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Department of Transportation and United Tribes Technical College partner on workforce training

BISMARCK – The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) have a new collaboration underway for workforce training. The partnership established today will enhance UTTC’s curriculum and provide a pathway for trained workers to fill high-demand transportation jobs across the state of North Dakota.

The partnership focuses on UTTC’s Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) and Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) programs. Students will receive hands-on experience from NDDOT personnel, including job shadowing, mentoring, and equipment training. The NDDOT will work with UTTC on developing their training curriculum to ensure graduates are prepared for and have the opportunity for careers in the transportation industry.

“There’s a strong need to fill jobs in this area of the public sector workforce,” says Leander “Russ” McDonald, United Tribes Technical College president. “The data shows a high level of job availability throughout the state. This partnership is a solid connection for job placement and we have high hopes for being part of the solution to this particular workforce need.”

United Tribes has offered HEO and CDL training for three years as part of a regional tribal college workforce training consortium known as DeMaND. Programs offer accelerated learning using the latest training simulators and state of the art equipment. Although the programs are based at tribal colleges, enrollment is open to individuals of any ethnic or racial background who are North Dakota residents, possess a valid driver’s license, and meet the program criteria.

“This partnership will help expand career opportunities for these students by helping them obtain technical skills they need,” said NDDOT Director Grant Levi. “This will help the DOT and the transportation industry by creating skilled workers that are in demand across the state.”

Currently the NDDOT has 350 snow plow operators who perform road maintenance across the state. The department has similar partnerships with other educational institutions, but this is the first that specifically targets Equipment Operators and Transportation Technicians.

“Students graduating from this program now have choices for a career or create their own business at home, throughout our state and region,” says Scott Davis, North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission director. “The NDDOT and UTTC are building a very strategic opportunity here that has benefits all around.”

The partnership also allows NDDOT employees’ access to recertification or refresher courses in all applicable trades taught in UTTC’s DeMaND program, such as equipment operation, welding and electrical technology.

For more information contact DeMaND Director Rae Gunn 701-255-3285 x 1491 or NDDOT HR Officer Jason Sutteimer 701-328-4358.