

## Workforce ready

Programs at CCC, Mesalands help students enter workforce better qualified, quicker

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[By Thomas Garcia: Freedom New Mexico](#)

Area community colleges are offering programs designed to help students earn state certification allowing them to enter the workforce with more opportunities.

For many, a traditional four-year college education such as programs offered at Eastern New Mexico University is just not an option.

While ENMU has adjusted to offer courses and classes to fit a working person's schedule, many currently in the workforce and supporting families just don't have four years to wait.

For those students, courses offered at Clovis Community College and Mesalands Community College are giving them a chance to improve their stance in the workforce.

At CCC students, interested in welding can earn their entry level certification by the American Welding Society in three months, said Lisa Spencer, director of marketing and community relations.

"The program teaches the fundamentals of industrial welding processes with emphasis on the American Welding Society program guidelines," Spencer said.

Mesalands offers a 16-week (one semester) certificate program and a two-year associate degree in farrier science, said Kimberly Hanna, public information officer.

The semester program covers basic anatomy, business, blacksmithing, horseshoeing, and theory. Students continuing to the two-year option study applied sciences with emphasis in farrier science.

"I came to Tucumcari to visit a friend and decided to enroll in the farrier program," said Frank Alguire, 22, of Socorro.

Alguire said working with animals has always been a passion for him. He said he will graduate from the two-year program in May and intends to open his own business.

Hanna said a second program offering a semester certification and two-year degree is the building trades program.

Students concentrate on basic techniques, including carpentry, construction safety, blue print reading and job site etiquette. Students also participate in the planning and construction of a home.



One of the most popular programs at Mesalands is the wind energy courses that are offered in a one-year certification and a two-year degree.

Hanna said the one-year program offers basics on the wind energy field and helps students enter this fast growing field. She said the two year degree will help students work toward management positions in the field.

“I needed a career change and wind energy seemed right for me,” said Richard Sandstrom, 51, of Colorado. “I plan on attending the two-year program. But If I get offered a job after the first year it will be hard to turn down.”

Sandstrom said being able to enter the work field after a year is a great advantage. He said it is one of the reasons that drew him to enroll at Mesalands.

Clovis Community College offers two six-month programs for anyone interested in cosmetology: esthetician (skin care specialist) and nail technician.

Those completing the esthetician program can apply for their state license and find employment in spas, beauty salons, skin care centers and even start a business from home.

This type of opportunity is what attracted 24-year-old Tanda Cox.

“I was working at a hotel as a manager until it was sold and I was out of a job,” Cox said. “This is the second time that a job has been pulled out from under me.”

Cox, a wife and mother of two, discussed with her husband the desire to attend college.

“This program is wonderful,” Cox said. “We will be done in March and I will be able to get my license and be in a better position to get a job.”

Cox said I really like working with people and helping them relax. She said the program not only gives here a chance at a better job but a chance at job satisfaction.

For those interested in teaching CCC offers an alternative licensure program for those with bachelor degrees in other fields.

“The program takes 17 months to complete,” Spencer said. Courses for the program begin in the summer session and are completed at the end of the second summer session.”

Spencer said the program meets New Mexico’s teacher competency requirements. She said it complies with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education standards recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

The ALP at CCC has programs for licensure in elementary education (K-8), secondary education (7-12), and special education (K-12).

“This program is a great opportunity for people wanting to get into teaching,” Spencer said.

### **Information**

- Clovis Community College: 769-4100.
- Mesalands Community College: 575-461-4413