and developing existing employees.”

The third factor, Dr. Dikeman says, is that Edgecombe requires that all graduating students complete CRC testing, and a CRC is a prerequisite for several programs, including nurse assistant, phlebotomy, and advanced manufacturing.

“Four years ago, fewer than 5% of our graduates earned a CRC,” says J. Lynn Cale, associate vice president of instruction. “Three years ago, the deans, program chairs, and instructors began to promote the importance and

significance of earning the CRC credential.

“This year, 53% of our students received a CRC. We continue to promote this credential daily, and students are ‘buying in.’ Our three-year average since we started the promotional campaign is 60%. One hundred percent is our goal, and we believe this is an achievable goal.”

To date, the college has awarded more than 3,000 CRCs, which is equal to more than 11% of Edgecombe County’s total workforce. That puts Edgecombe at No. 9 in CRCs awarded among the 100 N.C. counties and in the top 5 as a percent of the workforce. Across all of North Carolina, the percent of the workforce achieving CRCs is just under 3%.

There are three levels of career readiness certification – bronze, silver, and gold. The bronze level signifies that a recipient possesses skills for approximately 30% of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys in three specific skill areas: reading for information, applied math, and locating information. Silver signifies skills for 65% of WorkKeys jobs; and gold signifies more than 90% of required skills.

About 14% of the college’s CRCs awarded have been gold, and more than half have been silver.

In the state, more than 25% of all Career Readiness Certificates awarded came from Eastern North Carolina, thanks to Edgecombe and three other eastern schools ranked in the Top 10.

“These are foundational skills that can apply to any kind of job,” Dr. Dikeman says.

For more information:

Career Readiness Certificate
Sylvia Hinton-Grant
CRC Coordinator
823-5166, ext. 166
grants@edgecombe.edu

To date, the college has awarded more than 3,000 CRCs, which is equal to more than 11% of Edgecombe County’s total workforce.

Engineers Save Their Company Thousands Through Six Sigma Training

by J. Eric Eckard

When Ann's House of Nuts was facing quality and productivity issues in 2011, executives there tasked a pair of company engineers to fix the problems.

The engineers turned to Edgecombe Community College's Lean Six Sigma training program.

Using methods and procedures gleaned from the eight-week class, engineers Santiago Echeverry and Patricia Boland solved the quality and productivity problems and saved the company hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process.

"The support at the college is wonderful," says Boland, manufacturing engineer at Ann's House of Nuts' production facility in Robersonville. "They gave us feedback, and they take every student seriously. They're great mentors."

The college has been teaching these methods of problem-solving for a number of years, programs that evolved from quality control efforts at Motorola in the 1980s. Edgecombe offers both green belt and black belt certification training.

"It's more than just quality control," says George Anderson, director of customized training at Edgecombe. "It's about solving problems."

Echeverry and Boland participated in the college's first class of black belt training last winter. Like most Lean Six Sigma students at Edgecombe, they were sponsored by a company or organization. And, like most students, they entered the class with a specific project in mind.

Right away, they were able to begin addressing their company's challenges. "I felt like every class helped me achieve my goal," Boland says. "Right from the start, I learned tools to help."



Engineers Patricia Boland and Santiago Echeverry strengthened their problem-solving skills in a Lean Six Sigma class at Edgecombe Community College and saved their employer, Ann's House of Nuts, about \$650,000.

Baltimore-based Ann's House of Nuts, which has a warehouse facility in Tarboro, is North America's largest producer of trail mixes. In September 2011 – two months before the class began – there were 228 instances of incorrect salt levels on the production line in Robersonville. This caused down time for the line workers because they had to send many of the nuts through the processing system again.

Boland's goal was to reduce that number to fewer than 20 instances a month. By analyzing the measuring process, changing a few pieces of equipment, and conducting more detailed sampling – all methods and recommendations from the class – Ann's House of Nuts reduced its rejects to six in February.

That saved the company \$375,000 a year, Boland says.

Echeverry's project was similarly challenging, and the class provided comparable results. The company was getting complaints from a major retailer, indicating that too

many jars of honey-roasted nuts turned tacky or clumpy once they reached the retailer's warehouse.

The return rate had risen to 50 percent, which generated \$170,000 in losses over a 10-month period. Echeverry, who is director of engineering at Ann's House of Nuts, says his goal was to reduce that rate to less than 10 percent.

Using a Six Sigma method learned in class, Echeverry implemented a benchmarking method of analyzing the product to discover why the nuts were clumping.

"We collected data for three months," he explains. "We researched what competitors were doing, and we found that the tackiness was higher when the roasting temperature was lower."

There were other variables, he says, including the amount of honey used, speed of the production belt, and the amount of product fed into the roaster.

"But temperature was the variable with the highest impact," he says. "When we started the project in November, the company allocated \$250,000 to fix the problem."

"Once we discovered that the temperature was the main variable, we slowed down the process, changed the roasting temperature, and we were in business."

The \$250,000 allocation was unnecessary, and the return rate was well below 10 percent by the end of February.

"The whole process was very helpful," Echeverry says of Edgecombe's Lean Six Sigma training. "Every class was very useful."

Anderson called Echeverry and Boland "exemplary students."

"They made significant changes (at Ann's House of Nuts)," Anderson says. "The outcome was real, live benefits – bottom-line benefits."

I-TRIZ: exclusive problem-solving training offered at ECC

As the economy struggles to rebound, business and industry managers are looking for even the slightest hole to plug in their operations.

In September 2011, Edgecombe Community College began offering a new training program called Innovative Problem Solving with I-TRIZ, a problem-solving methodology that complements and supports Lean Six Sigma.

Edgecombe is the only community college in North Carolina to offer I-TRIZ.

