

BLUEPRINT

THE APPLIED TECHNOLOGY, ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND WORKFORCE NEWSLETTER
FOR VANCE-GRANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



WHERE SKILLS BECOME CAREERS AND FUTURES TAKE SHAPE

From hands-on training to high-demand careers, Vance-Granville Community College is helping students turn their skills, talents, and ambitions into opportunities for the future. With industry-driven programs and real-world experiences, students are prepared to step into the workforce with confidence and purpose.

FALL 2026 EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Fall 2026 edition of the Blueprint, Vance-Granville Community College's newsletter highlighting the people, programs, and partnerships helping students turn skills into careers and futures into possibilities. This edition, "Where Skills Become Careers and Futures Take Shape," celebrates the many ways VGCC is preparing students for success through hands-on training, industry-driven education, and real-world experiences.

Inside, you'll find stories that showcase the impact of our work—from new grants and faculty recognition to industry visits, strong CTE job placement, and the continued growth of opportunities like our Summer Electrical Academy. Together, these highlights reflect a college committed to connecting education with opportunity and equipping students with the confidence, skills, and experience to thrive in high-demand careers. Read on to see how VGCC is helping shape brighter futures for students, employers, and the communities we serve.

-Fredesvinda Colindres

Five VGCC Programs Achieve 100% in 2024–2025

Vance-Granville Community College continues to strengthen the region's workforce pipeline, and the 2024–2025 academic year marked a milestone: five of our programs reached a 100% success rate on Perkins 1P1, the federal performance measure that tracks student completion and academic progress in career and technical education programs. This level of performance reflects not only the dedication of faculty and staff but also the strength of VGCC's hands-on, career-focused learning environment.

Graduates in Nursing, Mechatronics, Paralegal Technology, Public Safety Administration, and Radiography met the Perkins 1P1 measure by the second quarter after program completion. Under the measure, success includes remaining enrolled in postsecondary education, pursuing advanced training, serving in the military or a service program, or securing or retaining employment—including jobs in high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand fields. This achievement reflects both employer confidence and the college's



commitment to high-quality, industry-aligned education.

The **Nursing** program remains one of VGCC's flagship offerings, preparing students through rigorous clinical rotations, simulation-based instruction, and partnerships with regional hospitals and long-term care facilities. Employers consistently report that VGCC nurses are workforce-ready on day one, contributing to the program's sustained demand and placement outcomes.

In **Mechatronics**, students train on advanced automation, robotics, and programmable logic controllers—skills directly tied to the needs of local manufacturing and distribution employers. The program's hands-on labs and industry-recognized certifications help graduates step immediately into technician and maintenance roles, supporting the region's growing industrial sector.

VGCC's **Paralegal Technology** program equips students with practical legal skills, including research, drafting, case preparation, and office technology. Strong partnerships with law firms, courts, and legal service organizations ensure students gain real-world experience, leading to full placement in positions such as legal assistants, paralegals, and compliance support roles.

The **Public Safety Administration** program prepares graduates for leadership roles in emergency services, law enforcement, fire departments, and public agencies.

With curriculum focused on operations, policy, and community engagement, students transition smoothly into supervisory and administrative positions across the region's public safety infrastructure.

Finally, the **Radiography** program continues to meet critical healthcare workforce needs. Students train on modern imaging equipment and complete clinical rotations with hospital partners, graduating with the competencies required for immediate employment as radiologic technologists in hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centers.

Reaching 100% success across five programs is more than a statistical accomplishment—it reflects VGCC's mission to provide high-quality, accessible education that leads directly to strong career outcomes. These programs serve students from diverse backgrounds and help strengthen the region's workforce in healthcare, public safety, advanced manufacturing, and legal services. The results demonstrate the college's effectiveness in supporting student achievement, meeting employer needs, and maximizing the impact of Perkins funding.



“This grant enables the welding program to further its quest toward educating learners...”

Spark Some- thing Great Grant!



Vance-Granville Community College is celebrating a new opportunity to enhance training for students in its Welding Technology program. VGCC is one of 12 schools across the U.S. and Canada selected to receive Hypertherm Associates' 2026 "Spark Something Great" educational grant.

The grant includes a Hypertherm Powermax45 SYNC® air plasma system and in-person training from a Hypertherm product expert. VGCC will use the new equipment to provide enhanced instruction for nearly 100 students in the Welding

6 Technology program at the College's Franklin Campus.

“Manual plasma cutting processes are quickly becoming a necessity in all manufacturing settings,” said Luke Gravel, VGCC Program Head for Welding Technology. “This grant enables the welding program to further its quest toward educating learners to achieve professional and personal success.”

