

Rowan-Cabarrus Community College will receive a grant of \$237,672 from Duke Energy to provide upgraded, high-tech equipment for RCCC's machining technology program. The new equipment will allow RCCC to expand the program and offer a two-year associate-degree option.

RCCC has received a \$35,000 grant from the Margaret C. Woodson Foundation Inc. for the 2009-10 academic year to provide scholarships for full-time students with financial need. The college will use the remaining \$10,000 to fund emergency student needs during the upcoming school year.

RCCC will use the Duke Energy Community College Program Grant to provide students advanced training using computer numerical control (CNC) and computer-aided drafting/computer-assisted manufacturing (CAD/CAM) equipment.

The grant also will help RCCC create a CNC simulation lab.

"Using CNC equipment to produce parts and objects designed by CAD and CAM is the future of machining," explained Jerry Hunt, RCCC's machining technology program head. "Without the Duke Energy grant, we would not be able to offer an associate-degree option, in which the second year requires intensive use of CNC and CAD/CAM equipment.

"The grant actually will benefit our first- and second-year students. By having more equipment in our machine shop, students will have less overall wait time to use any particular piece of equipment, giving them more hands-on experience. We certainly appreciate this grant and Duke Energy's generous support," Hunt said.

RCCC offers diploma and certificate programs in machining. The programs are designed to help students develop skills in the theory and safe use of hand tools, power machinery, computerized equipment and sophisticated precision-inspection instruments.

Students learn to interpret blueprints, set up manual and CNC machines, perform basic and advanced machining operations and make decisions to ensure work quality is maintained.

"We believe the North Carolina Community College System is an essential partner in addressing the critical workforce needs in our region," said Randy Welch, customer relations manager of Duke Energy Carolinas.

"We're proud the Community College Grant Program has brought dramatic benefits to employers, better paying jobs for workers, and enhanced economic development across our region."

In 2008, RCCC received a \$250,000 grant from Duke Energy to help equip the school's biotechnology facility planned for the N.C. Research Campus. RCCC will use the Duke grant to buy equipment for an aseptic bioprocessing suite (laboratory and prep rooms) in its future Research Campus building. The aseptic bioprocessing suite will allow RCCC to replicate the sophisticated biomanufacturing environments found in high-tech biotechnology industries that produce products ranging from pharmaceuticals to biomedical devices.

A groundbreaking ceremony for RCCC's building at the Research Campus will be held Friday at 10 a.m., in Kannapolis.

Speaking of the scholarship grant, Paul Woodson, of the Woodson Foundation, said, "The Woodson Foundation is pleased to support an institution critical to the growth and betterment of our community and its students.

It is the foundation's wish to assist in the education of deserving students, and RCCC plays a fundamental role in achieving that goal."

Based in Salisbury, the Margaret C. Woodson Foundation assists non-profit organizations in Rowan and Davie counties as they enhance the local quality of life. The Woodson Foundation has supported RCCC with grant funding since 1992.

"Rowan-Cabarrus Community College thanks the Margaret C. Woodson Foundation for this most generous grant," said Gaye McConnell, RCCC vice president of student services.

"These funds will help some deserving RCCC students who need assistance. During these tough economic times, many of our students will need some help. This grant will make a significant and positive impact in their lives."