

# Berkshire Community College Kicks Off Manufacturing Month

Berkshire Community College

PITTSFIELD—[Berkshire Community College](#) [1] (BCC) today unveiled a new state-of-the-art lab containing advanced manufacturing equipment housed at Taconic High School (THS) that will provide both BCC and high school students with the advanced technical skills needed to succeed in the new manufacturing workplace.

The announcement, tied to the start of Manufacturing Month, was presented in conjunction with MassDevelopment's [AMP it up! Advanced Manufacturing Program](#) [2], the [Massachusetts Technology/Education Engineering Collaborative](#) [3] (MasSTEC) and the [Massachusetts Community Colleges & Workforce Development Transformation Agenda](#) [4] (MCCWDTA), and was attended by public school representatives, dignitaries and prominent business and economic development leaders as well as students.

The Intellitek LearnMate system, located at THS in Pittsfield, BCC's longstanding training site for its Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Programs, is comprised of blended educational solutions consisting of a learning management system, virtual and hardware content with activities and capstone design project, industrial grade equipment and simulation software.

The lab will be utilized by BCC and Taconic High School faculty and students involved in the school's Manufacturing Technology Program and will also benefit advanced manufacturing companies seeking highly skilled workers.

"Advanced Manufacturing is an industry that's growing by leaps and bounds and Berkshire Community College wants to play a role in the growth of this vital sector," said BCC President Ellen Kennedy. "We have companies right here in the Berkshires that are producing products that have a global reach. Our partnership with Taconic High School aims to encourage students to become interested in Advanced Manufacturing early on - as well as affording BCC students the opportunity to attain the skills needed to find solid jobs in a highly employable sector."

Funding for the Intellitek LearnMate lab program was provided by the Massachusetts Community Colleges & Workforce Development Transformation Agenda by a \$20,000,000 Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration. The new equipment enables BCC to provide its students

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with a structured curriculum focused on all aspects of production manufacturing from design to completion.

Once dominated by a handful of large industries, Berkshire County is now comprised of many smaller, niche manufacturers who specialize in areas including paper, plastics, medical devices and aeronautics. These industries represent the future of high-tech manufacturing in Berkshire County. BCC, in partnership with companies that comprise the Berkshire Applied Technology Council and MassTEC, aim to support the many new opportunities that now exist in manufacturing in the Commonwealth and throughout the world.

BCC offers several certificate and degree programs including: an [Applied Manufacturing Technical Skills Certificate](#), an [Applied Manufacturing Technology Certificate](#) [5] and an [associate's degree in Manufacturing Technology](#) [6].

“This new equipment, along with partnership between THS and BCC, will help to provide the future educated problem solvers needed for our advanced manufacturing companies,” said BCC Vice President for Community Education and Workforce Development Bill Mulholland. “We are truly growing our own!”

More than 30 students are currently participating in Taconic High Schools' Manufacturing Technology Program, which provides an avenue to a career in manufacturing and post-secondary education. THS and BCC have been partners in education in manufacturing for more than 6 years. THS Manufacturing Tech Program graduates can earn four college credits at BCC according to Mark Lausier, a THS Manufacturing Tech faculty member.

“Berkshire Community College has provided collaboration between college, high school and workforce development which will address the skill set required for today's 21st Century student and workforce. A new level of student learning now exists at Taconic High School. Students are able to program Computer Numerical Control machines as well as robotics. Students are able to design a 3D solid model and then make a prototype on the 3D printer. This type of advanced skills are being taught at your top colleges. The best part is we have it right here in Pittsfield,” said Lausier.

In 2011, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick launched the [Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative](#) [7], an effort to build the world's most competitive and innovative cluster of companies with advanced manufacturing capabilities in the Commonwealth. Earlier this year, the Governor created the Advanced Manufacturing Regional Partnership Academy, a first-in-the-nation program designed to meet the manufacturing industry's future workforce needs.

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BCC and its partners will continue to actively spotlight this industry, which has a rich history and a thriving future in the Berkshires. Today's announcement coincides with the start of Manufacturing Month and in advance of [National Manufacturing Day](#) [8], which will be celebrated on Oct. 4.

For more details, visit [www.berkshirecc.edu/ampitup](http://www.berkshirecc.edu/ampitup) [9].

### **About Berkshire Community College**

*Berkshire Community College (BCC) is a public, fully accredited, community college offering associate degree and certificate programs, as well as various other educational opportunities, primarily to the residents of Berkshire County and surrounding areas. Visit BCC online at [www.berkshirecc.edu](http://www.berkshirecc.edu) [1].*

### **MCCWDTA**

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### **Links:**

[1] <http://www.berkshirecc.edu/>

[2] <http://ampitupma.com/>

[3] <http://www.masstec.org/>

[4] <http://www.masscc.org/content/mccwdta>

[5] <http://www.berkshirecc.edu/Catalogs/>

[6] <http://www.berkshirecc.edu/ContentManager/index.cfm?Step=Display&ContentID=236>

[7] <http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/initiatives/manufacturing/advanced-manufacturing-collaborative.html>

[8] <http://www.mfgday.com/>

[9] <http://www.berkshirecc.edu/ampitup>