"I-TRIZ is a natural progression from Six Sigma," explains Dr. Randi Dikeman, dean of corporate and community development. "Six Sigma is the gold standard for problem-solving in business and industry, and it centers on brainstorming. I-TRIZ takes this a step further."

"With I-TRIZ, a database of the best solutions from all fields has been assembled, and we teach students how to access those solutions."

In this economic climate, all companies are looking at ways to streamline and become more efficient. Innovative Problem Solving with I-TRIZ offers a new approach. And it's only offered at Edgecombe.

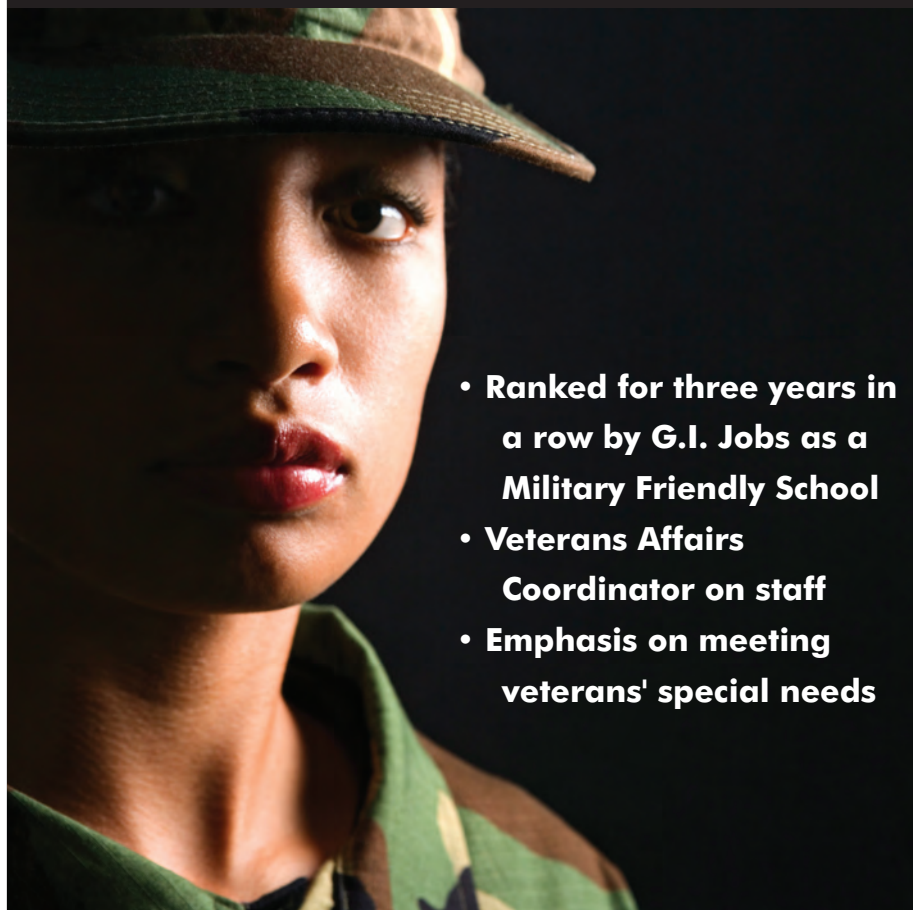
For more information:

Lean Six Sigma
George Anderson
Director of Customized
Training
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andersong@edgecombe.edu



Register TODAY!

Final registration for fall semester is **August 21 & 22**. Classes begin **August 23**. Call **(252) 823-5166** or log onto **www.edgecombe.edu**.



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- **Emphasis on meeting veterans' special needs**

How to Apply

Interested in taking courses at ECC but not sure where to begin? Becoming an ECC student may be easier than you think. Here's how to get started:

1 Submit your application

Your journey to becoming a student begins with a simple application. Applications can be completed the old-fashioned way with pen and paper or online. For a copy of ECC's application for enrollment, go to www.edgecombe.edu or call the Office of Student Services at 823-5166, ext. 255, on the Tarboro campus, or 446-0436, ext. 333, on the Rocky Mount campus.

2 Request copies of your transcripts

Request that an official copy of your high school, GED, or Adult High School transcripts be sent to the Office of Student Services at ECC. If you have previous college credit from another institution, you'll need to request those official transcripts as well.



3 Apply for financial aid

Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov.

4 Complete Placement Tests

Placement tests let your advisor or counselor know where you

are academically and ensure that you get the right classes as you begin your college education. Placement tests are given at various times every month and are usually completed in less than two hours. Please contact the Office of Student Services at 823-5166, ext. 255, on the Tarboro campus, or 446-0436,

ext. 333, on the Rocky Mount campus to set up an appointment to take the tests.

5 Schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor

Your counselor will meet with you individually to discuss your educational and career goals. Counselors also will help students with placement test results, transcript evaluations, and career assessment, and provide information related to financial aid and other services. Your counselor will assist you in scheduling an appointment to meet with your assigned faculty advisor.

6 Register for classes

During registration, your counselor will help you choose classes that fit your schedule and educational goals. After you decide on your classes, you will get an official registration schedule. Once this is completed, you can pay your tuition in the ECC Business Office.

Congratulations, you're an ECC student!



Stand out from the crowd.

CERTIFY YOUR EMPLOYABILITY WITH THE N.C. CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE



www.crnc.org

The Career Readiness Certificate:

- Increases your chances for employment and promotion
- Focuses on employment-related competencies
- Is a credential recognized by employers nationwide

At Edgecombe Community College, more than 3,000 Career Readiness Certificates have been awarded, making us a leader in North Carolina in the workplace skills assessment system.

Contact:
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