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MSCC Aviation Maintenance Tech Program Earns FAA Certification

The Federal Aviation Administration has formally approved Mid-South Community College as an Aviation Maintenance Technician School. Representatives of the FAA announced the program certification during a special ceremony at the college on Monday, Jan. 3.

“This isn’t just about education; this is about economic development,” said Dr. Glen Fenter, MSCC President. “Any time you can create a program that takes people from Eastern Arkansas and put them in a position to have great careers working for world-class companies, that’s economic development.”

“This program gives us the opportunity to change our culture and our way of life. That’s why this announcement for our college and for our region is so tremendously powerful and important.”

Dr. Fenter praised the FAA for its spirit of cooperation, but James Malecha, B Section Supervisor, Representing the SW LIT Flight Standards District Office, said the people at MSCC deserved the credit for the successful accreditation process.



“It’s nice because David (Hall, Certification Team Member and Principal Maintenance Inspector) and Jamie (Black, Certification Team Member and Principal Avionics Inspector) let them know what was required or needed, and the people at MSCC started right down that trail,” Malecha pointed out. “The next day there would be a work order for whatever was needed. The college team has done an excellent job.”

MSCC accomplished the certification feat in about four months, which is “much quicker than almost any other certification I can recall,” Melecha said. He described the college’s aviation instruction staff as a “really spectacular group” and said the speed with which the program earned its “wings” was “really a tribute to the talents and the experience of the individuals you have. The inspectors who worked on the certification were nothing but complimentary, so you should all be commended.”

Dr. Fenter also praised Federal Express for its pivotal role in the creation of the program.

“The only thing more exciting than having an FAA certified A&P program is having an FAA certified A&P program in partnership with a world-class company. The only thing more exciting than having an FAA certified A&P program in partnership with a world-class company is if that world-class company also happens to be FedEx. It just doesn’t get any better than that.”

“None of this would have ever occurred without the direction and vision of Greg Hall, FedEx Senior Vice President of Technical Operations. If not for Greg’s persistence and commitment to this program, we wouldn’t be standing here today.”

“Much as a lot of industry, we’re maturing, and we look forward to Mid-South Community College supporting the industry as our workforce changes,” Hall said. “This is a great start.”

The Aviation Maintenance Technology program at MSCC provides students with an introduction to the occupational area of Aerospace Maintenance as currently understood and practiced by FAA Aviation Maintenance Technician Certificate holders.

It provides the knowledge and background information necessary to progress through the Airframe and Powerplant curriculum, meet current FAA requirements, and achieve FAA certification as an aircraft maintenance technician. Classes will begin this month.

MSCC met a wide array of FAA requirements to earn the certification necessary to start the program in January. The college submitted a description of the curriculum; a list of the facilities; materials to be used; a list of instructors indicating certificate type, ratings, and certificate numbers held by each; and a statement of the maximum number of students to be taught at any one time.

Mid-South received a \$3.4 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to build the program. Emphasizing industry-relevant, on-the-job training, the program will give students the skills and experience needed to meet the demands of the aviation maintenance industry.

With help from all of its partners, including FedEx Express, MSCC has developed an integrated training program for airframe and powerplant technicians. Aviation maintenance classes will be taught by three highly-qualified and experienced instructors with more than 100 years studying, flying, servicing, repairing, and teaching about aircraft.

Key partners in the program include FedEx Express, Arkansas Northeastern College, the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), the Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas, and Aviation Repair Technologies.

Students interested in enrolling in the Aviation Maintenance Technology program may do so during regular registration on Monday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 5-6:30 p.m. in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for Educational Excellence. Late registration will be Wednesday, Jan. 12, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 5-6:30 p.m. Students who enroll after Jan. 10 will be assessed a \$10 late registration fee (except those who qualify for tuition waivers).

For additional information, call MSCC's Workforce Technology Center at (870) 733-6853.