



MCC Partners with Banner Health to Create Biomedical Technology Program

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By Adam Terro

Mesa Community College and Banner Health have partnered to create a new biomedical technology program to combat declining labor force, with enrollment available as early as fall 2021. Read the student newspaper article [here](#).

MCC was able to launch the Biomedical Equipment Technology program thanks to its proximity to a prominent Banner Health Center.

"Turns out, we have one of our largest hospitals in the Banner system right across the street from Mesa Community College," said Perry Kirwan, Vice President of Technology Management at Banner Health.

The decline in trained workers in the field, specifically those trained to operate and maintain Banner equipment, has created an opportunity for students to gain quick training and an opportunity for a career.

"All of the schools that we had in Arizona that would help train engineers and technicians, for the application of biomedical technology specifically for the hospital environment, are all gone," said Kirwan.

The problem is much bigger than just Banner. Hospitals across the valley need trained personnel to be able to handle the equipment used on site.

"The problem that we face is bigger than Banner Health, so even if Banner is not where somebody ultimately lands, there are a whole bunch of hospital systems that would love to have these people," said Kirwan.

"There have been about 177 companies who have posted 873 jobs since July 2018, and the biggest poster there has been Banner Health," says Michael Voss, MCC Dean of Instruction over Careers and Technical Programs.

Teams from MCC visited the hospital to see what exactly was needed for a student to be ready to enter the job field as soon as possible. Banner was also consulted about which courses were best for training prospective students.

"All the ELE [electronic] courses are going to be more hands-on," said Voss about the coursework associated with the program. While the program was constructed with the goal of training students for jobs in the hospital environment immediately, many of the courses are part of the electronics curriculum as well.

The program acts as a stepping stone with knowledge that can also be built upon and transferred to other areas.

It will last two semesters and awards a certificate and job opportunities at Banner Medical Center. An internship will be offered after completion of the course, with the hope of moving the student to a full-time position thereafter.

However, Kirwan emphasized the wide range of applications for the certificate.

"While hospitals will benefit from such students, it's not limited to just hospitals. All the medical device manufacturers themselves all have equivalents of what we do in the hospital environment," said Kirwan.



Despite the ability to branch into other areas, Banner and MCC expect students to be ready to move directly into the field and fill a much needed role in hospitals.

“A lot of biomedical technology programs focus on working as a lab tech in a biological or pharmaceutical lab, that’s not this,” said Voss, “This is really about repairing equipment like EKGs and all those hospital equipment pieces that are used in patient care.”

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