



ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE

TAKING FLIGHT AT ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE

Marlene Ruvalcaba had dropped out of USC as a pre-law student when she saw a local news report on Antelope Valley College's Aeronautical Sciences & Technology Program and decided to give it a try.

"I had no experience with aerospace or aviation and didn't even know the program existed, but it looked intriguing," recalled Ruvalcaba, whose curiosity led her to enroll at Antelope Valley College in June of 2016. Just one semester and four classes later, Ruvalcaba had three job offers and was working full time as a composite technician at The Spaceship Company while simultaneously staying in school en route to earning an associate degree.

Ruvalcaba, part of the college's initial cohort of students in the groundbreaking Airframe Manufacturing Technology Bachelor of Science degree program, is now a quality engineer with Virgin Galactic. She also serves as an Antelope Valley College adjunct instructor and exemplifies the impact Strong Workforce Program funding is having in putting people to work. The Aircraft Fabrication & Assembly track – which Ruvalcaba completed and which earned a **2018 Strong Workforce Program Gold Star award** – is among the most effective career training programs in the state based on data showing that virtually every student earning a degree or certificate was employed in a job similar to their field of study and saw a nearly doubling in wages. Strong Workforce funding



DID YOU KNOW?

Advanced Manufacturers are often small, specialized firms, so employers invest significant resources in training their workforce and providing personnel opportunities for job growth.



has allowed Antelope Valley College to accommodate growing enrollment by building additional composite and structure labs, purchase new equipment, and improve an array of program facilities.

"Without the support of the district and Strong Workforce dollars, programs like this would not be able to meet industry demands," said Dr. Maria Clinton, former department chair and current Interim Dean of Career Education. ***"The industry is hiring and we're providing them with skilled students who are job ready."***

The Aeronautical Sciences & Technology Program comprises Aircraft Fabrication & Assembly and Aeronautical & Aviation Technology (Airframe & Powerplant), in addition to the Airframe Manufacturing Technology Bachelor of Science degree that is part of the California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Pilot Program. Students in the Aircraft Fabrication & Assembly track are **guaranteed to sit for a job interview with Northrop Grumman** after just one semester of required courses – a semester that many students opt to condense into an accelerated 8-week schedule.

"I get students who are 18 years old, fresh out of high school, who have no experience whatsoever, but who decide they just want to give it a shot and a few months later, they're working at one of the largest aerospace companies in the world," Ruvalcaba said.

Clinton agreed. "Everyone in the Valley knows that if you want to get a job at Northrop Grumman, you go to Antelope Valley College's aeronautical program," she said. ***"After just eight weeks of training, our students are not only making 27 or 28 dollars per hour to start off, they also are establishing a career."***

Keeping the Region Soaring

8

Number of regional community colleges offering courses in the advanced manufacturing sector.

3,676

Number of students taking advanced manufacturing courses in the region.

\$52,386

Average earnings per job in the advanced manufacturing sector.