ACAP and partners team up to offer national WorkReady credential at no cost to learners

AROOSTOOK COUNTY – Aroostook’s unemployment rate is at a historic low, and skilled workers are in high demand by employers. ACAP Workforce Development, the Ashland Area Economic Development Committee, Ashland Adult Education and MSAD #1 Adult and Community Education have joined forces to connect as many workers as possible to high-wage, high-demand jobs through offering a nationally recognized WorkReady credential training at Ashland Community School in March. This is a short training that students can receive at no cost.

Lunch will be provided, and a stipend may be available for qualifying learners.

If you are a high school senior or junior wishing to get a foot in the door of the job market, or if you have been unemployed and wish you could brush up your skills quickly, the WorkReady class is a fast (60-hour) way to upgrade your resume and connect directly with local employers. Classes are offered in the evenings and compressed into three Saturdays. Maibec and JD Irving, as well as other businesses, will guarantee a higher starting rate of pay and/or an interview to people completing the Ashland WorkReady credential.

Employers will also attend the sessions so that you can meet them face-to-face.

The WorkReady credential is recognized across the U.S., and Maine employers such as LL Bean and Bath Iron Works offer preferred rates and interviews to jobseekers holding the credential. In addition to WorkReady, the Ashland course will include a Digital Literacy certification and a WelcomeME hospitality certificate included in the 60 hours of class time. This effort is supported by the generosity of the USDA, KeyBank Foundation, and area employers.

“This is a joint effort to especially connect workers with high-skill, good-paying jobs in manufacturing and forestry,” says Christy Daggett, Senior Manager at ACAP Workforce Development. “One in ten jobs in Aroostook County is in manufacturing, and production facilities are cleaner, faster and more computerized than ever before - so it’s important that workers are well-trained and adept at operating expensive equipment. According to the Maine Center on Workforce Research and Information, the 1,600 manufacturing workers in Aroostook earn an average wage of $16.44 hourly - or $34,195.00 a
For forestry occupations, the average wage is over $41,000 yearly. Both of these fields offer competitive entry-level wages and benefits.”

Space is limited. An open recruitment night will be held February 13, at 6:30 at Ashland Community School. If you have questions, please call Jenny Paul, Project Director at ACAP Workforce Development, at 764-3721.

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For 45 years, ACAP has provided the people of Aroostook County with services and resources that help individuals and families achieve greater economic independence. As a leader, or in partnership with others, ACAP provides guidance to the community in responding to emerging human needs in the areas of community, family, energy and housing, and workforce development services. For more information on ACAP, or to make a tax-deductible contribution, please contact the agency at 771 Main Street, on the web at www.acap-me.org, or by calling 764-3721. ACAP – We Make Life Better!