

1. How long have you been in operation?

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc., a **consortium of educational partners**, has been **working together since 2003** to address a shortage of skilled workers in the region. The Department of Defense completed an Economic Adjustment Plan in 2002 when it identified Fort Greely as the site of the Ground-based Midcourse Missile Defense System. Funds were provided to the City of Delta Junction to address concerns in the report.

The **Delta Career Advancement Center** was constructed with funding from the Department of Defense Community Impact funds to the City of Delta Junction, Denali Commission, state funds through the school district, private funds through individuals, businesses and Rasmuson Foundation. It **opened in January 2005** and became the home for the new Construction Trades program created at the high school. The first Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator Academy was offered in June 2006 and is a popular annual intensive program. UAF Community & Technical College, Cooperative Extension Service and Alaska Works Partnership have offered a wide range of classes at the Center since January 2005. The **Delta Career Advancement Center was named a Regional Training Center** by the Legislature in 2008.

As a partnership, our core purpose is summarized as follows: “The combined missions of the partners reinforce a commitment to career advancement, workforce development, academic preparedness, community education and life-long learning. The Delta Career Advancement Center, a collaborative project, is a gateway for learning and training in the area.”

2. What is your governance structure?

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. is a **501 (c) 3 nonprofit** committed to career advancement through education and training to develop Alaska’s skilled workforce. We have a **seven member board** of directors consisting of one each from the founding partners—Alaska Works Partnership (AWP), Delta/Greely School District (DGSD), University of Alaska Fairbanks Community & Technical College (UAF CTC) and Cooperative Extension Service (CES)—plus one industry representative and an additional appointee each by UAF CTC and DGSD of community members. The board generally meets monthly as needed.

3. What manner of public/private partnerships do you share?

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. is an educational **consortium of educational partners** including a State of Alaska school district, two University of Alaska Fairbanks entities and Alaska Works Partnership. Jointly these partners leverage funds to raise and receive private funds. These partners worked together to raise funds for the existing 9,600 square-foot facility that houses a 7,000 square-foot workshop, a computer lab and a smart classroom.

In addition, Partners for Progress works collaboratively with the Alaska Science Building Network, Center for Employment Education and the Alaska Operating Engineers and Employees Training Trust to deliver specialized training and instruction not offered by the school district or university. We have also assisted other regional training centers to provide, for example, an opportunity to have their students tested at our facility or to extend to them the opportunity to identify someone from their region to apply to the academy.

Area businesses have donated surplus supplies for the Construction Trades program at the high school. Area and Interior businesses provide a reduced rate for the rental of the heavy equipment which greatly reduces our total cost of operation, and we have a good relationship with the Fairbanks Pipeline Training Center for use of equipment at no cost. Our private sector board members donate time,

equipment and skills to make the operation successful. One board member worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop and get approved a 16-hour Emergency Water Treatment class which he then taught three times, donating his instruction time.

4. What specific training programs do you offer?

- Annually each June since 2006, the Delta Career Advancement Center is the hub for the **Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator and Mechanic Academy**. This is a competitive, three-week intensive academy focused on hands-on training for 10 successful applicants. Outreach extends to rural communities, accepting students from Delta, Tok, Juneau, Glennallen, Barrow, Dot Lake, Copper Center, Stevens Village, Tanacross, Nulato and Nikolai.

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. offers this academy each June in cooperation with the Alaska Operating Engineers and Employees Training Trust and Alaska Works Partnership. The past two years we have added an emphasis on heavy equipment mechanics as there is a growing need for skilled heavy equipment mechanics in the state. Most recently we have learned that our training program will be approved as a pre-apprenticeship training program providing direct indenture into the Operating Engineers without an application process. **Since 2006, we have had 80+ participants to date and 20 have been accepted into apprenticeships with the Trades.** The 20th was accepted by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) as a direct indenture from the Construction Trades high school program, and he was recognized at the May 2013 high school graduation.

In 2014 emphasis will be increased for heavy equipment mechanic training.

