

PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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# Building Mississippi's Aviation & Aerospace Workforce

**Mississippi Airports Association Annual Conference**

Presented by Angie Seymour

Government Affairs Director & Workforce Project Manager



# Why This Work Matters

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- Mississippi needs a strong aviation, aerospace, and manufacturing talent pipeline
- Our industries need employees that are trained, certified, safety-minded, and ready to work
- PRCC is consistently connecting education, industry, and workforce development
- Our goal is to provide work-ready students that are prepared for real jobs



# My Role at PRCC

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|    |                                                   |                                                                                                                                      |
|----|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01 | <b>Government Affairs</b>                         | Engaging with our elected official and agencies at the Federal, State, and Local level                                               |
| 02 | <b>Funding Strategy</b>                           | Securing and implementing investments for infrastructure, programs, and equipment needs                                              |
| 03 | <b>Program &amp; Partnership Development</b>      | Building industry relationships to ensure we are producing students with the job skills and credentials needed at the industry level |
| 04 | <b>Construction Project &amp; Program Manager</b> | Managed the design and construction of the Hancock County Campus                                                                     |
| 05 | <b>Workforce Project Manager</b>                  | Moving initiatives from plan to delivery by working closely with our industry partners to identify workforce challenges              |

# Hancock Aviation Aerospace Workforce Academy & Training Hangar

- Located at Stennis International Airport
- Adjacent to: Hancock High Career & Technical School, Stennis Space Center, and Port Bienville Industrial Park
- One Campus, Two facilities



# Aviation, Aerospace, & Manufacturing Roundtables

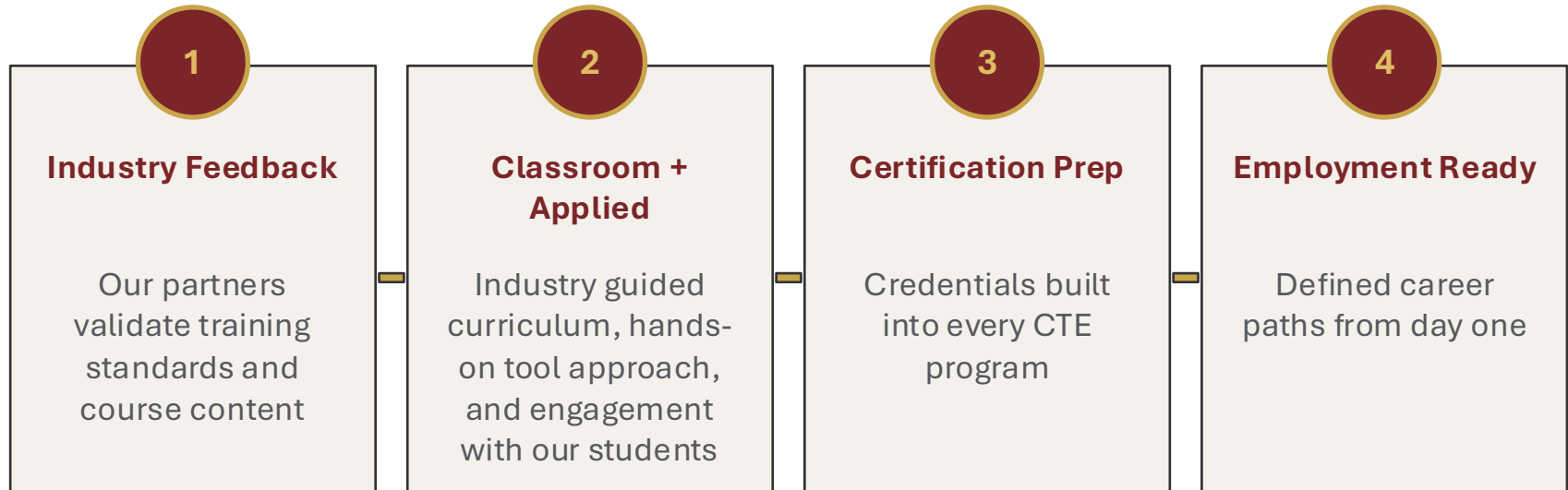
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- Roundtables bring industry voices to the table
- Partners identify workforce gaps and training needs
- Industry input guides curriculum development, equipment needs, and employment pathways
- Instrumental in facility layout and design
- Industry collaboration keeps programs relevant and responsive

# Partnerships Shape Workforce-Ready Curriculum

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*Collaboration keeps programs current, relevant, and workforce-driven.*

# \$21M

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secured through federal, state,  
and local funding

- MS Legislature
- EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant
- BP RESTORE Act
- Gulf Coast Restoration Funds (GCRF)
- DOL Grant – Senator Hyde-Smith
- FAA – Aviation Maintenance Workforce Development Grant
- ARPA Funding
- Cooperative Competes Site Development Grant

