



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Durham Public Schools, Durham Tech partner to prepare students for skilled trades field

Grants from A.J. Fletcher Foundation will help fund new career pathway

(Durham, NC) – Durham Public Schools and Durham Technical Community College are collaborating with local businesses to fulfill the need for skilled trade workers in the area.

The WayMakers: Durham’s Skilled Trades Pathway is funded through \$450,000 in grants from the A.J. Fletcher Foundation. Durham Public Schools will receive \$300,000 and Durham Tech will receive \$150,000.

“Durham Tech and Durham Public Schools recognize the need for skilled trade employees in Durham and the rest of the Triangle,” said Dr. Bill Ingram, President of Durham Tech. “We are proud to partner with Durham Public Schools and area businesses to meet this community need by training high school and adult students to qualify for in-demand positions with livable wages.”

Durham Public Schools will apply their grant funds to establish a Skilled Trades Academy at Southern School of Energy & Sustainability, which will start in Fall 2019. The academy will be for juniors and seniors in the Durham Public Schools system and will feature courses in construction, electrical, HVAC, power line maintenance, and plumbing in addition to classes in leadership and entrepreneurship.

Durham Tech will provide the Pathway by doubling the number of instructional offerings in the College’s Core Construction Fundamentals Course; establishing new plumbing and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, or HVAC, apprenticeship opportunities; and expanding shared programming with Durham Public Schools.

“The future is about collaboration. Empowering our kids to excel in the 21st-century means they’re going to need real world experiences. Durham Tech and Durham Public Schools working together to make that happen is what Durham is all about,” said Damon Circosta, Executive Director and Vice President of the A.J. Fletcher Foundation.

Durham Tech will use its grant funds from A.J. Fletcher to build out and equip teaching spaces and help hire instructors for plumbing and HVAC courses.

Graduates from the Skilled Trades Academy can then choose whether they want to seek employment or apprenticeship opportunities or continue their education at Durham Tech or a four-year college.

“Our goal is to open up more options for students,” said Dr. Pascal Mubenga, Superintendent of Durham Public Schools. “By partnering with local companies to offer rigorous coursework and on-the-job learning, our students will be prepared to go directly to work or continue on to college if that’s part of their career plan.”

Students in both entities will have work-based learning opportunities.

The pathway’s strategic partners will assist in establishing a shared advisory committee, developing curriculum and project-based partnerships, providing and training instructors, sharing resources, and other matters. Partners include CT Wilson Construction, Duke Energy, Durham General Contractors Association, Rebuilding Together, and Habitat for Humanity of Durham.

“Durham General Contractors Association is pleased to partner with Durham Tech and Durham Public Schools on this exciting new Skilled Trades Pathway program. We believe this program will help the Construction Industry, Durham Tech, and most importantly, the people who are looking for a good paying, long-term employment opportunity,” said Tim Cothran of the Durham General Contractors Association.

The WayMakers program will officially launch with a celebration in January 2019.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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