

Nevada



The Way to a Brighter Future

Western Nevada Community College

CARSON CITY, Nev.—For the past several years, Western Nevada Community College and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California have been working together on educational programs and construction projects that benefit Native American students and their communities. WNCC students earn college credits and gain valuable work experience while building homes, a Head Start center and other facilities for the tribe.

Located just 30 miles from Reno and 15 miles from Lake Tahoe, WNCC provides a welcome environment for those who want to learn job skills or earn an associate degree. The college has also joined with the University of Nevada, Reno to offer up to three of the four years necessary for a Bachelor of Technology in Construction Sciences degree.

In addition to the four-year degree program, WNCC also offers a two-year program in Construction Technology that prepares students for entry and mid-level positions within the various construction industry disciplines. Students can pursue trade-specific craft training in carpentry, electrical, heavy equipment, HVAC, masonry, plumbing or welding.

Last year 50 Native American students at Western Nevada Community College helped build a new Head Start facility for the Washoe Tribe in Stewart, Nevada, just south of Carson City. The project was a unique partnership of public and private entities that resulted in a 5,100-square-foot building that now serves 70 children.

The construction students took a full schedule of classes, focusing on training with heavy equipment or project management. Most also took welding classes to earn a certificate that qualifies them to repair heavy equipment in the field.

Students in the heavy equipment program worked on an interesting and beneficial project on the Pyramid Lake Reservation, a re-seeding program for land that had been prime habitat for mule deer until it was devastated by a fire. Students used two D-8 Caterpillar



bulldozers to drag a 45,000-pound, 320-foot-long battleship chain across the scarred earth. Seeds had already been dropped from an airplane on the area, and the battleship chain turned over the dirt, covering the seeds so they could germinate and leaving rows where rainfall could accumulate instead of running off the scorched high desert. A year later, seedlings are sprouting throughout the area.

The next project for the tribe and Western Nevada Community College is to involve students in building a housing project. Students will learn everything about house construction: site preparation, framing, plumbing, HVAC and electrical, earning credits toward a degree while building new homes for tribal members.

In addition to its Construction Technology program, WNCC offers four different degrees in dozens of academic areas that prepare students for jobs or to transfer to a university. □

WNCC heavy equipment program students with a Caterpillar 140H Motor Grader. Front row, left to right: William Frank, David Tom, John Koos. Back: Henry Lafond.

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CAREERS

Western Nevada Community College



offers associate degrees and certificates
in nearly 50 academic areas.

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