



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Sandy Mitchell, Baker Technical Institute, sandy.mitchell@bakersd.org, 541-524-2651

ShanRae Hawkins, StingRay Communications, shanrae@hellosingray.com, 541-390-6411

New Technical College Set to Open in Prineville

Baker Technical Institute will provide hands-on education for jobs to strengthen workforce

PRINEVILLE, Ore., March 22, 2021 – Today, Baker Technical Institute (BTI) announced it is expanding from its main campus in Baker City to provide career and technical training in Prineville. Beginning next month, BTI will begin offering Central Oregon residents access to high-quality career and technical training while helping businesses grow by increasing the population of skilled workers employed in trades ranging from construction and high tech jobs. The announcement follows BTI's recent approval and licensure from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to begin offering career and technical training in Prineville.

"Prineville City Manager Steve Forrester, the Shelk Foundation and other local partners had the vision to bring a technical school to the area and connected us with regional employers who shared the need to develop a pool of highly-skilled, licensed workforce," said Doug Dalton BTI President.

Founded in 2014, BTI focuses on providing a low-cost, efficient, and rapid path to gaining valuable career skills in high-demand industries.

According to Dalton, creating partnerships with regional employers and industry experts to design, build and teach BTI's curriculum of career pathway programs is key.

Kelsey Lucas, Prineville Area Director for Economic Development for Central Oregon, noted, "This is an incredible opportunity for Prineville and the region to train local talent, attract new talent for these nationally-recognized courses, and tailor specialized training for our existing industries and companies. The hands-on approach implemented by Baker Technical Institute complements the emphasis that the Crook County School District has placed on interactive and practical learning that can be applied across various industries through their Career and Technical Education (CTE) program."



Twenty years ago, half of all CTE programs were cut, but now that the economy has strengthened, there is a high demand for hands-on workers with competitive skills going unfilled. With boomers exiting the workforce, there's a surging demand for people with specialized technical skills, perfect for Millennials' hands-on maker mentality. Jobs like welding, nursing, construction, manufacturing, mechanics, and agriculture can offer a high-wage career from day one. CTE programs, like Baker Technical Institute, prepare students for these jobs in a fraction of the time it takes to get a university degree, along with providing much more specialized training than the typical university degree.

Dalton said one of the biggest challenges facing employers is the shortage of qualified truck drivers. According to the American Trucking Association, when accounting for both industry growth and replacing drivers leaving their jobs, either from retirement or other reasons, the industry will need nearly 1.1 million new drivers over the coming decade or just under 110,000 per year on average.

BTI has worked with an advisory board of industry leaders throughout Oregon and the Professional Truck Driving Institute to understand better the demand for drivers and what skills employers need now and in the future. The result is an innovative truck driving school built and designed by the industry's top minds to create the highest quality school anywhere.

In April, BTI will offer a truck driving and logistics course to help the local industry address a shortage of drivers. The four-week hands-on training will provide the necessary training for individuals to get their commercial driver's license (CDL).

"In today's transportation industry, there is a continuous shortage of truck drivers. I'm excited about BTI and its approach to a quality hands-on program that will not be just another CDL school. It is a real-life solution for a real-life problem," says Scott Porfily, President of Western Heavy Haul and a BTI advisory board member.

"Our partnership with BTI gives people opportunities they've never had before," said Steve Forrester, Prineville City Manager. "Being able to build a workforce and support the companies that have been operating not only in Prineville but the entire region is critical to having a thriving economy."

To learn more about BTI programs, [visit www.bakerti.org](http://www.bakerti.org)



About Baker Technical Institute

Baker Technical Institute (BTI) is a leading provider of Career Technical Education programs focused on developing the next generation of skilled workers, technology innovators, entrepreneurs, and community leaders in rural communities. With campuses in Baker City and Prineville, Oregon, BTI offers cutting-edge education and training, leading to certification in high-wage, high-demand careers, such as agricultural sciences, building trades, natural resources/environmental sciences, engineering, health services, welding, heavy equipment operation, truck driving, and manufacturing. For more information, go to bakerti.org

About the City of Prineville

Located east of the Cascade mountains in Oregon's high desert, the City of Prineville is a resurgent rural community that has preserved its small-town, ranching roots and Western lifestyle while embracing smart growth in a business-friendly environment. With a population nearing 10,000 residents, the county seat of Crook County attracts a diversity of business and lifestyle interests, including tech giants Facebook and Apple, recreational enthusiasts, and a thriving agricultural industry. Incorporated in 1880, City of Prineville operates the oldest continuously running municipal short line railway in the U.S., as well as a public golf course, and airport. Prineville boasts numerous recreational assets, including the Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River, and remains a popular destination for anglers and hunters. For more information on City services and programs, visit cityofprineville.com.

###