

# The Leading EDGE

Education+Delta+Greely+Excellence

Summer  
2013

## FY13 Highlights

### Expansion Vision Takes Shape

Partners for Progress in Delta received funding in FY13 to proceed with architectural drawings for a stand-alone expansion adjacent to the current Delta Career Advancement Center on North Clearwater Ave. Bettisworth North won the competitive bid process and the board and architectural team worked closely to create a schematic for the expansion. Lead architect Tracy Vanairsdale presented her firm's concept at the annual Industry Roundtable October 17, 2012. Participants responded with enthusiasm and the board locked in on a visual of the proposed new facility.

Rep. Eric Feige worked hard to get \$1 million in the FY14 capital budget. He has said on several occasions that the partnerships that brought together such an incredible training experi-

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*Lead architect Tracy Vanairsdale presented the concept at the annual Industry Roundtable.*

### Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator Academy Broadens Outreach and Includes Heavy Equipment Mechanic Focus

Our outreach for the annual and very popular Introduction to Heavy Equipment Operator Academy has increased, and our applications reflect broader regional acceptances. For example, the 10 graduates of the 8th Annual June Heavy Equipment Operator Academy included participants from Delta, Tanacross, Tok, Glennallen and Nikolai. Last year's academy included students from Delta, Alatna, Stevens Village, Nulato and Dot Lake. The applicants selected

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### SPOTLIGHT: UAF Community & Technical College

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Community & Technical College (UAFCTC) committed to Partners for Progress in Delta when Delta visionaries dreamed about boosting the skilled workforce a decade ago. Since its involvement, UAF CTC has delivered of a wide range of classes that can assist community members secure degrees, pursue job advancement or

be competitive for a new job. Everything from American Sign Language and Russian to Digital Photography, Quick Books and welding has

**"There is a demand for education and training in the greater Delta area."**

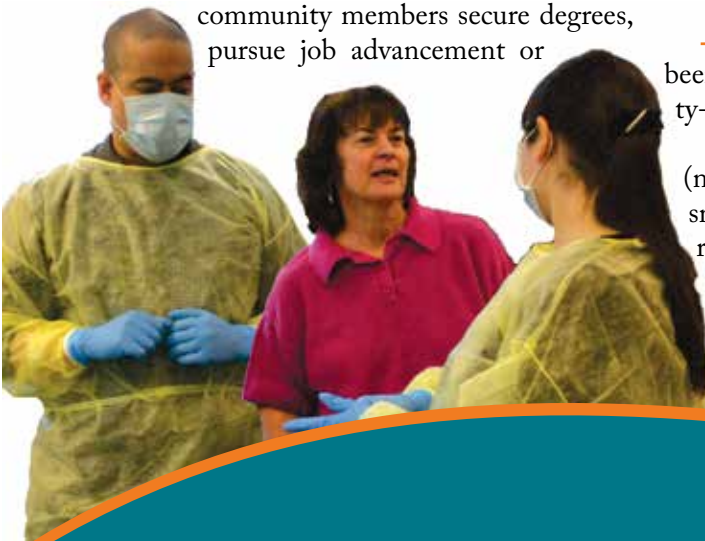
**Michele Stalder, CTC Dean**

been offered for credit; and non-credit, community-interest classes are scheduled regularly.

The new dean of CTC, Michele Stalder, (named permanent dean in 2012) understands small communities. She grew up in Chitina and recalls working with the Delta High School

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*UAFCTC Allied Health instructor Cathleen Winfree advises two Delta Certified Nurse Aide students about proper attire.*



### The Partners

Alaska Works Partnership  
[alaskaworks.org](http://alaskaworks.org)

Delta/Greely School District  
[dgsd.k12.ak.us](http://dgsd.k12.ak.us)

University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College  
[ctc.uaf.edu](http://ctc.uaf.edu)

University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service  
[uaf.edu/ces](http://uaf.edu/ces)

Operating the  
Delta Career Advancement Center

## Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator Academy continued from cover

for the June 2013 Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator and Mechanic Academy learned from three experienced, long-time Alaskan operating engineers.

In addition to a broader regional outreach, Partners for Progress in Delta has also begun an emphasis on the mechanics side of heavy equipment operation. Several of the participants last year jumped at the chance to spend time with mechanic instructor Jay Hodges and they loved it. One of our 2012 academy "mechanic-oriented" students from Nulato later was accepted into Operating Engineers Local 302 as an apprentice heavy equipment mechanic. He went from Delta to Palmer for more training, graduated from the program at the top of his class, and in the summer of 2013 got a job with a contractor working in Boundary.

