



Apprenticeship Catawba – Innovative Partnership

2016 Governor's NCWorks Awards of Distinction

Apprenticeship Catawba, an industry driven initiative, was implemented during a time when manufacturing was downsizing or leaving the Hickory Metro area. As the available workforce did not have the skill set needed, manufacturers came together to collaborate on growing their own workforce and formed Apprenticeship Catawba.

Apprenticeship Catawba is a partnership of advanced manufacturing companies committed to the purpose, value, ethics, and integrity of a formalized apprenticeship program. They are committed to the development of their workforce by offering high school students an education and career pathway associated with the advanced manufacturing opportunities in their organizations. Each company is committed to the success of the program and invests various resources to support the project.

In its third year, Apprenticeship Catawba has 34 apprentices with more added each year. Industry partners provide dedicated staff, money, and resources to assist Catawba Valley Community College and the area public schools with implementation of apprenticeships and summer internships. The partners open their facilities for tours and provide marketing to promote advanced manufacturing careers and engage parents and students. Within four months of inception, a process was in place and recruitment of the first class of apprentices had begun. The partners utilized Career and College Promise courses to accelerate the process. Partner support for apprentices includes salary, tuition, books, and fees. The process implemented by Apprenticeship Catawba could easily be replicated in both rural and micropolitan areas. Furniture manufacturers replicated Apprenticeship Catawba's model and now have 8 apprentices of their own.

After reviewing 50 apprenticeship models nationwide, Apprenticeship Catawba was one of nine models selected by CTE Advance for a best practices site visit. The selection team chose Apprenticeship Catawba for its replicable model. It was the only North Carolina apprenticeship program selected and will be featured in a nationwide report to be used as a guide for other communities interested in starting apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship Catawba has helped Catawba Valley Community College create a mechatronics pathways with multiple entry and exit points, including both continuing education and curriculum. This pathway allows short-term training with third party certifications through Continuing Education. The pathway also allows articulation from Continuing Education to curriculum to earn either a curriculum certificate or Associates Degree. The pathway developed between the partners and the Engineering Technologies Department Head creates stackable credentials.



Apprenticeship Catawba – Innovative Partnership

2016 Governor's NCWorks Awards of Distinction

Apprenticeship Catawba has promoted positive community and public relations for workforce development programs and encouraged individuals in need of workforce development in many ways. By introducing Apprenticeship Catawba to the greater Catawba County area, they have reinvigorated the workforce development programs in the area. The publicity of their best practices and success have helped recruit millennials into advanced manufacturing, as well as recruit incumbent workers in other advanced manufacturing companies.

Partners

- AptarGroup, Inc.
- Continental Automotive Systems
- GKN Driveline Newton, LLC
- Sarstedt, Inc.
- Technibilt, Ltd.
- Tenowo Inc.
- ZF Chassis Components
- Alexander County Schools
- Catawba County Schools
- Catawba Valley Community College
- Hickory Public Schools
- Newton-Conover City Schools
- NCWorks Apprenticeship
- Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board