

Women Invited to Enter the World of Welding at L&C

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Photo caption: Gailyn Cornell, instructor, works with a student in the welding booth at Lewis and Clark Community College. Cornell is teaching the Corporate and Community Learning Welding for Women class in March 2014. Photo by S. Paige Allen, L&C photographer

GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College's Corporate and Community Learning division is offering females the chance to explore the world of welding this March.

“This is a great opportunity for any woman who wants to try something that she may have never had the chance or ever thought about,” said Welding instructor Gailyn Cornell of Bunker Hill. “There is a lot of camaraderie between the women in the class. It's a supportive, fun atmosphere, and I would encourage any woman to join us, even if it's just to be able to tell someone that they are learning to weld and hear the reaction, which is usually, ‘You're doing what?’”

This class is designed to provide the basic training needed to weld safely and effectively in a non-professional setting.

Participants will be introduced to the most common forms of arc welding and welding terminology with the primary focus on wire-feed welding. Safety glasses are provided; other safety equipment will need to be purchased and a list will be provided during the first session.

“From basic repairs to artistic creations, the possibilities with welding are endless,” Cornell said. “Women may want to take this class to see if a career in welding is an option without making a big commitment. There have also been women who take the basic class for non-professional welders and chose to register for full-time welding classes. Either way, the students who take this class will have a greater knowledge of the equipment and products for home or hobby use than many who weld professionally. It's also empowering to learn a new skill, particularly one that is considered male dominated.”

Cornell began working at the Lincoln Electric Company in 1979 and spent several years in technical sales, before earning the position of project manager and National Training Coordinator for retail sales. She was also branch service director and director of corporate outreach for a regional welding distributor.

“The job situation for welders is very good,” Cornell said. “Baby Boomers are retiring and creating more job opportunities. Welding is a skill that doesn't rely on strength. It's a great opportunity for women because a technical skill levels the playing field when it comes to compensation.”

Welding for Women costs \$79 and will meet four Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon March 8 – 29 at the college's Godfrey campus. The registration deadline is February 28.

For information on registering for any CCL offerings, call CCL Division Assistant Becky Moore at (618) 468-5701. For a complete listing of Corporate and Community Learning offerings visit www.lc.edu/ccl.

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