

PACCC and TradesFutures to Launch Partnership

Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges Announces Unique Apprenticeship-Ready Partnership with TradesFutures

By NCC

BETHLEHEM, PA - The Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges (PACCC), representing the Commonwealth's 15 community colleges including Northampton Community College (NCC), is partnering with TradesFutures, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization established by North America's Building Trades Unions and industry partners, to implement the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (M3C) and apprenticeship readiness program model. This collaboration between our community colleges and TradesFutures will give many men and women access to careers in the building trades.

TradesFutures is dedicated to expanding pathways to union apprenticeships and family-sustaining construction careers, remove barriers for underrepresented communities, and championing proven practices that work. Their MC3 curriculum is a building and construction trades pre-apprenticeship program registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.

A memorandum of understanding agreement was signed by PACCC and TradesFutures officials on May 6 -- National Skilled Trades Day -- at the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association in Harrisburg.

"Our curriculum and the Apprenticeship Readiness Program model is a proven strategy to connect participants to high quality skilled trades careers," said Marina Zhavoronkova, Executive Director of TradesFutures. "TradesFutures and its network of union and industry partners are excited to support the development of this initiative -- a first-of-its-kind, state-wide partnership to implement the MC3 across an entire community college sector."

"This partnership represents an important step forward in expanding access to meaningful, sustaining careers for students and communities across Pennsylvania. NCC is proud to work alongside PACCC and TradesFutures to strengthen pathways in the skilled trades, meet growing industry demand, and help build a more future-ready workforce for our region and the Commonwealth, says NCC President, David A. Ruth, Ph.D.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry project that by 2030 Pennsylvania will need 300,000 skilled trade workers in high demand industry sectors of energy, technology, manufacturing, and healthcare. Within the next decade, labor reports reflect the likely retirement of nearly 40% of Pennsylvania's current skilled trade workforce.

"We believe this agreement helps to inform a statewide strategy to develop a workforce development pipeline of skilled trade workers," said Dr. Tuesday Stanley, President / CEO of the PACCC. "Systems have been somewhat fragmented. We see that landscape changing."

Pennsylvania's community colleges, through PA Works! are seizing an opportunity to build a first-in-the-nation workforce development ecosystem for skilled trade workers. PA Works! looks to expand partnerships with career and technical high schools and solidify a collaborative policy and funding relationship with governments and industry leaders.

NCC is already moving in this direction with the Technical Trades Consortium in the Expanded Northeast Region. Regional community colleges are offering programs and training to meet the workforce needs of hyperscale data centers planned for Luzerne and Bucks Counties.

"It is our goal that PA Works! will codify, in Pennsylvania statute, partnerships among community colleges, career and technical high schools, and the building and construction trades industry," Dr. Stanley said. "Doing so will magnify the preeminent role the community college sector plays in delivering workforce development programming in Pennsylvania."

About TradesFutures

TradesFutures is a non-profit corporation organized to develop, promote, and improve Apprenticeship Readiness Programs ("ARPs"). ARPs are educational programs that provide students with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to choose, obtain, and succeed in a formal, registered apprenticeship in the construction industry. TradesFutures is also dedicated to assisting underserved communities in establishing and maintaining careers in the construction industry. Learn more about TradesFutures and its work to develop a more accessible quality construction workforce at TradesFutures.



The Pocono Chamber of Commerce Celebrated The Monroe County Historical Association Grand Re-Opening and Ribbon Cutting

By Lindsey Dedics

STROUDSBURG, PA - The Pocono Chamber of Commerce, a proud partner of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, joined the community on May 1, 2026, to celebrate the grand re-opening and ribbon cutting for the Stroud Mansion Museum and Library and Heritage Center.

Taking steps through the history of the Pocono Mountains, you can find rare pieces tied to Monroe County, and even a heart-shaped tub, inside the Stroud Mansion Museum and Library in Stroudsburg

"We tell the story of Monroe County. We have artifacts from the 1770s up until the 1970s, and everything in between," said Amy Leiser, the Executive Director of the Monroe County Historical Association.

Operating as headquarters of the Monroe County Historical Association non-profit, the mansion on Main Street and North 9th Street is back open to the public Tuesday after a 10-years-long expansion project.

"Putting an addition on a 231-year-old mansion was a challenge. We had some soil issues, we had some construction delays, but here we are," said Bill Leonard, a Board Member with the Monroe County Historical Association.

The Pocono Mountains celebrated an important milestone in preserving local history with the grand opening of the Monroe County Historical Association's Heritage Center. The Stroud Mansion Museum and Library and the new Heritage Center serves as the hub for education, research, and community engagement, showcasing the rich cultural legacy of Monroe County through exhibits, archives, and educational opportunities. The Heritage Center reflects a continued investment in honoring the region's past while creating opportunities for residents and visitors alike to connect with the stories that have shaped our community. The grand opening marks an exciting new chapter for the Association and underscores the importance of preserving history for future generations.

The Pocono Chamber of Commerce was honored to mark the special occasion and celebrate this amazing organization in Monroe County!

Photos are courtesy of Michael Straub Photography.

