



Skills for Success

65,000+
ENROLLED

TrainForAlabama.com

WOOD PRODUCTS PILOT HIGHLIGHT

Skills for Success Pilots Wood Products Operator Course with SmartLam Dothan

The **Skills for Success Wood Products Machine Operator** course had its first pilot March 25–26 in partnership with **SmartLam Dothan and Wallace Community College**. This pilot represents a targeted effort to strengthen Alabama’s wood products and advanced manufacturing workforce through hands-on, industry-driven training. The course is designed in collaboration with industry partners and equips participants with the core competencies required to operate, maintain, and support production in modern wood processing environments.



Participants gained practical experience in the following key areas:

- Safety & Environmental Awareness
- Equipment Operation & Monitoring
- Machine Setup & Troubleshooting
- Material Handling & Process Flow
- Quality Control & Product Standards
- Facility Operations & Maintenance
- Communication & Teamwork
- Foundational Technical Skills



This pilot reflects the continued commitment of **Skills for Success** to deliver high-impact, employer-aligned training that prepares individuals to contribute immediately in high-demand industries. Wood products and manufacturing employers are encouraged to engage with this growing talent pipeline.

Visit TrainForAlabama.com to hire trained program completers, upskill your current workforce, or partner in shaping future training programs.



LINDA NOLEN HIGHLIGHT

Expanding Opportunity at the Linda Nolen Learning Center

The ACCS Innovation Center team recently connected with students at the **Linda Nolen Learning Center**, a Shelby County school focused on individualized support for students with special needs.

Through hands-on experiences powered by **Skills for Success** career exploration simulators, students explored CDL and heavy equipment environments in a direct, applied way. The simulations created a tangible connection to real-world settings and introduced how this work takes shape across industries.

Students operated equipment, worked through jobsite scenarios, and engaged with the pace and structure of these environments. The experience provided meaningful exposure and created confidence through participation and interaction.

This reflects the purpose of **Skills for Success**. It expands access by meeting people where they are, creates clear connections between learning and the workforce, and provides experiences that support awareness, confidence, and informed next steps. Workforce development is not just about filling jobs. It is about creating access to opportunity and building pathways forward.



BIOTECH PILOT HIGHLIGHT

Building Alabama's Biotech Workforce Pipeline

Skills for Success Biotech Pilot #2

The second pilot of the **Skills for Success Biotechnician course** concluded March 11, marking another step forward in developing Alabama's emerging biotech workforce. Hosted with support from **Calhoun Community College**, the hands-on training was led by **Sarah Mason** and **Dr. Kristina Burns**, who guided students through both foundational knowledge and real-world laboratory applications.



Throughout the course, participants developed critical competencies aligned with industry expectations, including:

- Understanding regulatory frameworks (EPA, FDA, USDA).
- Applying GLP and GMP standards.
- Performing laboratory techniques such as pipetting, solution preparation and aseptic procedures.
- Operating essential lab equipment and maintaining cleanroom standards.
- Practicing proper documentation, safety protocols and data analysis.

This second pilot reinforced a key principle of the **Skills for Success** model: industry-informed training delivered through hands-on experience produces job-ready talent. Students not only learned the “why” behind biotech processes, but also demonstrated the ability to execute the “how” in a controlled lab environment.

Most importantly, the students who completed the course now represent a growing pipeline of entry-level biotech talent equipped with practical skills, safety awareness and professional readiness — exactly what employers are seeking.

The Biotechnician course is currently under development, with a third pilot program scheduled to take place at **Calhoun Community College** this May. Employers who are looking to hire trained biotech talent, upskill their current workforce or engage in shaping future training can take advantage of **Skills for Success** programs.

Connect with us. Visit TrainForAlabama.com to get involved in hiring program completers or to explore customized training opportunities for your team.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Grant Gunn

We recently had the opportunity to connect with Grant Gunn, Registrar Coordinator for the ACCS Innovation Center, who explained that he is responsible for ensuring a seamless registration process for program applicants.

How does your work help support students, colleges, or business and industry across the state?

*My duties are to provide registration support to the colleges by processing **Skills for Success** registrations. We assist with troubleshooting issues that the college workforce staff, high school staff, or students may have, and ensure accurate data is processed.*

What's your favorite place in Alabama to unwind?

My favorite places to unwind include the beaches of Gulf Shores and the banks of the Tennessee River located in my hometown, The Shoals.