Importantly, the academy has had tremendous support from the City, local businesses and the Deltana Fair Association. Academy participants have the opportunity to operate each of the pieces of equipment used during the hands-on two-week portion of the program including a dozer, grader, excavator, water truck, backhoe, compactor, and end dump. **The three-week academy results in 20-hour MSHA, Forklift operator, First Aid/CPR/AED training and certifications.**

- The **Delta High School** career and technical programs delivered at the Center include: AutoCAD, Metals, Construction Trades and Aerospace. The Construction Trades classes go well beyond a typical “shop” class that might construct sawhorses. Students at the Delta High School Program create real-world projects that serve the community. For example, students helped construct the existing facility, some have built the vendor booths used by the Farmers’ Market, others helped construct concession and announcer stands for the football team, picnic benches for the local community park and metals classes produce and sell to the public State of Alaska Forestry approved burn barrels.

Dual credit is given for English, welding and Certified Nurse Aid courses. There is a School-to-Apprenticeship Agreement in place with the Trades since 2003.

- **University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College**—delivers a range of workshops, testing services and classes for academic credit and skill certification opportunities, as well as customized non-credit skills building classes at the Delta Career Advancement Center. Career advancement areas of emphasis include applied business, computer skills, fire science, welding, AutoCAD, and Allied Health. In particular, the UAF CTC Certified Nurse Program is a spring

favorite with a waiting list to get into this program. In 2013 four of the program's graduates were hired at the new assisted living facility in Delta.

- Cooperative Extension Service holds workshops on cold climate construction, energy, gardening and horticulture, food processing and preservation, preparation for state pesticide certification, Department of Transportation trucking regulations, small business financing and economic development.
- **Center for Employment Education (CEE)** delivered a prep class to prepare area residents to take the state test required to earn a permit to acquire a Commercial Drivers' License. We then worked with the CEE to offer a 10-hour driving class ending with a road test.

5. How many participants do you have currently in those respective programs?

Annually, we have 10 in the summer academy. Another 54 took fall 2013 university classes and we have a series of late start classes this spring—everything from a series of small business development one-day workshops to the nine-credit Certified Nurse Aide class being offered again beginning in March. There is a waiting list for the Certified Nurse Aide class which is limited to 10.

In addition, this year there are 58 high school students taking career and technical classes at the Center. Classes offered this year are: AutoCAD, Aerospace—Build a Plane, Metals I and Metals II, Construction Trades I and Construction Trades II. Several college-bound high school students are taking university classes, another y have come since July to the center for testing—everything from Work Keys to Accuplacer and individual testing for on-line classes.

In the past decade, CES reports from 2003 to 2013 there were over 7,000 contacts made in Delta through workshops and presentations offered by Extension professionals. This includes workshops, presentations and special events by a variety of Extension faculty and staff.

In addition, the community depends on the Center as the location to apply for a Bureau of Land management subsistence permit each summer. Approximately 500 people come to the facility to complete applications.

6. What do you offer in the form of degrees and/or certificates in these programs?

Our partners—Alaska Works Partnership, Delta/Greely School District, University of Alaska Fairbanks Community & Technical College and Cooperative Extension Service—offer technical and vocational education to help develop the region's workforce. Each partner offers proven training with recognized certification and accreditation relating to their expertise and mission. The University of Alaska Fairbanks Community & Technical College offers everything from certificates and associate/bachelor degrees to noncredit workshops and one-credit classes. Many of the courses help students to prepare and be successful for state examinations, such as the Certified Nurse Aide program.

7. How many certifications have you issued and in what training fields since you began operating?

Of 80 participants in the annual Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator and Mechanic Academy since 2006 (10 maximum per academy because of the hands-on nature of the program and instruction), 20 have been accepted into apprenticeships with the Trades. This summer academy has been approved as pre-apprenticeship training with an opportunity for direct indenture into the Operating Engineers. Of the 15 who took the CDL prep class, eight were eligible for the pilot driving class and three of those four earned their CDL. We would like to offer this driving class at the 20-hour level but funds limit us to

four possible candidates for the 10-hour CDL driving class. Our Cooperative Extension Service partner delivers required pesticide training annually from the center to a number of sites around the state through video conferencing.

8. Describe the demographic profile of your student body.

From high school students to senior citizens, the Delta Career Advancement Center is a gateway for career and personal growth through learning and training. Delta has a large Slavic population and they have been eager to acquire skills that will lead to jobs and/or advancement. English as a Second Language is an important series of classes for this population. The summer academy attracts young adults aged 17-30. The university classes attract high school students wanting a jump on college to folks who had to quit college to raise a family and now want to finish their program, to many just looking to do better at their current job, position themselves for advancement or something new. Delta has a number of small businesses and those folks are looking to update skills and learn new techniques to market their services and products. The Cooperative Extension Service series of one-day, small business development workshops have been well-received in the community, especially among small “mom and pop” businesses.

