



## Grant could net new equipment for Franklin County Career Center and Technology Center

By ROB LUFF Staff writer  
Franklin County Career and Technology Center could be getting additional equipment to offer a mecha-tronics program to its post-high school education programs.

According to Jim Duffey, administrative director of the career center, Harrisburg Area Community College will offer an associate's degree in industrial maintenance and mecha-tronics through the career center if it wins a Career Institute Grant from Pennsylvania Department of Education.

The grant would award between \$100,000 and \$200,000 toward equipment costs for the program. The grant is very competitive and will only be awarded to two of 18 applicants statewide, Duffy said.

The program requires about \$400,000 worth of equipment, so the grant would go toward that goal. If HACC doesn't win the grant, Duffey is prepared to raise the money by other means, but it would slow the process.

HACC will find out at the end of the month whether it won the grant. The college would own

the equipment, but it would be housed at the career center.

The mecha-tronics program would teach students how to fix automated machines with computerized components, which involves some highly technical training.

The machines are generally used in manufacturing plants, such as the Volvo plant in Shippensburg.

If HACC does win the grant, Duffey said he already has a list of potential employers lined up to hire the first program graduates, including Volvo, Tyco, JLG and Target Distribution.

The course is compatible with some of the Career Center's high school programs, so students could complete part of their degree course work while still in high school, Duffey said.

"Since we did this it seemed natural that (course work) like this could lead into a two-year degree," Duffey said.

The Career Center's upcoming expansion will free up the space necessary for the equipment.

The \$15 million project would reorganize rooms and add additional space to provide up to 42,500 square feet in additional floor space, Duffey said.

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