Training Our State for the Better

Skills for Success Course Catalog

The ACCS Innovation Center, a division of the Alabama Community College System, partners with community colleges, businesses, and industry to develop and deliver **Skills for Success** courses. These fast and flexible short-term training programs are industry-recognized and non-credit, with no-cost opportunities available. Courses equip learners with in-demand skills through a hybrid model that blends online theory with hands-on lab training.

Available Courses

Skills for Success courses are available year-round across Alabama's community colleges. Course availability may vary by location.

- Ambulance Operator/EVOC
- Asphalt Roller Operator
- Barista
- Bulldozer Operator
- Carpentry Helper
- CDL A
- CDL A Theory Only
- CDL B
- CDL B + Passenger
- CDL B + Passenger Theory Only
- CDL B Passenger School Bus
- CDL B Theory Only
- CDL Behind the Wheel Only
- Community Health Worker
- Concrete Mixer Truck Driver
- Customer Service
- Electrical Helper
- Excavator Operator
- Fiber Optics Tech and Installer
- Flooring Installation Technician
- Food & Beverage
- Forklift Operator
- Hazmat Endorsement
- Hotel Operations
- Land Survey Technician
- Machine Operator
- Mental Health Worker
- Motor Grader Operator
- Nursery Landscape Worker
- Nursing Support Technician (NST)
- Passenger + School Bus
- Passenger Endorsement
- Passenger Theory Only
- Paver Operator
- Plumbing Assistant
- Propane Technician
- Retail Meat Cutter
- School Bus Endorsement
- School Bus Theory Only
- Screed Operator
- Skid Steer Operator
- Veterinary Assistant

Courses Available in Spanish:

- Skid Steer Operator
- Bulldozer Operator
- Asphalt Roller Operator
- Fiber Optics Technician and Installer
- Food & Beverage
- Hotel Operations
- Retail Meat Cutter

Courses In Development

Building with Alabama's workforce in mind, these courses are coming soon to an Alabama community college near you.

- Asphalt Lab Technician
- Backhoe Operator
- Biotechnician
- Concrete Form Carpenter
- Dementia Care
- Drone Operator
- Heavy Equipment Mechanic Assistant
- Interior Fiber Optics Technician and Installer
- Manufactured Home Installer Helper
- Mastering the Customer Experience
- Operator Tech Automotive
- Roof Framing
- Shuttle Buggy Operator
- Traffic Control and Flagger
- Wastewater Treatment Operator
- Water Treatment Operator Grade 2
- Wood Products Machine Operator

Take the Next Step!

Quick steps to flexible training start here.

Visit TrainForAlabama.com today!



2026 Children's of Alabama Indy Grand Prix Recap

The ACCS Innovation Center team was on-site at **Barber Motorsports Park** for the **2026 Children's of Alabama Indy Grand Prix** on March 28-29, bringing learning to life through the **Skills for Success** career exploration simulators. Race attendees from across Alabama were offered the opportunity to step into a different kind of driver's seat—one focused on hands-on career exploration, interactive learning, and discovering future pathways.

Families, students, and community members eagerly explored the simulators, gaining a firsthand look at how experiential learning can open doors and spark new interests. From interactive demonstrations to meaningful conversations, the connections made reinforce the ACCS Innovation Center's commitment to building a skilled workforce in Alabama through fast and flexible, industry-recognized training that prepares participants for successful careers.



INNOVATION Unplugged



Episode 90

COACHING THAT COMMANDS: BUILDING RELATIONAL EQUITY BEFORE CONFLICT HITS

Guest: Wes Chenault, Leadership Coach and Coaching Director, Durbin Leadership

Episode 91

RIGHT FORMATION, RIGHT PLAY: ALIGNING TEAMS FOR DECISIVE EXECUTION

Guest: Wes Chenault, Leadership Coach and Coaching Director, Durbin Leadership

Episode 92

ALIGNED TO WIN: HOW STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS DRIVE GROWTH

Guest: Barry May, Chief Workforce Development Officer, ACCS

Episode 93

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN: A SMARTER MODEL FOR ALABAMA'S WORKFORCE FUTURE

Guest: Audrey Webb, Regional Workforce Director/Director of Work-Based Learning Programs, ACCS

Episode 94

BUILD THE BACKBONE. EMPOWER THE FRONTLINE: INSIDE THE STRATEGY THAT CONNECTS HIGH SCHOOLS, ADULT ED, AND INDUSTRY

Guest: Dr. Courtney Taylor, Executive Director of Mississippi's Office of Workforce Development, AccelerateMS

