



Alma Vazquez, of Springfield, trains with another student in the phlebotomy class at STCC.



Stacey Richters, seated in center, teaches a Phlebotomy for Healthcare Workers class at STCC.

SPRINGFIELD

STCC phlebotomy course can boost health workers' careers

Cassandra Smith hadn't even finished her course work in Phlebotomy for Healthcare Workers at Springfield Technical Community College when she was offered a job at a national health company.

"I'm super excited about it," said Smith, of Springfield, who is starting her job this month. "I would not qualify for it if I did not take the class."

This summer, the college's Workforce Development Center will once again offer the class to people working in the healthcare field who are looking to expand their skills. The 60-hour class will run July

9 through July 26 on weekdays between 5 and 9 p.m.

The noncredit course prepares students to take the exam to become a certified phlebotomist in Massachusetts. The class is designed to teach workers in certified healthcare positions to draw blood for diagnostic procedures.

Instructor Stacey Richters says the intensive course is a fast program that allows workers to get the training they need to bring their career to the next level.

"It's a commitment for three weeks. A lot of the students are

working as (certified nursing assistants)," she says. "This training will open the door to higher pay."

One of the students, Danielle Jaber, of West Springfield, works as a CNA, but said she would like more stability, regular hours and a better wage.

"I want to be a certified phlebotomist," she says, noting the training will create more opportunities. "You can work in emergency rooms, in clinics, doctor's offices, blood mobiles."

During a recent class, the students practiced drawing each other's blood under Richters' supervision. They appeared to enjoy the hands-on experience and close-knit nature of the phlebotomy class.

Smith, one of seven students to be offered a job after taking the course, is a licensed CNA home health aide.

"I'm in the healthcare field. I'm advancing it as I go," she says. "I'm tacking on different certifications." And, she adds, "STCC always gives you an opportunity to further your education, and it continues to elevate me. I love the class. The teacher is outstanding. She came in with an open heart and open arms. We learned



Student Cassandra Smith, of Springfield.

the phlebotomy is more than just drawing blood. We learned about customer interaction, interacting with patients who are in a hospital setting. The class is very, very helpful."

Anyone interested in taking the class in July should have a current healthcare certification in at least one, but not limited to healthcare roles including: certified nursing assistant; emergency medical technician; patient care technician; certified medical assistant; licensed practical nurse; certified elec-

trocardiogram technician; and certified dental assistant.

The fee for the class includes National Healthcare Association Exam.

To enroll online and learn more about the course, visit stcc.edu/wdc/healthcare and click on the "Phlebotomy Certification for Healthcare Workers" link.

For more information, please contact the Workforce Development Center at 413-755-4225 or send email to wdc@stcc.edu.



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STUDENT CASSANDRA SMITH