



For Immediate Release

Media Contact:
Jennifer Aries
(925) 784-0574
jennifer@25comm.com

BridgeValley Community and Technical College Offers Real World Experience to Students

(South Charleston, WV) - Late last year, BridgeValley Community and Technical College began providing students enrolled in its Administrative Professional Technology program, the opportunity to gain real world work experience on campus while continuing to pursue their educational goals.

The new program, which has allowed BridgeValley to hire two students thus far, allows students to work onsite as office and administrative professionals while earning income and college credit.

After reading about a similar program in New Hampshire to solve a workforce turnover problem in the insurance industry, BridgeValley's Workforce and Economic Development Division Vice President Laura McCullough was intrigued and began to devise ways a similar program could be launched at the college.

Developed in accordance with the basic standards recommended by the United States Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship, the new apprenticeship provides student workers with an hourly wage and 12 units of coursework upon completion of 4,000 hours of on-the-job training. Students selected to join the BridgeValley workforce, are provided with the same benefits as BridgeValley employees upon their hire date and every six months students are evaluated and provided a slight wage increase, pending they are meeting the requirements of the position.

"We're using the Board of Governors degree program for this," said McCullough. "In two years, they have a full-time job at a higher pay grade than they could have coming in and they have an associate degree. It's good for the worker/student and great for the college. We're replicating our workforce in a way we want them trained."

McCullough said BridgeValley intends to seek out community and business partners interested in offering apprenticeships to the college's students.

"Just about every occupation is apprentice-able," said McCullough. "We need to manage this transition to a young workforce. The idea of an apprentice is to hire someone not qualified

and train them the way you want them to be trained. You figure out what tasks need to be done. It's a way to train your workforce."

Businesses interested in partnering with BridgeValley can contact McCullough directly at (304) 205-6611 or Laura.McCullough@bridgevalley.edu.

About BridgeValley Community and Technical College

BridgeValley Community and Technical College promotes student success, prepares a skilled workforce, and builds tomorrow's leaders by providing access to quality higher education. BridgeValley Community and Technical College will be the college of opportunity for a diverse learner population, offering leading-edge technology, innovative ideas, and dynamic service to our students and our communities. BridgeValley Community and Technical College serves a six-county region including Fayette, Raleigh, Nicholas, Clay, Putnam and Kanawha counties. The college operates two campuses in Montgomery and South Charleston, along with the addition of the new Advanced Technology Center. BridgeValley Community and Technical College is a public institution of higher education independently accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges and a member of the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia.

For more information about BridgeValley Community and Technical College financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education and events, call (304) 205-6600 or; or check the College's website: "<http://www.bridgevalley.edu>"