



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

3200 East Highway 34
c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3478

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Precision machining program launching at Women's Prison

PIERRE, S.D.- State prison inmates will soon help fill demand in one of South Dakota's top occupations facing workforce shortages. A pilot program for female inmates to earn a precision machining certificate starts this spring semester at the Women's Prison in Pierre.

"We have been searching for a meaningful work training program for female inmates for years, and everything aligned with our agency, the Department of Labor and Regulation, and Lake Area Technical College," said **state Corrections Interim Secretary Doug Clark**.

More than 300 jobs are projected to be open in the precision machining field in the next year in South Dakota.

"To provide the student with quality instruction and the best chance of success, the precision machining training will be taught in-person at the Women's Prison," said **Vice-President Diane Stiles of Lake Area Technical College**. "Lake Area Tech College is committed to changing lives and launching careers. We are making that possible for this population all while meeting the critical workforce demands in South Dakota."

Students will learn manual mills and lathes and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining. Instruction will take place in the Women's Center for Opportunities building adjacent to the Pierre Community Work Center.

The Department of Corrections identified 10 inmates with the aptitude and interest in the program who have a high school diploma or GED® credential, are minimum or low-medium custody, and are within six months of their prison release date.

"This program provides an opportunity for these women to learn a viable skill in a high-demand field while incarcerated, setting them up for success upon release from prison and beyond," said **state Labor and Regulation Secretary Marcia Hultman**.

(more)

DLR will support these women in completing their studies, gaining valuable work experience and successfully integrating into these jobs upon their release.

Successful participants of this one-semester program will have the opportunity to continue their education to earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in Precision Machining.

[SD UpSkill](#), a partnership between the Board of Technical Education and DLR, provided funding for this unique program. State lawmakers approved funding to purchase the Women's Center for Opportunities building during the 2021 legislative session.