

AmSkills in Pasco County expands apprenticeships



Tom Mudano, executive director, AmSkills



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Pasco-based AmSkills has expanded its registered apprenticeship program from the Florida Department of Education to include machining CNC (computer numerical control).

That increases its total registered apprenticeship programs to six occupations. The program is competency-based, providing up to 12 nationally recognized certifications from the National Institute of Metalworking Skills, said Tom Mudano, executive director, in an AmSkills monthly newsletter.

AmSkills has been working with two manufacturers to implement a machining apprenticeship.

In July, the workforce development organization said it celebrated three apprenticeship signings with two manufacturers in Pinellas and Pasco counties. Recent AmSkills pre-apprenticeship graduate Juan Arguelles started his machinist CNC apprenticeship at Pharmaworks in Odessa. There, he'll have a mentor at Pharmaworks and a coach at AmSkills for support. Pharmaworks now has four apprentices with another candidate expected to start in a few months.

ABC Packaging in Tarpon Springs has also brought on two adult pre-apprentices, Trevor Cutro and Ronal Prodromitis, to start their Machinist CNC apprenticeships, AmSkills said. ABC Packaging said it attempted to have an apprenticeship program in the past but all failed.

“They never worked out because they never had support outside [of work or school] and AmSkills brings accountability to the apprentice,” Michael Reicher, VP at ABC Packaging, said in the newsletter. “Without AmSkills, this model will not work.”