

Rural Business Programs • Rural Business Development Grant

Breaking the Cycle

The rural residents of Marion, Grundy, and Sequatchie Counties face many challenges; particularly challenges in education, jobs, and income. For many, intergenerational poverty is the norm and educational attainment is just a dream. For those who seek to break this cycle, many obstacles can arise due to their physical proximity to higher education. As a result, degree and certification rates remain low making high-wage employment harder to obtain.

Chattanooga State Community College (CSCC), a local community college, strives for higher standards that lead to the attainment of degrees and certifications, meaningful careers, and a committed citizenry of lifelong learners. In March 2019, CSCC submitted an application for a Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG). It was their plan to use the funds to purchase two Amatrol Skill Boss training systems.



The Amatrol Skill Boss is used by the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council for its Certified Production Technician (CPT) Plus certification in electronic, electrical, fluid power, and mechanical systems.

After project completion in June 2020, CSCC went to work to give students hands-on training with the Amatrol Skill Boss. The equipment and training directly supports the rural advanced manufacturing industry by preparing students with the skills necessary to fill in-demand jobs. This project directly benefits several advanced manufacturing employers in the region and further develops the local workforce for economic success. Thus, helping local residents break the cycle of not having access to higher education degrees and certifications. Rural Development continues to invest in rural America supporting the creation and preservation of quality jobs in rural communities ensuring self-sustainability for generations to come.

Obligation Amount: \$34,805 Grant

Date of Obligation: Fiscal Year 2019

Congressional District: Representative DesJarlais, TN-04; Senators Marsha Blackburn and Bill Hagerty

Partners: Chattanooga State Community College

Demographics: Marion County, Tennessee

Impact: USDA-RD grant funding provided access to specialized equipment to educate and prepare students for the manufacturing production industry.