

Apprentice Zachary Brownlee is trained by mentor Jeff Jacobs.



# ENVIRONMENTAL EXPRESS

## Champions Youth Apprenticeship

**K**athy King, human resources manager with Environmental Express, describes the evolution of the company's youth apprenticeship program, from initial discussion with Apprenticeship Carolina™ to implementation through Trident Technical College's Industrial Mechanics Program.

**EDGE:** How did your company choose to become involved with youth apprenticeship?

**Kathy King:** As a South Carolina manufacturer, we understand the need to ensure a future workforce that is equipped with the skill set and desire to make an impact within a manufacturing environment. Our leadership is also very passionate about giving back to our community, and partnering with the youth division of Apprenticeship Carolina provided us just that opportunity. We understand the value of being able to train a future workforce today to ensure a successful tomorrow.

**EDGE:** Is there anything unique about your program that you'd like to highlight?

**KK:** We are one of the few injection molding operations in the Charleston area. This

is a niche skill set that requires a great deal of training as well as specialized equipment. In addition to injection molding, we have a robotics division, machine shop, welding & fabrication shop, and general manufacturing areas that include production, assembly and packaging. We look forward to providing our apprentices with a broad on-the-job work and learning experience to help them develop their natural skills and talents, as well as uncover new skill sets.

**EDGE:** What word or phrase do you think best describes youth apprenticeship?

**KK:** Ready and willing. Our first apprentice hit the ground ready and willing to take on new challenges and to learn new skills. He is completely dialed in to his

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**"We're excited to be a part of the youth apprenticeship program, because we see it as an investment in the future success of our organization."**

— KATHY KING, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, ENVIRONMENTAL EXPRESS



## Environmental Express, Inc.

Environmental Express, Inc., a Cole-Parmer company, is the leading developer, manufacturer and distributor of environmental laboratory equipment and consumable supplies for commercial, governmental, industrial and academic laboratories worldwide.

Established in 1988 in the Charleston area, Environmental Express provides an entire range of laboratory products used in applications such as water/wastewater analysis, oil and grease analysis, metals analysis and hazardous waste analysis. The company's products are sold throughout the world through a strong network of international dealers.

Environmental Express is a rapidly growing business with around 70 team members in the Charleston area. As with most growing businesses who hold an international footprint, future initiatives are built around continued expansion through acquisition as well as through organic growth.

mentors and is making the most of this opportunity.

**EDGE:** How do you think youth apprenticeship will impact the workforce in your community?

**KK:** We have confidence knowing that regardless of the career path or future employer that our apprentices choose, they will be equipped with the job and life skills they need to make a positive difference in their communities. Not only are they learning about equipment, processes and business operations; they are also learning important life skills from their mentors and fellow teammates.

The apprentices learn effective communication and team building skills, leadership and project management skills, as well as how important it is to be on time and to meet and/or exceed established goals. They learn that whether a team wins or loses, they do it together and all share the responsibility for the outcome. It is our hope that our apprentices will have such a positive experience that they will in turn want to give back in the same way to their communities.

**EDGE:** What do you think will

be the top positive outcome of having a youth apprenticeship program?

