



ALAMO
COLLEGES

PALO ALTO COLLEGE

NEWS RELEASE

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Palo Alto College now offers oil and gas degree

Alamo Colleges-Palo Alto College will begin offering an associate degree program in Oil and Gas Technology beginning in the Fall 2013 semester after receiving approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in June 2013.

“We will provide highly trained employees for the oil and gas industries in support of the Eagle Ford Shale region in South Texas,” said PAC president Dr. Mike Flores. “Because of our location in south San Antonio, Palo Alto College is poised to become the training hub for oil and gas corporations for the Eagle Ford Shale.”

Students in the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Oil and Gas Technology program will receive training as petroleum pump systems operators, service unit operators, roustabouts and other similar process and production technician positions. Process technicians will be trained to operate petroleum refining and processing units and are expected to earn an average of \$23.76 per hour. Production technicians could earn an average of \$21.36 per hour and will be able to maintain equipment in the petroleum and natural gas industry.

The first courses began this fall in the two-year stacked model program, where students can earn an entry-level certificate in a four-month term and apply it towards the associate degree requirements. The stacked program begins with an Entry Level Energy Technician Certificate, followed by a 12-hour Career Foundation Certificate. Academic credits earned from the two certificates can be applied to one of two tracks in the degree program – Process Technology or Production Technician. Online classes with hands-on open labs will be offered to provide flexibility in course completion.

Palo Alto College also received a \$300,000 grant from the Texas Workforce Commission Skills Development Fund to purchase equipment for training including process control and instrumentation trainers, simulation software, pump training systems, industrial wiring system, motor control system, and more. The equipment will be used for hands-on learning consistent with industry needs.

Palo Alto College will become the only college within a 100-mile radius of San Antonio offering this type of degree, joining other colleges in Texas - Brazosport College in Lake Jackson, College of the Mainland in Texas City, Navarro College in Corsicana, and Coastal Bend College in Beeville.

The Eagle Ford Shale region is the most active shale play in the world with over 265 rigs currently active and more than 129,000 jobs expected in the next 10 years.

Palo Alto College, one of the Alamo Colleges, is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees. With nearly 9,000 students, the College also offers short-term certificates and non-credit continuing education classes. The campus is located on the Southside of San Antonio at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy. 16 and online at alamo.edu/pac.

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