



Former Panther's program aims to retrain workers

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CONCORD – Former Carolina Panthers football player Mike Minter has created a program that retrains people and puts them in new jobs. Across North Carolina, people can enter the [APSI program](#) for free and get job training for an industry that is growing globally.

Robert Redmon is enrolled in a course to become a certified fiber optic cable technician, and Minter developed the program that's training Redmon.

"When people go back go back to school and they go back to get training and they go back to better themselves, that's what life is all about," said Minter.

Redmon is enrolled at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College because he lost his job at freightliner in Rowan County.

"The job was lost to foreign competition because they opened a plant in Mexico," Redmon said. Since he lost his job, he qualifies for Workforce Investment Act funds. The WIA funds and economic stimulus funds are paying for Redmon to attend the certification courses.

"I'd done some installation before, I just didn't have the certification. In this economy, you need it," he said.

"Fiber optics is where it's at. So if that's where it's at, then people who normally work with their hands, let's put them into an industry that's thriving," Minter said. "We do the teaching. That's what we do. We actually come in and train these people. When they leave us, they are actually certified. So when they go to a Duke Energy, or when they go to Time Warner Cable, they're certified to be able to get their job."

Minter explained how his program, the government funding and the community colleges came together.

"The connection is that people go to the community college to find out about different industries, so why not partner up with somebody where they already know where to go?" he said.

The APSI program has already certified over 120 fiber optic technicians since it started this summer. The course at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College is already full, and future courses across the state are filling up fast.

"Everyone in there's very grateful," Redmon said. "My whole thing is about giving people hope, giving them a second chance to be able to get into an industry that they can work out."

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