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School of Professional & Technical Education

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From advanced fabrication equipment to industry-leading welding tools, new grant funding is helping Utah State University Blanding welding students train on the tools they'll use throughout their careers.

More than $141,000 in funding from four grants is allowing the welding program to expand hands-on learning opportunities, reduce barriers to entry for students and provide supplies expected to support instruction for years to come. The grants include two Perkins Special Project Grants, a Rocky Mountain Power Foundation Education/ STEM Grant, and an American Welding Society Welding Workforce Grant.

“This funding allows us to offer a broader range of high-end, industry-standard welding equipment,” said Chloe Wilson, the USU welding instructor who applied for the grants. “The goal is to help students get familiar with the equipment they might be using in manufacturing environments and once they start their careers in welding.”

The largest grant, a federally funded $72,307 Perkins Special Project Grant, supported outfitting the lab with equipment including a hydraulic wrap-around bender, press brake and Lincoln Ranger 330 MPX welder/ generator. The hydraulic bender will allow students to pursue AWS D1.1 structural steel welding qualifications through destructive testing, adding a valuable credential to their resumes. The press brake and Lincoln Ranger will expand training in advanced fabrication and field welding, including pipeline welding.

A second Perkins grant, along with funding from the Rocky Mountain Power Foundation and American Welding Society, provided additional equipment including a tungsten grinder, student welding hoods, ESAB multi-process welders and two Miller Dynasty TIG welders.

The American Welding Society grant also funded welding wire and electrodes, including enough stick welding (SMAW) electrodes to last approximately 15 years at the program’s current rate of use.

“This funding and equipment amplify our ability to provide exceptional hands-on training and education to current and future students in Blanding,” said Austin Welch, lead welding instructor at USU Eastern. “Chloe’s substantial efforts in securing these grants will greatly benefit every welding student in Blanding for the foreseeable future. The extent of that impact is difficult to quantify, but these resources will serve our students well for decades.”

For more information about USU welding programs and other professional and technical education, visit The School of Professional & Technical Education website.

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