

Werts Welding donation enhances truck driver training at Lewis & Clark

September 13 2017 4:03 PM



GODFREY – Werts Welding and Tank Service, Inc., of Wood River, is enhancing Lewis and Clark Community College’s Truck Driver Training program through the recent donation of a tank trailer.

“The trailer extends the capabilities of our current program to provide unique training and experience in a trucking segment that requires specialized skills in hauling liquid materials,” said Harry Nelson, L&C Truck Driver Training program coordinator.

The 1989 Heil 9,200-gallon tank trailer was once a Casey's General Store tank truck with four compartments to transport gasoline and diesel, said Dwight Werts, president and CEO of Werts Welding and a member of the L&C Board of Trustees. It is valued at \$18,000.

"Werts Welding and Tank Service is in constant communication with the trucking industry, which is facing a critical shortage of qualified professional drivers," Werts said. "Werts Welding and Tank Services has always been a big supporter of this program. This donation is our way of assuring Lewis and Clark has the equipment needed to help the entire industry in our region."

L&C's Truck Driver Training program prepares individuals with little or no commercial driving experience for a career in tractor-trailer driving.

"The program has a perfect track record of students earning passing scores on their Commercial Driver's License tests and a great reputation among trucking employers," said Dr. Linda Chapman, Vice President of Academic Affairs. "This impressive tank trailer contribution will contribute to the students' learning and their confidence as it gets incorporated into the instructional program."

Students receive classroom instruction about Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) requirements to enable them to obtain their CDL learner's permit. Additional classroom instruction, in conjunction with behind-the-wheel driving experience, provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to take the Illinois Secretary of State-administered CDL Class A road test.

Graduates who successfully pass this test receive their CDL and are qualified to obtain employment in the transportation industry as an entry-level truck driver.

"The donation of the tank trailer will better prepare our students for careers in this competitive field," said L&C Dean of Career Programs Sue Czerwinski. "We appreciate Werts Welding and their contribution tremendously."

Truck drivers are in high demand. There is a shortage of around 35,000-40,000 drivers currently, according to the American Trucking Association. With the average age of truck drivers between 49-52, that problem may get worse in coming years, according to the National Transportation Institute.

"If anyone has any interest in developing a career as a professional truck driver, Lewis and Clark's program sets a new standard with simulators and a full program of study focused on safety, technology and state-of-the-art equipment," said L&C President Dale Chapman.

To learn more about L&C's Truck Driver Training program, visit www.lc.edu/program/truckdrivertraining.

Werts Welding is an internationally known tank trailer parts and service company specializing in petroleum, pneumatic, chemical and vacuum tank trailers, as well as a complete line of tank trailer parts and equipment. The family owned corporation has more than 80 employees and its headquarters is located in Wood River, Illinois and has been in business for 60 years. To learn more, visit www.wertswelding.com.