



**Wharton County  
Junior College**

# NEWS RELEASE

Office of Marketing and Communications  
911 Bolling Highway  
Wharton, Texas 77488

Toll free: 1.800.561.9252, ext. 6322  
Office: 979.532.6322  
Fax: 979.532.6493

---

## MEETING A NEED

*WCJC's Manufacturing Technology Program will provide skilled workforce*

WHARTON, TEXAS – Wharton County Junior College students will soon have a cutting-edge career path to follow thanks to an ongoing collaboration between the college, Tenaris and the Bay City Community Development Corp.

Through WCJC's new Manufacturing Technology Program – which kicks off this fall – students will be able to obtain one of three different certificates or complete a two-year associate of applied science degree in Manufacturing Technology.

Students participating in the program will be well-versed in the skills necessary for a host of industry-related fields, said Dr. Amy LaPan, WCJC's Dean of Vocational Instruction.

“The Manufacturing Technology Program will prepare students with the expertise needed to work for Tenaris or other industries requiring skills like welding and machining,” LaPan said. “This is a great opportunity for area residents to obtain a set of skills that can be quickly translated into gainful employment.”

Tenaris officials said their collaboration with WCJC will have a positive impact on the entire community.

“Tenaris partnered with WCJC to develop a sustainable program that would meet the needs of more than just our company,” said German Cura, President of Tenaris-North America. “Our investment in this program will impact the community by providing them with an opportunity to achieve educational and career goals.”

Manufacturing Technology Program courses will be taught at WCJC's Bay City Campus, which is housed in the Center for Energy Development complex in Bay City. Tenaris currently occupies a suite of offices in the same facility.

A new mechanical laboratory building is currently under construction adjacent to the facility and is anticipated to be completed by Sept. 14. The roughly \$1.2 million structure is being funded primarily by the Bay City Community Development Corp.

Tenaris – a leading global manufacturer and supplier of steel pipe products plus related services for the world's oil and gas industry – has contributed \$575,000 for the purchase of the mechanical lab's specialized equipment.

BCCDC officials said the collaboration is a step in the right direction – one that will have far reaching benefits.

“Providing the best education and training we can to our young people is one of the best things the Community Development Corporation can do with its resources,” said Bobby Wilkinson, BCCDC’s board president.

Although Tenaris has taken the lead on the project, several other industries have contributed through an advisory finance committee. These include Oxea Corporation, Celanese Corporation, South Texas Nuclear Project and LyondellBasell Corporation.

“LyondellBasell understands that education and training can give prospective employees and advantage in our industry,” said Dale Friedrichs, site manager of the LyondellBasell Matagorda Plant. “It’s important to us that our investment benefits our neighbors and the community.”

Rudolph Henry, WCJC’s Director of Nuclear Power Technology and the Manufacturing Technology Program Director, said students who complete the one-year certificate programs can go directly to work for Tenaris or another similar industry or, if so choosing, continue for an additional year to complete the Manufacturing Technology or the Nuclear Power Technology AAS degree.

Henry said the certificates may also be used as “enhancements” to Process Technology and Nuclear Power Technology AAS degrees.

“This will provide students with more flexibility in their employment options,” Henry explained.

Certificates will be offered in three areas: the existing Electrical Technician or Instrumentation and Control Technician and the new Mechanical Technician. The Manufacturing Technology AAS degree will offer the same three areas as “specialties.”

The purpose is to develop a “qualified, professional” worker who can “address industry’s demand for specialized technicians,” Henry said.

“This program allows WCJC the opportunity to increase the diversity of its course and curriculum offerings which in turn gives students a more diverse compliment of skills,” Henry said. “The curricula are structured to assist the students in their development of electrical, instrumentation, mechatronics or mechanical maintenance skills necessary for entry into many sectors of industry, including power generation, chemical processing and manufacturing.” Program graduates will be able to demonstrate a host of skills, including the ability to install, maintain and upgrade electrical systems, electronic and computer-controlled mechanical equipment and work with various instrumentation devices.

LaPan said additional staff members will be required to help teach the courses once the mechanical laboratory is up and running this fall.

More information on the Manufacturing Technology Program – including course descriptions – can be found on the WCJC website at: [www.wcjc.edu](http://www.wcjc.edu)

*Tenaris is a leading supplier of tubes and related services for the world's energy industry and certain other industrial applications. The company's mission is to deliver value to its customers through product development, manufacturing excellence and supply chain management. Tenaris seeks to minimize risk for its customers and help them reduce costs, increase flexibility and improve time to market. Tenaris employees around the world are committed to continuous improvement by sharing knowledge across a single global organization.*

*Wharton County Junior College is a Texas public, two-year, comprehensive community college offering a wide range of postsecondary educational programs and services including associate degrees, certificates, continuing education courses, cultural affairs and leisure-time activities for the benefit of the community and a population of students that varies in age, background and ability. WCJC operates campuses in Wharton, Sugar Land, Richmond and Bay City with a student population of around 7,400.*

###