
President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

Northern Wyoming Community College District

Grantee: Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD)

Industry Focus: Fossil Energy

Key Partners: Sheridan College; Gillette College; Pennsylvania State University; Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce; Campbell County Economic Development Corporation; Wyoming Department of Workforce Services; University of Wyoming; Western Research Institute; Arch Coal, Inc.; Foundation Coal West, Inc.

Grant Amount: \$975,881

Leveraged Amount: \$410,000

Location of Grant Activities: Northeast Wyoming, Campbell, Johnson and Sheridan counties, and southeastern Montana

Challenge: The demand for workers in Wyoming's mining industry is anticipated to grow by an average annual rate of 4.5 percent through 2014, for a 10-year increase of 11,000 workers. This exceeds all other industries in the state. Researchers also anticipate the need for more than 1,000 new engineers and engineering technicians during this period. At the same time, demand for skilled workers is also increasing. Wyoming's energy companies need to upgrade the skills of current employees, and regional community colleges must increase their capacity to train workers for careers in the energy industry.

Addressing the Challenge: The Northern Wyoming Community College District, in partnership with Pennsylvania State University, will create the Associate of Science Degree in Mining Technology (ASMT) project. This program will increase the capacity of regional colleges to prepare workers for careers. The ASMT program will include courses that 1) are already in use in the NWCCD, 2) can be transported from Penn State without changes, 3) or are adapted from Penn State courses and 4) address surface mining and curriculum gaps for skills identified by local employers. All courses will be converted into the Worldwide Instructional Design System (WIDS) to facilitate online delivery, block scheduling and transportability to other institutions.

Projected Outcomes:

- 60 students will be trained during the life of the grant
- Develop training capacity by introducing an Associate of Science in Mining Technology degree in the NWCCD.
- The Penn State curriculum will be implemented by experienced mining engineers serving as faculty.

