

Jordan: Industry vets can leave legacy as teachers of skilled trades

BAYTOWN, TX — As increasing numbers of students enroll in technical programs that can lead to well-paying careers in the booming petrochemical industry, Lee College and other Texas Gulf Coast institutions are working overtime to recruit and hire enough qualified instructors to meet the demand.

Debi Jordan, executive director for Workforce and Community Development, wrote about the challenge to find instructors this month in a blog featured on the website for Construction Citizen, a coalition of owners, contractors and craftspeople who want to advance the construction industry.

More than 50,000 new petrochemical workers will be needed across the Texas Gulf Coast over the next decade. Retirees and others who have worked in the petrochemical industry are among the best candidates to train students in pipefitting, millwrighting, instrumentation, electrical, welding, computer maintenance and many other fields — and often, a four-year degree is not required to leave a legacy for the next generation by becoming a teacher of the skilled trades.

“The kinds of things required include industry work experience, a passion for the subject matter, and a willingness to learn new skills through targeted faculty training that we provide for new instructors,” Jordan wrote in her blog. “Other types of instruction require certain industry certifications, educational certificates and degrees and participation in faculty training.”

Full-time and part-time teaching opportunities that include flexible schedules are available now at Lee College and community colleges across the region.