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Pottawatomie County Third County in Kansas Certified as ACT Work Ready Community.

Wamego, KAN. — The Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) has worked with local community leaders, educators and employers to certify Pottawatomie county as an ACT Work Ready Community.

The ACT website shows that Pottawatomie County is the third county in the state to join over 140 certified counties in the nation. The certification will help employees and students know what their strengths and weaknesses are, and help employers place new hires based on what they can demonstratively do through testing.

“With the hard work of local superintendents, principals, guidance counselors and human resource managers through the Human Resource Management Network of Manhattan (HRMN), our team was able to get the necessary Work Keys assessments and support from the business community in order to get the county certified,” said Jack Allston, PCEDC executive director. “A major team member was Jo Brunner with **KANSASWORKS**. She and her team were instrumental in promoting and testing significant current and transitional workers.”

PCEDC and **KANSASWORKS** have tested over 400 students and workers in the Pottawatomie County.

“The ACT Kansas Work Ready Certificate shows an employer the basic skill levels a job applicant has in Math, Reading and Locating for Information,” said Jo Brunner, workforce services supervisor at **KANSASWORKS**. “The employer can then determine what additional training, if any they may choose to provide, to the jobseeker upon hire. The skills identified by the assessments reflect skills needed in almost all jobs.”

Brunner said, “In the Junction City and Manhattan Workforce Centers **KANSASWORKS** provides the Career Ready 101 online refresher course for those people seeking

employment and we provide the WorkKeys assessments so that jobseekers can obtain a Kansas Work Ready Certificate.”

Over 50 employers in the Pottawatomie County area are currently participating and recognize the ACT Work Ready Certification. Employers can review workers and students and match them to the job skills they require for open job positions.

“Currently we use [the certificates] as pre-employment tools for certain departments,” said Dawn Van Horn, human resources director for the city of Junction City. “By obtaining the certificate, you are slotted to progress through the pre-employment recruitment process. As a municipality, budget dollars are tight and accounted for. This program is no-cost to the potential candidate or employer. It provides the candidate with another tool for their career progression and provides an employer with an assessment of what potential candidates can bring to the table as far as skill sets and capabilities.”

Jobseekers can complete the certificate testing in the **KANSASWORKS** workforce centers. Companies can look online at www.workkeys.org under occupational profiles to see what test scores exist for similar jobs throughout the nation.

Your company can recognize the ACT Work Ready Certification and review workers and students that match the job skills you need.

To learn how your company can utilize this program or learn more about testing, contact the PCEDC at (785) 456-9776 or email jessica@ecodevo.com.

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