



## WELDING ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MONDAY NOV. 2 2020 VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

### **I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:40 P.M.**

### **II. ATTENDEES**

Natasha Allen, Rightline Equipment

Mike Anthony, Boilermakers Local 502

Rob Cameron, Central Welding Supply

Lance Ganieany, Kelso High School, Career and Technical Education

Alyssa Joyner, Workforce Southwest Washington

Victoria Pruitt, WorkSource

Cory Torppa, Kalama High School, Career and Technical Education

Bill Ofstun, Longview School District, Career and Technical Education

Randy Byrum, LCC

David Pittsley, LCC

Lynell Amundson, LCC

### **III. AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **a) Updates from LCC**

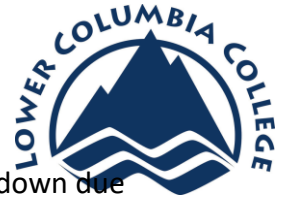
David Pittsley shared that LCC has remained open during the pandemic but has had to make alterations to comply with COVID-19 requirements. Classes have been limited to 10 students, down from the typical class size of 30 to 35. It was necessary to add additional sections of welding in order to serve all students. Classes have been running from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. with 30 minute break between each section. All LCC faculty have been working additional hours to cover additional classes.

David also shared that the biggest hurdle is the social distancing requirement of six feet. Instructors can't go into a student's weld booth to observe their weld and help with the mechanics. To mitigate this issue LCC brought in additional weld machines that allowed students to safely gather around the table as the instructor demonstrates a weld.

Enrollment is down just a bit but not enough to be significant. There are typically 40 to 50 students enrolled Fall Quarter and this year there are 41 students.

Another measure LCC is taking due to pandemic is extensively cleaning the shop. Students are responsible for cleaning their area with disinfectant and hand washing is required at both exit and entry. The shop has one-way traffic with entry and exit at opposite ends of the lab.

The wearing of masks was initially a challenge but students have adjusted and it is now a norm.



Many welding departments at community colleges throughout the state shut down due to the pandemic. LCC was one of the first to reopen and continue operating along with Grays Harbor Community College.

Randy Byrum shared that LCC has reinstated WABO testing again this quarter and has been serving industry partners. The number of industry partners allowed to test at any one time is limited and LCC has been scheduling accordingly in order to serve industry. Randy also informed the group that blueprint reading will be offered face-to-face winter 2021. LCC's classroom is large enough for students to practice social distancing and remain six feet apart.

All of these safety measures due to the pandemic will continue into 2021 most likely through the end of the academic year.

## **b) K-12 partner updates**

Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers shared information about how their programs are running during the current pandemic.

Lance Ganieany shared that Kelso classes are all virtual to date. He has used videos to support coursework including recordings of equipment with demonstrations of how they function. He's been working on new projects for students. Senior students were allowed back to school for the first time beginning early November.

Cory Torppa of Kalama High School shared that the school went to seven periods this year. He teaches five prep courses. Welding is the biggest challenge. He's been able to send projects home with students in construction classes and students report learning a lot with this option. He's been teaching welding for four years and thanked LCC welding instructors immensely for their help and support, for the annual welding competition, and other activities that LCC has hosted to give students exposure to the trades. Students have started back to school early November with limited numbers in the classroom. Second group is scheduled to start mid-November. Lack of equipment for each student is a challenge.

David shared that LCC doesn't loan out any equipment due to COVID-19 and advised schools to implement a documented cleaning plan and offered to help schools find additional equipment.

Bill Ofstun, Longview School District, shared that he is new in the CTE director role. Longview schools have been operating remotely since beginning of the year with some students that are in the at-risk population and needing extra help being allowed to come in on certain days. They hope to have students back to campus early November if COVID-19 cases remain low. He shared that there is a lot of concern about current student failure rates and the need to address the current situation and getting students back in school. He thanked LCC for suggestions regarding cleaning equipment and documenting procedures for keeping students safe during times of the pandemic.



### **c) Industry partner updates**

Business and industry partners shared information regarding their current status and how they are working during the current environment.

Mike Anthony said Boilermakers Local 502 are experiencing the same issues others mentioned. He currently has four apprentices in class and he makes up the fifth person which is the number of people Pierce County restricts groups to while in training. They have the same issue with being able to teach apprentices welds that David mentioned regarding when students are in the booth practicing welds. The apprentice steps out, Mike steps in to have a look, try to discover what they did or didn't do. No option for watching over the shoulder or advising apprentices on the mechanics of a weld.

Mike also mentioned that just bringing apprentices on board during this pandemic is a challenge. Many industry projects have been put on hold and the work just isn't out there. Industry is working on projects that have to and others are set aside until things open up.

They have been able to provide testing again with industry with strict COVID-19 policies in place including sanitizing stations, hand washing, requiring masks a checklist to confirm no one is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

They do hope to start up classes again in January by breaking groups into smaller numbers, some in the classroom with others in the shop.

Kim Rongey, Topper Floats, was unable to attend but did share via e-mail that they have implemented a strict two hour cleaning regimen and that they are definitely seeing problems with the supply chain.

Alyssa Joyner shared that the need for welders remains high but many manufacturers are looking for individuals with entry level skills – communication, measuring, hand tools, safety. Vigor continues to have a great need for welders with aluminum welding skills. LCC has had several conversations with Vigor but does not spend much time on aluminum welding. With the onset of the pandemic faculty haven't implemented anything new and are just working through the program to ensure students gain skills needed across industry.

Randy shared that LCC did buy additional equipment for aluminum welding and has received generous donations from Topper Industries but right now most students are entry level and not prepared to pursue additional skills.

Lance shared that S&R Sheet Metal donated aluminum for the Kelso High School program and they have plans to address these skills in the next trimester with TIG welding.

Rob Cameron calls on customers from Kelso to Astoria to Lebanon and Medford Oregon. It's busy and most weld shops would hire a good welder. Some of the smaller shops are a bit slow but the majority aren't taking on any new projects because they are operating at capacity.



His company wears masks and all customers are required to wear a mask. They follow all of the governor's recommendations.

Natasha Allen shared that Rightline is hiring and encouraged LCC to send graduates her way.

#### **IV. COMMUNITY EVENTS UPDATE**

- a. Welding competition status – on hold
- b. Try-A-Trade – on hold
- c. Pizza, Pop and Power Tools – on hold

#### **V. DISCUSSION**

Randy mentioned that it was a pleasure to have both the Weld Competition and Skills USA on campus during the 2019-2020 academic year. Mike Anthony attended his first Skills USA competition in Pierce County and said the students were very impressive. He looks forward to LCC being able to bring these events back to campus.

David expressed gratitude to those attending and thanked them for their continuing support.

Cory Torppa asked about resource for teaching blueprint reading. Randy teaches a class and has a textbook he uses. Lance mentioned a web site weld.com that he is reviewing. David suggested having students design a project with the winning project designed by students as a group for a community project. ToolingU might have a blueprint reading module that could be used.

Reading a tape measure, basic math skills, continue to be problem both at the education institutions and within industry.

#### **VI. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.**