This year three students—from Delta, Glennallen and Copper Center—decided to work with Hodges to learn as much as they could about the mechanical side of heavy equipment. They are serious about finding jobs as heavy equipment mechanics, or at least a mechanic's helper, and they loved what they called, "the best of both worlds," since they had a little time on the machines and got to work on equipment.

Hodges, who has 25 years' experience in the Trade, said Alaska is in need of qualified operating engineers—to both operate and work on heavy equipment. He figures



the academy in Delta is important because "it is a more rural setting and can attract talent that might otherwise not get noticed." Instructor Annie Cunningham agrees. "Once you get one from a small community to participate, then word of mouth kicks in and others from that same small community learn about an opportunity." In addition, she believes the new-found knowledge of resources to help become successful is empowering for folks in small communities. She has 35 years' experience in the field and is now retired. Al Odem, with 31 years field experience and seven years as an instructor, said he likes the idea of Alaska operating engineer retirees investing in training new folks. "We should grow our own," he said, and "not be happy when employers hire from outside."

The Operating Engineers and Employer's Training Trust instructors provide field and hands-on equipment training. As in previous years, the "hands-on experience" makes this academy special. Participants got a chance to operate each of the pieces of equipment including a dozer, grader, excavator, water truck, backhoe, scraper, loader, roller and end dump. Participants captured the importance of the safety training and the value of good communication as critical on a job site.

Since 2006, 82 students have received training for the safe operation of heavy equipment. Gary Hall, Delta High School Construction Trades instructor and academy coordinator, believes the academy's focus on work ethic helps students discover and commit to a career path which allows them to contribute to the workforce. Local businesses work with the organization during this fast-track three-week intensive academy, and the Deltana Fair Association again let the academy use a site at the fairgrounds as part of the hands-on training. Participants received MSHA and First Aid/CPR/AED training and certification.

Senator Click Bishop told the 2013 graduates they had an opportunity to learn a skill set that you can take anywhere. Since he had spearheaded the creation of the Regional Training Center concept as Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, he said he knew first-hand about the hard work to make the Delta program a success. He recognized the good foundation of community support and committed board members. He reminded students they had the "best of the best in instructors."

City Mayor Pete Hallgren echoed the importance of folks in the community who worked hard to set up the partnership. "Nobody said we had to have this and this is not mandated by government," said Hallgren.

He explained that 10 years ago this was an idea. People with ideas and those concerned about the community and future opportunities for young people worked to create a viable and successful partnership. Hallgren told the students "You are the beneficiaries of this good partnership," and he described it "a success when other endeavors helped by the city were not so."

**Top:** 2013 students, instructors, speakers and a possible future graduate pose during graduation. **Above:** Students operate actual construction equipment during the Academy. **Left:** Students Adam Koppers of Delta, Guy Scharratt of Glennallen and Nicholas Varas-Bayless of Copper Center with instructor Jay Hodges. **Far Right:** Academy Coordinator Gary Hall and Senator Click Bishop present Alex Glushko with his certificate of graduation. **Right:** Students receive on-site instruction at the Deltana Fairgrounds.





## UAF Community & Technical College

continued from cover

welding instructor in 1980 to get him approved as an adjunct to teach university welding classes for the Tanana Valley Community College—CTC's predecessor.

Stalder believes Delta is important and now, as permanent dean, is shaping plans for the college's expanded presence here. Today she looks at how UAF CTC can improve service to the area including Fort Greely. She notes, "There is a demand for education and training in the greater Delta area. CTC's broad range of subject matter expertise combined with our ability to offer both academic credit and non-credit classes is what makes the Partners and UAF CTC partnership thrive."

An active member of the Partners for Progress in Delta board of directors, she supports faculty who drive from Fairbanks to make a particular class happen.

Cathleen Winfree, the head of the Allied Health Department, is one of the instructors that has invested time and energy to meet the area's request and need for trained certified nurse aides. Each spring since 2005 she has offered the nine-credit Certified Nurse Aide class through in-person classes in Delta, video conferencing and hands-on training in Fairbanks. She is currently exploring additional classes that can be offered in Delta, and CTC will be offering a Medical Terminology class this fall.

