



800 North Third Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102
Phone: (717) 232-7584 • Fax: (717) 233-4723 • www.pacommunitycolleges.org

For Immediate Release

October 2, 2014

Media Contact: Danielle Gross
P: (717)232-7584 **C:** 717-418-9001
dgross@pacommunitycolleges.org

Pennsylvania's Community Colleges Crucial to State's Manufacturing Industry

HARRISBURG— As manufacturers around the country observe Manufacturing Day tomorrow, Pennsylvania's community colleges are celebrating their role as educators at the forefront of the modern manufacturing industry. Today's manufacturing jobs in Pennsylvania include highly trained employees who work on state-of-the-art equipment in well-paying jobs.

"Community colleges in Pennsylvania are training today's skilled manufacturing workers," says Elizabeth Bolden, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges. "Our colleges are responsive to the needs of their communities and local economies, and many have implemented new programs to train workers in high-priority occupations, including manufacturing jobs."

Community colleges throughout the state have pioneered training programs in conjunction with local community and business leaders. They regularly increase training offerings in high-demand manufacturing occupations in the state, such as welding or machine repair and even create new programs to train needed workers in local growth industries, such as Marcellus Shale in the southwest or pharmaceutical processing in the southeast. In addition, new programs are established to re-train or enhance the skills of Pennsylvanians who lose their jobs when their employers close their doors or relocate elsewhere.

Northeastern Pennsylvania received a boost on Monday when it was announced that Lehigh Carbon Community College, Luzerne County Community College and Northampton Community College will receive a four-year \$10 million federal grant to develop new degree, certificate, and diploma programs in high priority career fields. This marks the third time that Pennsylvania community colleges have received grants via the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grants Program (TAACCCT). These grants help to expand the capacity of the American community college system to provide innovative training programs in partnerships with local employers.

Pennsylvania's community colleges are working to meet the challenges of providing skilled workers for today's manufacturing jobs. According to the PA Department of Labor, there were 556,700 manufacturing jobs in the state in August 2014. Growing sectors include Plastics Product Manufacturing; Pharmaceutical and Medicine Manufacturing; and Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing. For information on Manufacturing Day events throughout Pennsylvania, visit www.mfgday.com

###

The **Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges** is a voluntary membership association for Pennsylvania's community colleges. Its members include the college presidents, members of the colleges' boards of trustees, and key college administrators. The Commission represents the interests of and advocates for the collective needs of the community colleges to federal and state policymakers. For more information, please visit www.pacommunitycolleges.org.