The new resources will give students valuable experience with modern metalworking technology while helping prepare them for success in today's manufacturing workforce. VGCC is grateful to Hypertherm Associates for investing in our students and supporting the continued growth of our Welding Technology program.



AWS Section Educator Award

Honoring Excellence in Welding Education

Charles L. Gravel, Program Head of Welding at Vance-Granville Community College, has been recognized by his peers within his American Welding Society (AWS) District/Section as the recipient of the 2025 Section Educator Award.

The award honors Gravel's contributions to the AWS and the welding industry, as well as his work preparing the next generation of skilled welders. At VGCC, Gravel combines classroom instruction with hands-on training to help students develop the technical skills needed to pursue careers in welding.

The recognition also highlights Gravel's involvement in the broader welding community and his role in helping strengthen the profession through education. His work provides students with a strong foundation while supporting the skilled workforce needs of the region.

Reflecting on the recognition, Gravel said, "I am excited to be recognized by the Triangle Section of the American Welding Society as the Section Educator for 2025. The hard work and dedication of our instructors has accelerated the success of the Welding Technology program at VGCC and has widened the impact within our community."

Vance-Granville Community College congratulates Gravel on this well-deserved honor and his continued contributions to welding education and the industry.

What began with a visit to the VGCC classroom turned into an exciting opportunity for students to see firsthand how their skills can translate into a wide range of industries.

On April 16, 2026, students from VGCC's Mechatronics programs traveled to Bell & Howell's Durham facility following an earlier classroom visit from the company. During the visit, students learned about the history of Bell & Howell, met several members of the company's staff, and had the opportunity to ask questions directly about the work they do and the career opportunities available in the industry.



From The Classroom To The Industry: Students Visit Bell and Howell

Students were especially impressed by the variety of equipment and technology they saw throughout the facility. While many may have initially associated Bell & Howell primarily with manufacturing, the visit revealed just how broad the company's work really is. Bell & Howell provides service and support for technology used across a wide range of industries, including dental offices, hospitals, medical facilities, e-commerce operations, and commercial printing.



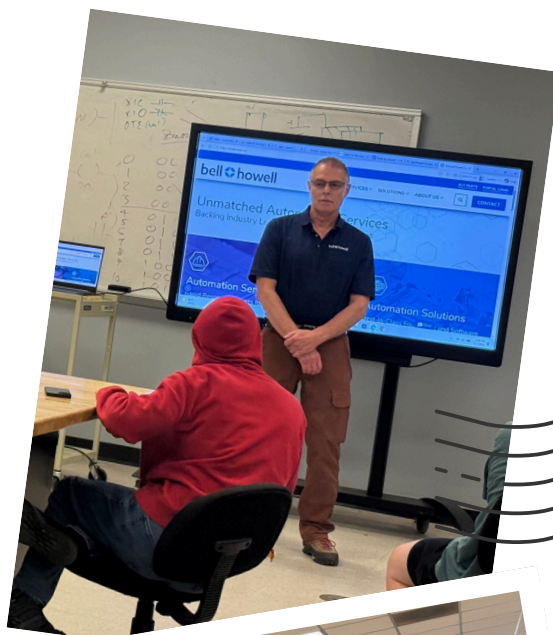
Students saw equipment used to support dental practices, including patient chairs and 3D printers that produce models for teeth and implants. They also learned about automated systems used in hospitals, autonomous vehicles that move inventory through e-commerce facilities, and automated prescription-filling systems being developed for companies such as Amazon. One of the highlights of the visit was seeing specialized industrial printers several feet wide that produce extremely high-definition prints in action.

The experience gave students a new perspective on the many ways automation, electronics, mechanical systems, and technology intersect in today's workforce. Seeing these systems operating in a real industrial environment helped connect what students learn in the classroom to the technology being used by businesses every day.

The partnership has also extended back into the classroom. Bell & Howell donated a variety of electrical, mechanical, and pneumatic components for VGCC students to use in their hands-on training. The donation included switches, actuators, high-pressure air lines, and tools, giving students additional equipment to work with as they develop their technical skills.

The relationship between VGCC and Bell & Howell has continued to grow since the visit. Bell & Howell has already hired one VGCC student and has expressed interest in exploring additional ways to partner with the college and its students.

Bell & Howell has quickly become a valuable new industry partner for VGCC's Applied Technologies programs. We are excited about the opportunities this relationship can provide our students and look forward to continuing to build a strong partnership with Bell & Howell in the years ahead!