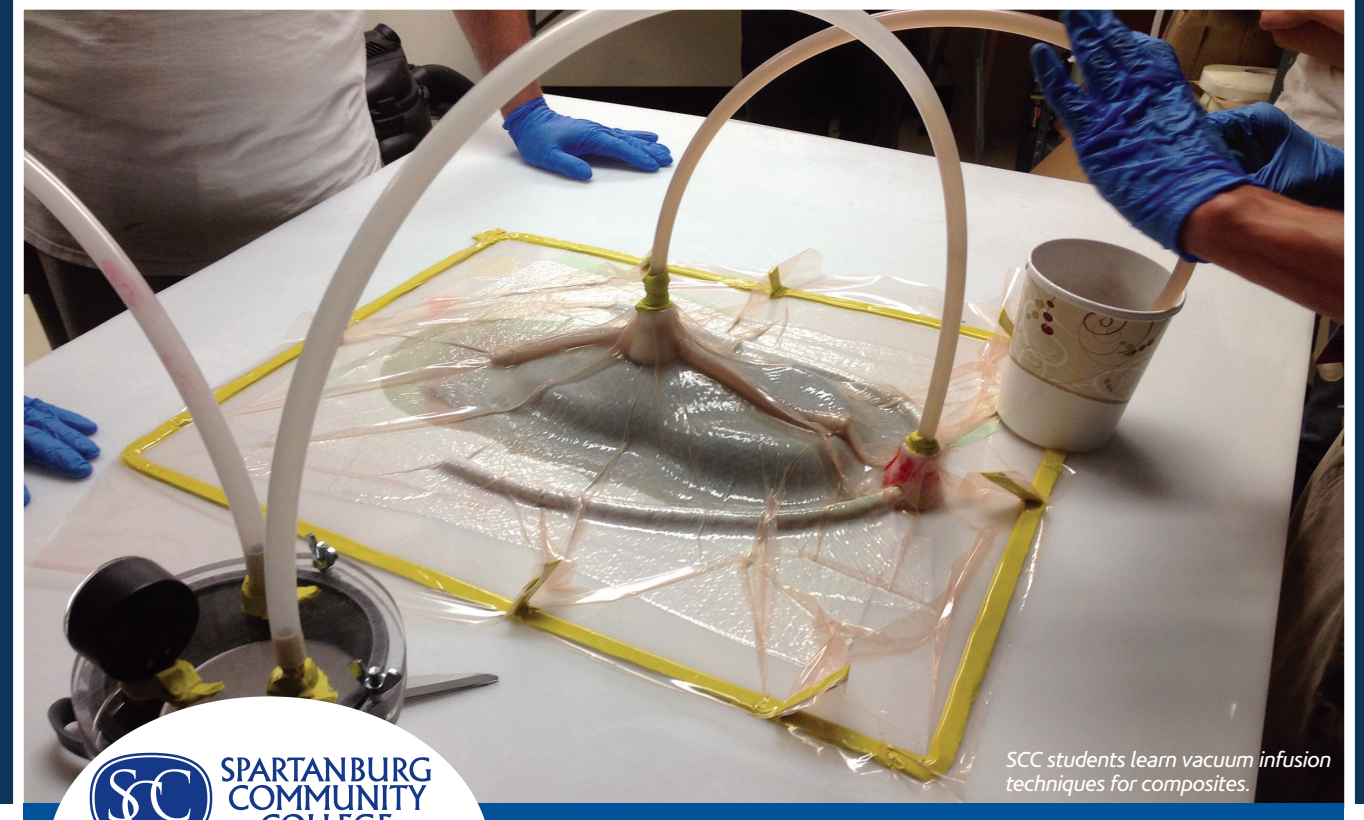
**KK:** I feel confident that if you asked our mentors, they would tell you they are getting just as much benefit, if not more, from the apprenticeship experience as our youth apprentices. The opportunity to give back to a young person by investing in their future success is engaging and rewarding at a personal level and has proven to be a very positive opportunity for members of our mentor team. From a company perspective, we get the benefit of having an engaged and invested young person with fresh ideas contributing to our operations. The win here is for both the company and for the youth apprentice.

**EDGE:** If you had the opportunity to talk to another company that was considering youth apprenticeship, what would you say?

**KK:** I would highly recommend youth apprenticeship. The benefits far exceed expectations, and the rewards are many. We're excited to be a part of the youth apprenticeship program, because we see it as an investment in the future success of our organization. ■

## Filling Workforce Needs

Spartanburg Community College Develops New Programs for Process Control and Composites Technicians



SCC students learn vacuum infusion techniques for composites.



Spartanburg Community College (SCC) is pleased to announce the start of a new certificate in process control technology provided through its Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Industrial Technologies (CAMIT). This program serves as a complement to the high-demand mechatronics program. It offers students a different set of skills opening them up to new opportunities in automated manufacturing not previously addressed by other programs.

Process control technicians have a different skillset related to the control of pressure, flow, temperature, level, pH, humidity, conductivity and chemical reactions. Demand for people with these skills in South Carolina is greater than ever. This need has become even more evident as manufacturers like Toray Carbon Fibers America Inc. move into the area.

SCC is working to meet the need in this critical area with the development of this new certificate program inspired by local experts in chemical processing as well as the many training groups along the gulf coast that serve the petroleum industry. In fact, these groups have written most of the books on the topic. The program will tap new instructors along with the latest technologies based on current best practices in the industry. It is set to

launch in Fall 2017 with a goal of growing into a complete associate degree offering.

Additionally, the inclusion of process technology into SCC's programs of study has generated a great opportunity to begin the first coursework at the college centered on composite materials manufacturing. SCC is presently working on facility renovations that will provide for instruction in both process technology and composite manufacturing with emphasis on carbonization and vacuum infusion processes. They are also coordinating with the American Composite Manufacturers Association (ACMA) to offer student certifications in vacuum infusion and basic composite competencies as part of their Certified Composites Technicians (CCT) program.

ACMA has already provided SCC with training materials and other resources to ensure instructors are up-to-date with the full breadth of local composite manufacturing practices. "ACMA's CCT program addresses our industry's clear need for uniform training and technical skills," said Tom Dobbins, president of ACMA. "By partnering with Spartanburg Community College, we hope our CCT program will give students the tools they need to succeed in vacuum infusion jobs all throughout South Carolina and beyond."