

Community-Based Job Training Grants

Odessa College

Grantee: Odessa College (OC)

Industry Focus: Advanced Manufacturing

Key Partners: Permian Basin Workforce Development Board (PBWDB), the Permian Basin Workforce Network, and Ector County Independent School District (ECISD)

Grant Amount: \$1,751,178

Leveraged Amount: \$291,665

Location of Grant Activities: Texas

Challenge: A recent survey of industry representatives indicated a shortage of skilled welders in Odessa. Economic development projects in the Permian Basin are changing the industry's need for new workers. The average age of welders is currently 54 and continues to climb, with an expected 50 percent of skilled welders retiring by 2012. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Texas will need an estimated 1,780 welders in the next five years. In addition, the current Welding Training Center (WTC) needs upgrades to its facilities.

Addressing the Challenge: The Welding Training Center (WTC) will provide free, fast-track, customized, non-credit training to novice student and adult welders as well as incumbent workers. To provide relevant training to the target audience, capacity building activities for the WTC will include purchasing state-of-the-art welding equipment, student welding supplies, hiring and professional development of faculty and staff, renovating existing facilities, marketing and outreach, and curriculum development. The existing space will be remodeled to house 30 welding training stations. Proposed training will include a daytime course for prospective welders as well as an evening course for incumbent workers under the direction of OC's Department of Continuing Education. Additional afternoon training will include specific training and/or assessments requested by industry partners.

Projected Outcomes:

- 480 trained, skilled welders
- Renovate and reopen the Welding Training Center
- Develop training curriculum based on industry and K-12 needs
- Hire and train faculty and staff to implement training at the Welding Training Center
- Develop and implement marketing, outreach and recruitment