Lt. Gov. Hunt Explores Future-Ready Workforce Training at VGCC

Press Release

North Carolina Lieutenant Governor Rachel Hunt visited Vance-Granville Community College's South Campus on March 31, touring key workforce training programs and meeting with students, faculty, and industry partners to learn more about the College's role in the regional workforce.

The visit began with a meet-and-greet with local industry partners, including refreshments crafted by students in Vance-Granville's Culinary Arts program. Representatives from Altec, Ontic, and Sunrock joined College leaders to demonstrate the importance of collaboration in aligning academic programs with real-world workforce needs. Ontic and Sunrock highlighted recent apprenticeships with VGCC's Mechatronics Engineering and Heavy Equipment Operator programs, respectively, which offer students a clear pathway from the classroom to their future careers.

"As our region's primary workforce developer, it was important for VGCC to showcase not only students and programs, but the public-private partnerships that connect our students with strong careers in our communities," noted VGCC President Dr. Rachel Desmarais.

Lt. Gov. Hunt's tour also included stops in the College's lively mechatronics and electronics labs, where students demonstrated the skills they're already putting into practice with local employers.



A Future-Ready Focus

The focus turned toward the future as VGCC leaders shared plans for the College's Center for Advanced Manufacturing & Applied Technology (CAMAT) and Transportation Training & Technology Center. Together, these expansion projects reflect the interconnected nature of the regional economy: CAMAT will prepare the next generation of manufacturers and engineers who produce goods, while the Transportation Center will train the truck drivers and mechanics needed to move those goods efficiently through the supply chain. The Lieutenant Governor also visited the VGCC Small Business Center and learned about its entrepreneurship initiatives.

The tour concluded with a hands-on demonstration of the College's drone program, displaying VGCC's continued investment in emerging technologies and innovative workforce solutions.

"I've been incredibly impressed by the public-private partnerships at Vance-Granville Community College," Lt. Gov. Hunt observed. "This is exactly what it looks like when communities come together to expand opportunity by building workforce programs that prepare our students not just for today's jobs, but for the future they deserve."

As the 13th stop on the Lieutenant Governor's Future-Ready Community College Tour, the visit to Vance-Granville Community College highlighted the critical role institutions like VGCC play in preparing a skilled, adaptable workforce. Through strong industry partnerships and forward-looking programs, VGCC continues to equip students with the tools they need to succeed while supporting the evolving needs of the regional economy.



Say Hello

to Our New NCEdge Customized Director!



Tracy Parks

About

Tracy Parks, PMP joins the NCEdge Customized Training Program with more than 32 years of leadership experience in operations, manufacturing, supply chain, logistics, pharmacy operations, facilities management, environmental health and safety (EHS), quality systems, and continuous improvement. Throughout her career, she has led large cross-functional teams and driven organizational transformation through operational excellence, employee engagement, and customer-focused strategies.

Tracy brings expertise in workforce development, customer satisfaction initiatives, and Voice of the Customer programs. In her role with NCEdge, she will leverage her broad industry experience to strengthen partnerships with businesses across Vance, Granville, Warren, and Franklin counties and will help deliver high-quality, customized training solutions through the resources and expertise of Vance-Granville Community College.

NCEdge

NCEdge helps North Carolina companies build and sustain a highly skilled workforce through customized training solutions aligned with business needs. Supporting organizations across a diverse range of industries, NCEdge delivers workforce development strategies that strengthen talent, improve employee performance, and drive business success.

Through the NCEdge Workforce Development Lifecycle, we partner with employers to identify workforce needs through strategic consulting, assess critical skill gaps, develop customized training solutions, implement targeted training programs through local education and workforce partners, and provide ongoing follow-up to measure outcomes, support continuous improvement, and maximize return on workforce development investments.

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READY, SET, INTERVIEW:

Introducing Big Interview at VGCC

Vance-Granville Career Services is excited to introduce Big Interview to our students. Big Interview is an online career-readiness and interview-training software platform that combines instructional videos, realistic mock interviews, AI-powered feedback, resume tools, and career-preparation resources in one place. It is designed to help students learn how to interview effectively, practice their skills repeatedly, and improve based on feedback. Some of the key features of the software include:

AI Mock Interviews where students can practice answering realistic interview questions on video and receive feedback on areas such as content, clarity, pacing, tone, filler words, and eye contact.