Stalder said she is also pleased to have hired Stacy Petersen to assist students at the center, to identify market needs and to recruit possible qualified instructors in the area.

UAF CTC plans to share information about options at a special event in Delta. "The event will be an excellent chance for current and perspective students to explore what certificate and degree programs CTC has to offer," said Stalder.



*Michele Stalder, CTC Dean.*

## How We Are Doing

Each year we are required to survey students and employers to see how we are meeting their needs.

In the last year, 97% of respondents said they would take another course or encourage someone to take a class at the Delta Career Advancement Center.

Some of the comments shared by students include:

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The instructors are **AWESOME** • Puts you ahead in life

• Where else could you go and get this kind of training? • This center helps students **FIND THEIR CAREER**

• People here have **CONNECTIONS** with employers • Certifications and real world training make you more

**EMPLOYABLE** • I learned how important a good work ethic is on any job • This training has given me a **BETTER OPPORTUNITY** to enjoy a job that I want

• As a supervisor, I **GAINED MORE KNOWLEDGE** to lead the way and be more competitive • This class was a very **OUTSTANDING EXPERIENCE**. I loved it • Great class, great instructor. Class/course directly

related to job. **VERY HELPFUL** • I can now go on in my college education • Thanks DCAC for helping me **JUMPSTART** my career • It made me realize what I wanted to do • It has **SAVED ME MONEY** and travel

time. I could not have done it any other way • I think it is an awesome place to get a **HEAD START FOR COLLEGE** • Delta Career Advancement Center has

**HELPED OUT MY CAREER** greatly.

”



## CDL Class Sequence Possible for Delta

Community members have asked for several years for a Commercial Driving License (CDL) training program at the Delta Career Advancement Center. Working with the Center for Employment Education in Anchorage we were able to offer driving instruction in July 2012. Preceded by an intensive two-day course designed to help students prepare for the state exam for commercial drivers, which is required before driving instruction, the CDL training was offered through the Center for Employment Education at the Career Center. Fifteen students participated and eight of the 15 expressed interest in taking the driving course. Of the eight, four were selected to take the pilot driving course. Of the four three successfully passed the CDL driving test given at the end of the instruction. Plans call for another offering in FY14—a prep class in November or December and another driving sequence in spring. Call 895-4605 to place your name on a list if you interested. We need 10 for the prep class to make it go.



*Instructor Don Peska congratulates Dwight Phillips on passing his driving test.*

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*This newsletter funded through the Division of Business Partnerships of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.*

**Check this out.  
Act now!**



*Bettisworth North architectural renderings show hallway, co-location of partner offices and student common area, and the large classroom.*

## Expansion Vision Takes Shape continued from cover

ence in Delta “represented the best of what community was all about.” He said when people believe in something and work together to make it happen, then we can achieve a lot. The board is appreciative of the FY13 and FY14 investments. The new facility will provide co-location office space for the educational partners and additional classroom space along with a commercial kitchen approved by the Department of Environmental Conservation. The kitchen, integral to expanded culinary arts training, could be used by entrepreneurs who have requested a place to develop and test products that can be sold commercially.

**MISSION** Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc., (PPD), an educational consortium in Delta Junction, Alaska, serves as a gateway for learning and training to help build and maintain Alaska’s workforce.

### GOALS

- Help Alaskans be competitive for jobs emerging from new developments and existing workforce opportunities in the area;
- Be a focal point for Alaskans who seek career advancement education and training, academic degrees and continuing education credit;
- Help prepare secondary students for career options;
- Identify area needs for education and training for long-term employment; and
- Create and nurture long-term partnerships with agencies, businesses, organizations, the trades and government.

### TOP PRIORITIES

- Create solid pre-training opportunities to help the success rate of future skilled workers.
- Customize intensive training academies to ready prospective workers for real-world opportunities.
- Deliver core and essential academic courses for those seeking university degrees.
- Develop a cadre of qualified local instructors.
- Identify options for encouraging and helping regional students participate in training.
- Build a stand-alone expansion to meet the needs of the community.

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. supports career pathway programs to help build Alaska’s workforce. Partners for Progress helps operate the Delta Career Advancement Center and is a state-recognized Regional Training Center (RTC). Regional Training Centers deliver career and technical education and training to create a skilled workforce, and as such, it receives funding through the Technical and Vocational Education Program of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships.