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USDA grant-funded CNC equipment arrives at NGTC

Long anticipated, several new pieces of Computer Numeric Controlled (CNC) machining equipment were delivered to the Purcell Metals building on the North Georgia Technical College Clarkesville Campus in July. Purchased with funds made available from a USDA Rural Development grant, two lathes, one mill and three simulators, all made by industry leader Haas Automation, Inc., are being installed and will be fully online for the beginning of Fall semester.

“It is critical to provide state of the art facilities for our students so they can be fully prepared to enter the workforce,” said Acting NGTC President Dr. Mark Ivester. “It is great to have the support of David Mull and Jeff McLeod USDA Rural Development to bring this level of equipment to the college.”

“We are proud to get these pieces in,” said NGTC CNC and Machine Tool Instructor Shannon Gary. “We have to teach the students three different ways to program CNC equipment from paper and pencil to CAD/CAM to conversational programming. With this equipment, we are now fully prepared to teach all three approaches.”

Conversational programming is a method of interacting directly with equipment on the shop floor rather than creating a program using computer software and then transferring the information to the machine. The new Haas equipment will allow students to practice with simulated exercises in programming and will also give them experience working with automated tool change in processing.

“I am very excited I will be able to learn on these machines next semester,” said student Shannon Garrett. “My father graduated from this program and has worked in a shop that uses this kind of equipment. I’ve seen it
when I’ve been helping him, but I haven’t had a chance to try it for myself, so this will be an excellent learning opportunity for me.”

Because of advancements in technology, these three new machines have a smaller footprint than the older equipment currently in the shop. Equipment acquisitions of this magnitude are difficult to work into budget, and the combined package of machinery, simulators, and warranty plan is a great boon to the program. Prior to this delivery, a high speed wire cutter purchased in 2010 was the newest addition to the lab; the CNC lab has never had simulators for the students before.

For more information about programs of study at North Georgia Technical College, call 706-754-7700 or visit www.northgatech.edu.

Picture: (L-R) Instructor Shannon Gary, student Shannon Garrett, Acting President Dr. Mark Ivester, student Grayson Ash, Instructor Derrick Hogan, and student Ben Weatherby.

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