PRESS RELEASE

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Photo: *During the month of February, Blue Ridge Community College celebrates hands-on Career and Technical Education. (Photos by: Rich Keen.) A* ***high resolution image*** *is available for media use on Google Drive.*

Blue Ridge Community College Celebrates Career and Technical Education this February

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. - Blue Ridge Community College is proud to join the national celebration of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month this February, highlighting the vital role CTE programs play in preparing students for meaningful careers and strengthening local communities.

CTE describes educational pathways that focus on equipping students with practical skills and knowledge directly aligned with specific careers and industries, including many programs offered at Blue Ridge. CTE programs strategically integrate academic learning with hands-on training, preparing students for both college and careers in various high-demand fields.

Blue Ridge offers several CTE pathways, covering four primary areas: Business and Service Careers, Nursing and Healthcare, Public Safety, and Advanced Technology.

Brenda Blackburn, dean of business and service careers, emphasized the importance of CTE in shaping the future workforce.

“Career and Technical Education prepares students for a wide range of high-wage, high-quality, high-skill, and high-demand careers,” said Blackburn.

Joe Shook, dean of advanced technologies, described CTE as the foundation of the modern workplace.

“CTE is the nuts and bolts of the workforce,” Shook stated. “It’s about learning a trade to succeed at work. Areas in CTE touch nearly every professional field in one way or another.”

Blue Ridge also offers numerous **CTE programs for high school students** through the **Carer and College Promise program**. These tuition-free courses are available to students in Henderson County Public Schools and Transylvania County Schools, allowing them to explore career interests while gaining a head start on their future – whether they choose to enter the workforce or continue their education in college. Interested students and families can speak with their high school advisors, or contact Blue Ridge directly for assistance at (828) 694-1700.

Blue Ridge Community College is dedicated to empowering students through CTE programs, equipping them with the skills needed to thrive in today’s evolving job market and make a meaningful impact. These programs are essential in supporting local communities, particularly during periods of growth and recovery, by fostering a skilled and resilient workforce committed to service and innovation.

During CTE Month, Blue Ridge will hold an on-campus student event to celebrate the benefits of CTE, as well as share photos and facts about all four CTE areas on official college social media channels. For more information about Blue Ridge Community College's CTE and other pathways, visit **www.blueridge.edu/programs**.

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About Blue Ridge Community College

*Blue Ridge Community College is a two-year, post-secondary institution that elevates the educational experience to prepare students for 21st-century success in the workplace or at four-year colleges and universities. Providing real-life, affordable, and accessible education, the College offers more than 200 degrees, diplomas, and certificates; more than 200 online courses; and fast-tracked job training. To learn more about Blue Ridge Community College, visit **blueridge.edu**.*