



PRAXAIR NEWS RELEASE

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PRAXAIR LAUNCHES \$300,000 “SKILLS PIPELINE” WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, EXPANDING ITS GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO STEM EDUCATION

BATON ROUGE, La., August 7, 2014 – Praxair, Inc. (NYSE: PX) today announced a new “Skills Pipeline” program, the company’s multifaceted approach to help address the growing need for skilled workers in today’s global economy. The first phase of the program will provide more than \$300,000 to train 100 new welders in an accelerated one-year curriculum in Louisiana.

This program is the most recent example of Praxair’s commitment to advancing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education. Funded by Praxair’s Global Giving Program and conducted in cooperation with the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), Praxair’s Skills Pipeline program will be offered through Baton Rouge Community College, Delgado Community College and SOWELA Technical Community College. Scheduled to begin in September, the program also provides funding for new instructorships and professional development opportunities for existing welders.

“Praxair is constantly focused on developing a diverse pipeline of talented STEM and skilled trade professionals to ensure we meet our critical business needs and remain competitive globally,” said Anne Roby, senior vice president at Praxair. “We have had a strong presence in Louisiana for decades and are pleased to partner with LCTCS. We believe these important investments affirm Praxair’s commitment to the communities where we live and work.”

“Praxair’s initiative wastes no time in addressing what looms as a very specific and pressing need for our state,” said Louisiana House Speaker Chuck Kleckley. “Praxair’s Skills Pipeline scholarships offer an accelerated educational effort providing the state of Louisiana with 100 credentialed welders ready to go to work within a year. The state of Louisiana has more than \$60 billion in new plant construction slated to begin by 2016 and the need for skilled welding professionals is urgent. This program is a prime example of the industry-academia-governmental collaborations envisioned for the state’s Workforce and Innovation for a Stronger Economy (WISE) Program.”

Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) President Dr. Monty Sullivan spoke of the significance of such a program to the students saying, "This investment by our partners at Praxair comes at a critical time for Louisiana as we continue the drive to increase the skilled workforce of tomorrow. Welding and construction skill crafts are some of the fastest growing and some of the highest paying professions in the state. This effort will give more Louisiana citizens the skills to go to work."

The scholarships will provide students access to an accelerated AWS SENSE curriculum as well as career-readiness content from Praxair. Courses in the AWS curriculum include:

- Shielded Metal Arc Welding (SMAW)
- Gas Metal Arc Welding (GMAW)

- more -

- Flux Cored Arc Welding (FCAW)
- Gas Tungsten Arc Welding (GTAW)
- Manual Oxyfuel Gas Cutting (OFC)
- Mechanized Oxyfuel Gas Cutting (OFC)
- Manual Plasma Arc Cutting (PAC)
- Manual Air Carbon Arc Cutting (CAC-A)

In November 2013, the company announced it would fund approximately \$200,000 in scholarships over five years for AWS and SkillsUSA. These scholarships support the education and hands-on training of student welders in the United States, a skillset that is vital to the growth of the metal fabrication industry and many of Praxair’s customers.

Praxair has a long history of sparking creativity in the welding community. Through its Praxair Distribution, Inc. business, the company is a leading supplier of proprietary welding, cutting, specialty and medical gases, as well as welding-related equipment and supplies. With its retail stores, world-renowned *ProStar*® product line, cylinder-filling plants, distribution warehouses and online channels, PDI serves over 500,000 customers and is recognized for its expertise in enhanced metal fabrication productivity services. With such extensive expertise, Praxair is in the unique position to help further the careers of future and current welders.

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Praxair, Inc., a Fortune 250 company with 2013 sales of \$12 billion, is the largest industrial gases company in North and South America and one of the largest [worldwide](#). The company produces, sells and distributes atmospheric, process and specialty [gases](#), and high-performance surface coatings. Praxair products, [services](#) and technologies are making our planet more productive by bringing efficiency and environmental benefits to a wide variety of industries, including [aerospace](#), [chemicals](#), [food and beverage](#), [electronics](#), [energy](#), [healthcare](#), manufacturing, metals and many others. More information about Praxair, Inc. is available at www.praxair.com.

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