

HCC launches cannabis careers training program

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College and its new community partner, Elevate Northeast, are launching a revitalized cannabis careers training program in October for those who want to work in the industry.

The program, offered through the Cannabis Education Center, begins the weekend of Oct. 17-18 with two days of required core curriculum training over Zoom.

Each day will be broken down into two sessions, 9 a.m. to noon, and 1 to 4 p.m. Each session will include presentations from cannabis industry experts followed by a question and answer period.

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Students who complete the core training will then be eligible to register for spring 2021 classes in one of four cannabis industry career tracks: cultivation assistant, extraction technician, patient services associate, and culinary assistant.

A previous series of cannabis industry training courses offered by HCC and the Cannabis Education Center were suspended in the spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“HCC is proud to partner with Elevate for the sole purpose of helping jobseekers get the training they need to

successfully enter the cannabis industry,” said Jeffrey Hayden, HCC vice president of Business and Community Services. “At the same time, we look forward to enhancing and expanding our relationships with cannabis companies in Holyoke and other communities throughout the region. Our goal is to help individuals gain employment while meeting the demand of area businesses.”

Dates for the spring career track training sessions have not yet been announced.

Cultivation assistants provide the daily care of the crops from seed to harvest and may be involved in cracking seeds, soil mixing, potting, defoliation, watering, pest control and trimming.

Extraction technicians work in labs assisting production managers in all aspects of extraction, purging, oil manipulation, winterization, distillation, solvent recovery, and quality control.

Patient service associates work behind the counters at cannabis dispensaries, interacting with the public, answering technical questions, and providing information to registered cannabis patients, caregivers, and recreational customers making purchases.

Culinary assistants are responsible for preparing cannabis or cannabidiol-infused products using a variety of cooking, baking, and infusion techniques.

The cost of the two-day core train-

ing session is \$595.

Elevate Northeast is a Massachusetts-based, women-founded 501(c)(3) nonprofit, created to support the Northeast U.S.’s growing cannabis industry through workforce training, education and advocacy.

The Cannabis Education Center is based out of HCC’s Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development.

To register for Core Cannabis Curriculum class, please go to: hcc.edu/cannabis-core

More information on these and other upcoming classes and programs can be found on the Cannabis Education Center’s website - cannabiseducation-center.org or by calling 413-552-2320.