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Valencia College's Optics Program Making Significant Early Impact



The new Optics, Photonics, and Fiber Optics training program has been successful for both students and employers.

How do you measure the success of a new Optics Technician training program? You could look at class enrollment, graduation rates, and job placement. These are important data points for Carolyn McMorran, Assistant Vice President of Professional and Continuing Education at Valencia College where she helped launch the **Precision Optics, Photonics, and Fiber Optics Technician** program. But McMorran says there is a tangible human element that is perhaps more important than traditional metrics. "For our students, it's been life-changing," she said.

[Read More](#)

Mission Possible: Soldiers Explore Optics Careers



AmeriCOM's Donna Smith, Science Educator Liaison, and Magda Hernandez Otero, Community Liaison, visited Fort Drum in Upstate New York to attend the Career Fair through its **Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** for service members planning to transition from military service into new careers. As Donna and Magda explained, the optics industry is a natural fit for many veterans, as the equipment they have been trained to use contains many optical components. There is a growing need for optics technicians, and veterans can benefit by using the GI Bill to pay for training. Our team showed veterans viable and fulfilling career paths in optics, and shared information about optics training programs in our ecosystems around the country.

"Optical sensors have been very important to the military for everything from navigation, to threat warning, to finding potential targets at longer ranges."

Check out Photonics Media's **All Things Photonics** podcast as CEO Dave Shelton discusses AmeriCOM's ongoing efforts to strengthen the U.S. optics manufacturing industry to support national defense and security.



DPOC Membership Gaining Momentum



AmeriCOM is pleased to announce the inaugural members of the Defense Precision Optics Consortium (DPOC).

4D Technology, deploying patented technology and innovative metrology products for measuring surface quality and defects on precision surfaces

AccuCoat Inc., supplying thin-film coatings on plastic, metal, glass, and crystal components for global customers

Advanced Thin Films, providing spectrally complex optical components for high power laser systems

Apre, manufacturing surface and wavefront interferometers to advance the optics industry

The Institute of Optics, awarding more than half of all optics degrees in the U.S., and recognized as the nation's first educational program devoted to optics

LaCroix Precision Optics, celebrating more than 70 years of service, manufacturing custom optical components and assemblies

Lattice Materials, providing custom-grown and machined silicon and germanium-based material with full traceability

LightPath Technologies, offering optics and photonics solutions to blue-chip customers across industrial, defense, telecommunications, and medical industries

Meadowlark Optics, designing, developing, and manufacturing an extensive range of high-quality polarization systems and components

NACL Industrial, creating optical coating solutions for a variety of industries including military, medical, automotive, consumer device, augmented reality, machine learning, and LIDAR/UAV systems

Optimax, leveraging advanced optics manufacturing to empower programs that benefit humanity and safeguard freedom

OptiPro Systems, providing precision machine tools and Mastercam software for New York State manufacturing companies for more than 40 years

OSE Optics, an industry leader in creating custom optical solutions

Ruda Optical, provisioning solutions in optical alignment, tight tolerancing, and custom high-precision designs

Thorlabs, designing and manufacturing products in fiber optics, lasers, optical instrumentation, optomechanics, photonics, and vibration isolation

Transformative Optics Corporation, blending advanced science with practical tools to revolutionize optics and imaging

Universal Photonics, a world-leader in critical surface preparation materials, dedicated to the advancement of surfacing and polishing technology in all phases of fabrication

Vertex Optics, manufacturing precision optics and ceramic components for the aerospace, medical, defense, semiconductor, energy, and automotive industries

AmeriCOM will spotlight DPOC-member organizations in upcoming issues of *Optics Insider*. To learn more about how the Consortium can benefit your organization, and for more information on how to join, visit our **DPOC website**.

AmeriCOM Meets with Defense Industry Partners

AmeriCOM joined the exhibitors at the recent Defense Military Conference held in December at the Convention Center in Austin, Texas. The technical talks and panel sessions provided valuable information for organizations like AmeriCOM that support various initiatives of the Department of Defense, including the Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) program, the National Imperative on Industrial Skills (NIIS) development, and overall manufacturing technology advancements.



Dave Shelton, AmeriCOM President & CEO, at the Defense Manufacturing Conference.

AmeriCOM was able to update its military advisors on the progress being made with onboarding Optics Technician training programs across the country, our Defense Precision Optics Consortium (DPOC), and COM-Lab, our 10,000 sq. ft. research lab facility.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Arizona Photonics Days
Tuscon, AZ
Jan. 22-24, 2025

SPIE Photonics West
San Francisco, CA
Jan. 25-30, 2025

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Workforce Development Institute
Coronado, CA
Jan. 28-31, 2025

SPIE Defense and Commercial Sensing
Orlando, FL
April 13-17, 2025

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