Interview Questions Library and Lessons where students have access to over 1,000 interview questions that are targeted on different industries, career clusters, or skills areas and access to short video and written lessons that cover interviewing fundamentals, behavioral questions, overcoming nerves, professional communication, networking, and workplace readiness.



Customized Student Support where students can utilize a resume builder and AI-based feedback to help them improve content, formatting, keyword alignment, and compatibility with applicant-tracking systems (ATS). Students can also receive feedback and assignments created by faculty or Career Services Staff that is tailored to particular programs, courses, or career fields.

This software platform is designed for diverse learners and provides resources for ESL/ELL students, neurodiverse students, introverted students, career changers, and other learners who may face particular challenges during the job-search process. This career-readiness tool can be used to boost a student's confidence before a real interview, help students transform classroom skills to employability skills, and provide more accessibility with immediate feedback, progress tracking, and scalable assignments. We are excited to offer a variety of resources to students at Vance-Granville to prepare them for the world of work.

For more information regarding the Big Interview software, please contact Career Services, Dr. Krystal Foxx, at careerservices@vgcc.edu or 252-738-3466.



New Apprentices & Work-Based Learning Students Begin Their Career Journeys Fall 2026

This Fall, a new group of Apprentices at Vance-Granville Community College are taking an exciting step toward their future combining college education with paid, hands-on experience in the workplace.

Through Registered Apprenticeships, students have an opportunity to do more than prepare for a career. They are starting their careers while completing their education. Apprentices receive structured on-the-job training with participating employers while completing related classroom instruction through VGCC.

For the Fall 2026 semester, VGCC welcomes

14

nine new Apprentices who are beginning apprenticeship pathways with

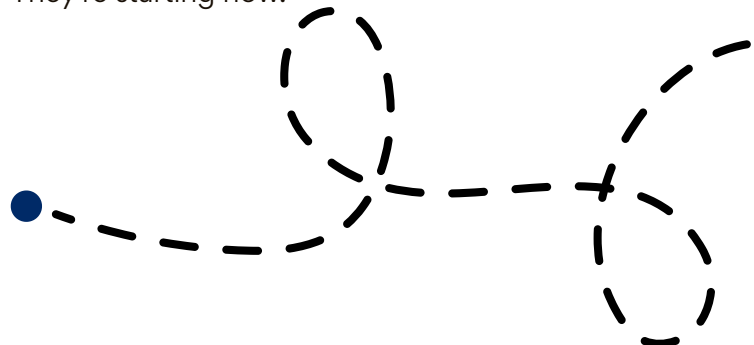
Ardagh Group, Dill Air Controls, Eaton Corporation and Mandolin HVAC Services in areas such as Mechatronics, Electrical Systems, Air Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Technology.

The apprenticeship is an experiential learning model that creates a direct connection between what students learn at VGCC and the skills they develop in the workplace. Under the guidance of experienced professionals, apprentices gain practical experience, build industry-specific skills, and develop the professional competencies employers are seeking.

For students, the opportunity provides a pathway to education, employment, and career advancement at the same time. Each apprentice brings a different story, career goal, and perspective, but they share something important: the opportunity to gain an education while developing valuable real-world experience.

Apprenticeships is also an investment in the region's workforce. By partnering with VGCC, employers have an opportunity to develop talent according to their workforce needs, mentor future professionals, and create stronger pipelines for hard-to-fill positions.

As VGCC's newest apprentices begin their journeys this fall, they represent more than the next group of students entering the workforce. They represent the next generation of skilled professionals who will help strengthen businesses, industries, and communities throughout our region. Their careers aren't waiting until graduation. They're starting now.



Experiential Learning Beyond Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship is one of several ways VGCC connects students with meaningful career experiences. The college also offers Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities that allow eligible students to gain hands-on experience related to their academic program and career goals.

Through paid and unpaid WBL opportunities, students can connect classroom learning with real-world workplace experiences while earning college credit. Students have the opportunity to strengthen technical and professional skills, build their resumes, explore career pathways, and establish valuable connections with employers.

Eleven students from various academic programs started their work-based learning experience for the Fall 2026 semester on August 17, 2026. The students are currently enrolled in Curriculum (CU) & Continuing Education (CE) programs such as: Human Services Technology, Biotechnology, Paralegal Technology, Information Technology, Culinary Arts, and Pharmacy Technology



Employer Partnerships That Build the Workforce

Together, Registered Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning are important components of VGCC's commitment to experiential learning. While the structure of each opportunity may differ, both help students bridge the gap between education and employment by providing opportunities to learn through experience.

Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning opportunities are strengthened through partnerships between VGCC and area employers. These collaborations provide students with valuable exposure to the workplace while helping employers connect with emerging talent and develop future employees.

