

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *Optics Insider* by AmeriCOM!

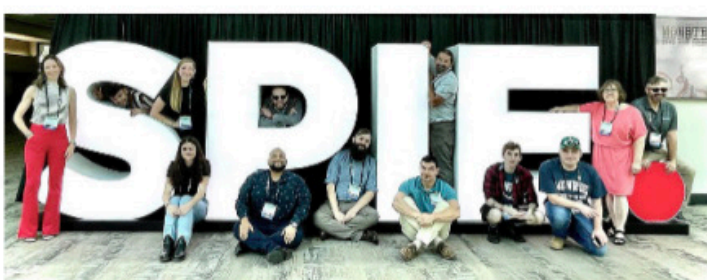
This monthly newsletter shares the latest news and information on our work with academic and industry partners to strengthen our nation's optics manufacturing workforce. Community colleges and manufacturing companies are central to the effort of identifying, recruiting, and training the next generation of precision optics technicians. These issues will share key insights on how we are working with our partners to lead this charge. Read about how your academic institution or company can be part of this national imperative, and enjoy the inaugural edition of the *Optics Insider* by AmeriCOM.



Across the Nation, Students Studying to be Optics Technicians Are in High Demand

The 2022 SPIE Optics + Photonics Conference in San Diego

included more than 2,000 presentations and the latest industry news with 48 conference seminars. For a handful of students in an optics training program, a trip to SPIE O+P offered much more: a chance to showcase their program – and themselves – to optics companies from around the country. Plus, they're still talking about the tacos they enjoyed along the way!



Nine students from the Monroe Community College (MCC) Optical Systems Technology Program in Rochester, NY, attended the conference in August hoping to network with optics professionals and learn more about the industry.

In meeting with industry experts and potential employers about their own career prospects, students also validated how MCC's program has positioned them to be job-ready.

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Community Colleges Attract Talent for High-Demand Industry

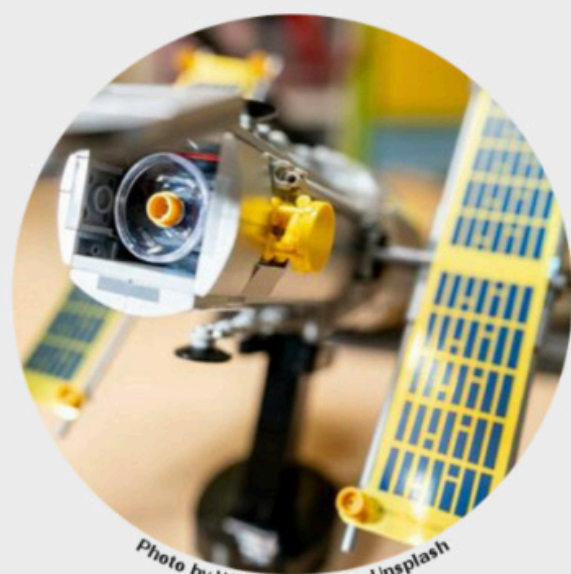


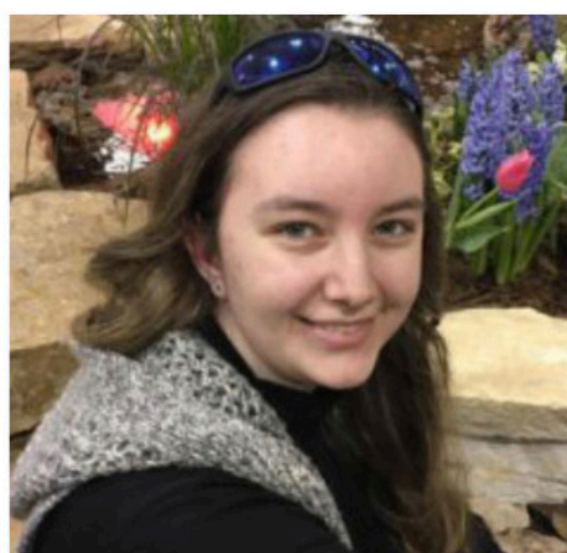
Photo by Winston Chen on Unsplash

Optics are everywhere. From satellites, to medical devices, to supermarket scanners, optics impact our everyday lives in countless ways. Despite the ubiquity, the optics manufacturing industry still struggles to meet the demand for precision optics technicians. Education writer Paul Fain examines how community colleges are addressing the labor shortage and attracting new students to the field.

