



## Lehigh Valley Employers Want Skilled Workers. These Students are Answering the Call

By Paul Muschick / (Photo courtesy of BAVTS Bridges Foundation)

**LEHIGH VALLEY** - Students who have put in extra work to gain skills that are in demand at Lehigh Valley employers were honored recently for their dedication to expanding their talents.

Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School (BAVTS) and its partners recognized 21 students on April 11 for completing the Professional Skills Training Course. It teaches "soft skills" that make employees successful, such as how to manage conflict and how to be punctual, communicate, collaborate, and organize.

The course was developed following surveys of employers' needs by Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC) and Workforce Board Lehigh Valley.

"We listen to what's happening in our community and adapt to its needs, while at the same time, look to the future to make sure we are in a position to provide our students with exposure to the careers of tomorrow," said Adam Lazarchak, Executive Director at BAVTS.

"We created this program so that we could guarantee employers that if they hire one of these individuals recognized today, they would be getting a great employee," he said.

The students who obtained their professional skills certificate are studying health careers, automotive technician, masonry, commercial art, culinary arts, protective services, computer networking, plumbing, social media marketing, and welding. They are from the Bethlehem Area, Northampton Area, and Saucon Valley school districts.

After the ceremony, they had the opportunity to network with about 15 employers who attended.

Northampton Community College developed the curriculum and the course is taught by NCC instructors Anita Krick and Peg Wakstein. BAVTS Bridges Foundation provides the funding, which comes from the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program and donations from businesses in the region.

Lazarchak thanked the organizations that make the program possible, including LVEDC.

"It was their Education and Talent Supply Council meetings and subsequent industry surveys that planted the seed for this certification program," he said.

"BAVTS is incredibly responsive to our employers' needs. They took feedback from our community, recognized the challenge, and built a solution with their Professional Skills Training Course. We at LVEDC applaud their work and are grateful to the students who have invested their time and energy preparing themselves with the skills our employers value," said Karianne Gelinas, LVEDC's Vice President of Regional Partnerships & Talent Strategies.

The Professional Skills Training Course is open to select students who are invited after demonstrating superior attendance, responsibility, attitude, and work ethic. Of 436 senior students at BAVTS, 52 were recommended for the program this school year and 21 achieved their certification.

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### RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Residential and Commercial Façade Improvement Programs are designed to help improve the exterior appearance and condition of residential and commercial properties within the four boroughs. The program's goals are to maintain historical and architectural integrity, improve neighborhood appearance, and help property owners make exterior repairs to their homes or businesses while increasing property values for all borough residents.



### ABOUT SLATE BELT RISING

Slate Belt Rising is a neighborhood revitalization initiative designed to integrate and capitalize on the substantial assets of the individual Slate Belt boroughs of Wind Gap, Pen Argyl, Bangor, and Portland. While Slate Belt Rising specifically targets these four boroughs, some initiatives promote development and coordination of services throughout the entire region.

More information is available on our website under the Services tab, including program guidelines and applications Visit [slatebeltrising.org](http://slatebeltrising.org).

### PROGRAM OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action Lehigh Valley is an anti-poverty non-profit offering programs and services in Advocacy, Business Start-Up and Development, Food Access and Nutrition, Housing, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Youth.



Contact Brian Fenstermaker at [bfenstermaker@caclv.org](mailto:bfenstermaker@caclv.org)  
or 484-523-0900 with any questions.

*Bangor's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration*

at the

**SLATE BELT HERITAGE CENTER**

*Let's relive history together!*

*The Slate Belt Heritage Center is located on 30 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street in Bangor.*

*Admission is free!*

<b>Saturday, June 7th</b>	11AM-4PM: "A Walk-Through History: Bangor at 150" exhibit, Bangor's time capsule content on display, and hoist demonstration
<b>Sunday, June 8th</b>	Noon-5PM: Bangor 150 <sup>th</sup> exhibit and Bangor's time capsule display. Pasty drop from the Bell Tower after the parade! Bangor Alumni Concert-place and time to be announced.
<b>Tuesday, June 10th</b>	5PM-8PM: Bangor 150 exhibit and Bangor's time capsule display.
<b>Wednesday, June 11th</b>	5PM-8PM: Bangor's 150 <sup>th</sup> exhibits and Bangor's time capsule display 6PM: WALKING TOUR in town starting at the Center
<b>Thursday, June 12th</b>	4PM-9PM: Bangor's 150 <sup>th</sup> exhibit and Bangor's time capsule display 7PM Program: Memories of Growing Up Slater (New book) with speakers Marc Blau and Nancy Traves Broadbent
<b>Friday, June 13th</b>	5PM-8PM: Bangor's 150 <sup>th</sup> exhibit and Bangor's time capsule display 6PM: WALKING TOUR in town starting at the Center
<b>Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday, June 15th</b>	Noon-3PM: Bangor's 150 <sup>th</sup> exhibit and Bangor's time capsule display

Follow our Facebook page *Slate Belt Heritage Center-SBHC*  
for program updates and more information.