## Securing the Funding to Train The Workforce

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- Investment supported facilities, equipment, and program development
- Facilities designed to be accessible and adaptable
- Funding aligned with workforce and industry priorities

# Facilities Designed for Industry-Relevant Training

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## Training Hangar Opened August 2023



## Aviation Aerospace Workforce Academy Opened August 2024



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- Both facilities support hands-on training and equipment use
  - Both are designed with spaces built for current programs and future growth

# Hancock Aviation Aerospace Workforce Academy

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**38,000** square feet

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## Our Programs

- Advanced Manufacturing Technology
- Welding & Cutting Technology
- Hydrographic Technology
- Coding Technology
- Industrial Electronics Technology
- Court Reporting
- Practical Nursing
- Academic Courses
- Adult Education

# The Frank Ladner Center For Aviation & Aerospace Training Hangar

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**18,000** square feet

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## Our Programs

- Unmanned Aerial Systems
- Aviation Maintenance Technology

# Unmanned Aerial Systems Program

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- One-year program that begins each fall
  - 15 student cohort (with a waiting list)
  - 45-hour technical certificate
  - 60-hour AAS (Associate of Applied Science) degree
- UAS curriculum entails: Aviation Systems, Airframe Setup and Maintenance, and Flight Skill Development

# Unmanned Aerial Systems Program

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- Prepares students for the FAA Part 107 UAS Commercial Remote Pilots license
  - Testing facility in New Orleans
- Employment pathways across multiple industries
  - Utility companies, engineering/survey firms, large industrial inspection companies, and public safety agencies
- Instructor, Cavin Skidmore:  
[bskidmore@prcc.edu](mailto:bskidmore@prcc.edu)

# Aviation Maintenance Technology Program

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- Two-year program that begins each fall
  - 15 student cohort (with a waiting list)
  - Two instructors
  - 64-hour technical certificate
  - 79-hour AAS (Associate of Applied Science) degree
- AMT curriculum entails: inspecting, repairing, servicing aircraft engines, applying theories, and disassembling and troubleshooting various components and systems



# Aviation Maintenance Technology Program

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- Preparation for their oral, written, and practical exams
  - Airframe & Power Plant rating
  - Enter the workforce as a mechanic for 4 years
  - Prepare for the Inspector Authorization Exam
- Strong industry interest in PRCC students
- Instructor, Hunter Welborn:  
[jwelborn@prcc.edu](mailto:jwelborn@prcc.edu)



# Students Prepared for the Workplace

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## **Real conditions**

Training beyond the classroom, including non-air-conditioned spaces in real world environments

## **Safety & OSHA Regulations**

Safety awareness and housekeeping practiced daily

## **Tool responsibility**

Tool placement, accountability, and teamwork

## **Soft skills**

Professionalism and workplace accountability

# Advisory Councils & Industry Engagement

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- Advisory councils for each program area
- Industry guidance on curriculum and equipment
- Feedback on student readiness and workforce expectations
- Donated equipment strengthens hands-on training
- Partners help identify our student's career opportunities



# Internship Opportunities

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## FOR STUDENTS



Education

+



Experience

+



Connections

=



Career Opportunities

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## FOR EMPLOYERS

Access to a pipeline of trained, local, and career-ready talent

## FOR PRCC

Ensures that our programs remain connected to the current and future needs of industry

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## INTERNSHIP PARTNERS

Rocket Lab • Rolls-Royce • Skydweller Aero • L3Harris  
Relativity Space • The Spaceport • Lockheed Martin

# Hancock County Tuition Assistance Program

HANCOCK COUNTY PORT & HARBOR COMMISSION

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A last-dollar program that covers the remaining cost of regular tuition to attend PRCC.

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**\$343K**

contributed to date

**300+**

students supported

**4**

consecutive semesters

# Where Do We Go From Here?

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- Growth will always be strategic and sustainable
- Focus on program success before adding new programs
- Future opportunities include:
  - Airport Management Technology
  - Commercial Pilot

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# Here We Grow Again

- PRCC is expanding at our Hancock Campus
- PRCC GulfEDGE Training Center
- Expanding workforce training opportunities
- Supporting regional aviation & aerospace, coastal, and technical workforce needs



# PRCC GulfEDGE Training Center

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**\$4M**

## **BP RESTORE ACT**

Construction of the GulfEDGE Training Center and expansion of our UAS, Hydrographic, and Technical Workforce programs

**\$2.3M**

## **GOMESA - DMR**

Expand Hydrographic Technology training and equipment

# Help Build Mississippi's Aviation & Aerospace Workforce

**Partner with PRCC**

**Advise our  
programs**

**Support hands-on  
training**

**Hire our students**

**Angie Seymour**

Government Affairs Director & Workforce Project Manager  
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Pearl River Community College