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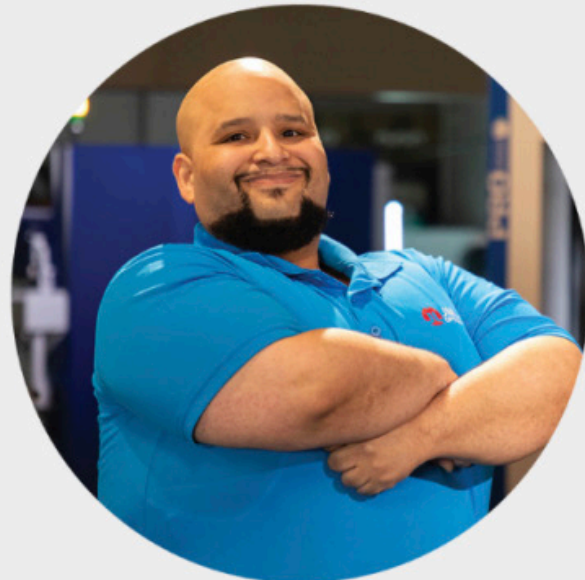
Unconventional Career Path Leads Colorado Nursing Student to Optics

Annaliese Reed worked in a nursing home while pursuing a degree with a four-year university. But she knew the nursing field wasn't the right fit for her. She tried working as a pet groomer, travel agent, jewelry consultant, and florist, but still wanted something more. Enter Front Range Community College with a certificate program that utilized all of those skills in an exciting, fulfilling career.



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Apprenticeships Create "Win-Win" for Optics Manufacturers and Technicians

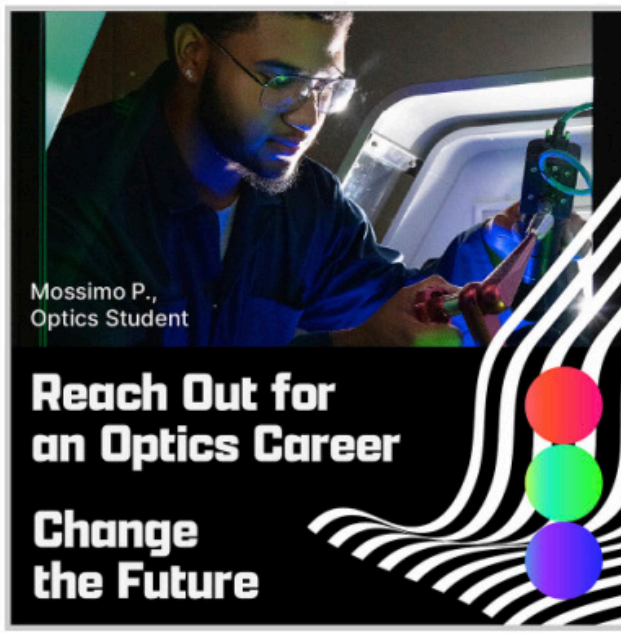


Employers want skilled workers to drive business. Workers want skills to drive career advancement. Countless industries, from home construction to auto repair, create apprenticeships to meet both demands. Could apprenticeships be a recruitment and retention strategy for your optics manufacturing company? We have some tips to help you get started.

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Isn't it ironic? Optics are practically everywhere you look.

Yet the industry's biggest barrier is its low visibility as a career path. Find out how AmeriCOM's digital outreach campaign, The Future is Optics, can help connect prospective students with your community college optics program. Visit TheFutureIsOptics.com for more.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Arizona Photonics Days
Jan 25 - 27, 2023

SPIE Photonics West
Jan 28 - Feb 2, 2023

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