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RCC to lead statewide manufacturing training program

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GRANTS PASS, Ore. — Rogue Community College (RCC) will serve as Southern Oregon's hub for a statewide program to support small manufacturers.

RCC has been awarded $770,000 for a 12-month program to provide hands-on training, both to upskill people already in the workforce and to incorporate into current course offerings for students at RCC. Training will focus on areas such as machining, aerospace-grade welding, quality inspection, supplier qualification, smart manufacturing, and federal contracting readiness.

Stephen Phelps, Dean of Instruction & Student Engagement at RCC, says they're adamant about including lean manufacturing training in the program at the request of local industries.

"Basically, how can we be more efficient? And part of the benefit with that type of training is that it helps small businesses become more efficient, save more money, make more money, better products to the consumers, and makes them more competitive for future funding opportunities from the federal government, your defense contractors and stuff like that."

RCC has a meeting with OSU in a week to finalize the plan.

Phelps says there are around 400 small manufacturers just in the area, and he wants to serve as many of them as possible through this program.