For more information about partnering with VGCC or learning more about Registered Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning opportunities, contact LaShawn Hawley, Experiential Learning Coordinator in the Career Services Department, at (252)738-3336 or hawleyl@vgcc.edu.

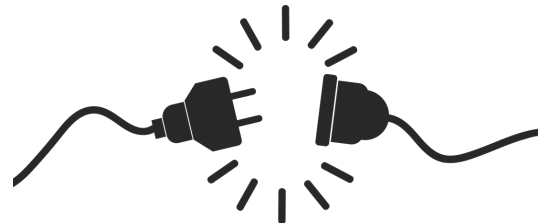




Vance-Granville Community College, Granville County Schools, and Local Employers Team Up for Careers Electric Summer Academy

CREEDMOOR, NC — Local students gained both practical trade skills and valuable career connections through the new Careers Electric™ Summer Electrical Academy offered by Vance-Granville Community College and Granville County Public Schools —one of just a few such academies to launch across the state this summer.

“North Carolina’s greatest strength is its people, and the state’s continued growth starts with an investment in our future workforce,” said Governor Josh Stein. “These electrical academies will prepare the next generation of electrical professionals, create opportunities for students, and support the long-term growth of our economy.”



Press Release

VGCC’s Summer Electrical Academy boasted 11 students from J.F. Webb High School in Oxford and South Granville High School in Creedmoor, including three recent high school graduates and eight rising seniors. The students took Residential Wiring and National Electrical Code this summer as part of the College’s Basic Wiring certificate program, in addition to participating in a work-based learning experience. Local employer partners included Brummitt Electric; Danco Electrical Contractors; Enon Electric; Granville County Public Schools; Lewis Electric of Oxford, Inc.; S.T. Owen Electric, Inc.; and Shalag US, Inc.

Each academy was developed through close collaboration between the North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE), a host community college, and local school district partners, with employer partners serving as work-based learning hosts and pre-apprenticeship sponsors. Each student enrolled in one or two electrical courses for college credit, earned industry-valued credentials, participated in hands-on work experiences, and completed a registered pre-apprenticeship. Upon completing the academy, the student is positioned to enter entry-level employment through registered electrical apprenticeships or continue their education in Electrical Systems Technology at their community college.

Each student received a \$2,000 completion stipend, along with career coaching, financial literacy instruction, employability skills training, and all required instructional materials at no cost. The academy is designed to help students transition seamlessly from high school into rewarding careers in the skilled trades.



Vance-Granville
Community College



Looking for a pathway into
today's manufacturing industry?

register for the
**Certified Manufacturing
Associate Course** *this fall*



**Powering the Future of the
Manufacturing Workforce**

- October 5th – January 19th
- VGCC South Campus | Creedmoor
- Mondays & Tuesdays (In-Person)
- Cost: \$187.60*

VGCC's Industrial Maintenance & Electrical Systems pathway brings together skills used across several industrial trades building a strong foundation in mechanical, electrical, and safety skills that applies to more than one role.



Elisa Rodwell, Director, Occupational Extension
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Vance-Granville Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees. Vance-Granville Community College also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the status of Vance-Granville Community College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

**REGISTER
TODAY**

www.vgcc.edu/coned/oex/

xxxxxx
xxxxxx
xxxxxx
xxxxxx



Vance-Granville
Community College

National Manufacturing Day

This event empowers manufacturers to come together and address their collective challenges and build excitement about manufacturing careers to help their communities and future generations thrive. Join us as a vendor!



Register Here

Friday, October 2, 2026
8:30 am to 11:30 am

VGCC Civic Center

200 Community College Rd, Henderson, NC 27537



David Bullock, Department Chair
252-738-3541 or bullockd@vgcc.edu



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4TH ANNUAL FILL THE PANTRY CRAFT SHOW FUNDRAISER 2026

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 | 2PM-7PM
VGCC CIVIC CENTER | 200 COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROAD

Cost of admission is 3 canned goods,
nonperishable food items, or paper goods.

Vendors who would like to participate, contact the
VGCC Food Pantry at 252-738-3323, douglasa@vgcc.edu
or view QR code for entry form. Spaces are limited.



Raffles Throughout
Event

Food & Beverage
Vendors

Indoor Event



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Vance-Granville Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Vance-Granville Community College. Vance-Granville Community College is an equal opportunity institution. The college serves all students regardless of race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, or disabling conditions. Vance-Granville Community College is a Tobacco-Free College.