9. What are the technical and vocational labor demands in your region and how successful are you in satisfying that demand?

Boeing and its subcontractors are always looking for employees with a strong work ethic who have some basic skills upon which they can build. These same Missile Defense employers are also interested in having Cybersecurity classes required for accreditation and certification in the field offered at the Center and we are exploring this with them. Several businesses depend on the Center to offer welding classes for their employees. We also have identified a need for drivers who have earned their CDL. Contractors are hiring apprentices to the Trades for local public and private jobs.

10. What is your annual budget? What other sources of funding do you have besides TVEP?

In FY 14 we have \$322,800 through TVEP to fund our operation. We have a small reserve in private funds for special projects and for maintenance and replacement. Our board is working on a long-range plan to develop additional sources of funding to meet area employer demands.

11. What annual level of funding have you received historically and to date?

We have received 3% of available TVEP funds in each of the following years:

FY09	\$283.4
FY10	\$283.4
FY11	\$292.4
FY12	\$302.6
FY13	\$326.9
FY14	\$322.8

12. What specifically do TVEP funds pay for at your training center?

We have no employees and the board has focused on directing as much as we can for the delivery of programs. Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. has a Memorandum of Agreement with the school district to help fund 50% of the Center's operating costs for fuel, phones, custodial and electric. TVEP funds also cover the costs of delivering university programs at the Center. Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc.

has an agreement with the UAF Community & Technical College for them to provide an on-site UAF coordinator and arrange for any instructors to teach UAF classes in demand in the area. If we cannot hire a local adjunct, then an instructor travels from Fairbanks to Delta to deliver a class. A good example is the Certified Nurse Aide program; it combines video conferencing, on-site instruction by a Fairbanks-based instructor and hands-on clinical work in Fairbanks. TVEP funds also cover the cost of the annual Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator and Mechanic Academy, including student and instructor food and lodging, an academy coordinator and program supplies and rental of the equipment.

13. What would you do if TVEP were eliminated or reduced? Increased?

TVEP funding is critical to our operation. Since a third of the budget is directed at the summer academy, we have a large commitment to ensure continuation of a quality program that has just been approved as a pre-apprenticeship training leading to direct indenture into the Operating Engineers. We believe we operate cost efficiently and effectively. We have received capital funding toward construction of a stand-alone expansion because of the increased demand for career and technical classes. In addition, there is a large entrepreneurial sector in the area that would like to expand small business opportunities for the agricultural community. An increase in funding would enable us to work with the Center for Employment Education to offer a 20-hour CDL driving class. The more time in training can only improve the chances for success for those who might not have any or little experience. Currently, we focus on those with some experience to ensure successful completion with only 10 hours of instruction. In addition, with an increase in funding we could develop specialized classes for high school students during spring break and other select times during the academic year.

14. Do you operate a residential facility in conjunction with your programs?

No. We reserve a block of rooms at a local motel for any out-of-town participants in our June summer academy. We have had participants from Delta, Tok, Juneau, Glennallen, Barrow, Dot Lake, Copper Center, Stevens Village, Tanacross, Nulato and Nikolai.

15. What is your student/teacher ratio?

We employ no instructors. We contract with others to deliver training at the center.

The construction academy has four instructors for 10 students.

University classes can range from four to 25 in a classroom.

16. How many faculty do you employ? Describe their certification levels.

We do not employ faculty. Our individual partners provide instructors. For example, the Delta/Greely School District has its **Career and Technical Education** Construction Trades/Metals and Automotive **high school instructor located in the Center**. He was **named by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board in 2012 as the CTE instructor of the year for the State of Alaska**. He has worked in construction and construction management for more than 35 years.

We contract with the UAF Community & Technical College to provide/hire instructors for university classes offered in Delta. The University of Alaska Fairbanks hires adjuncts from the Delta community to teach as many of its classes as it can. Instructors must meet UAF requirements for teaching—in some instances a master's degree is required.

Instruction is also delivered via video conferencing. For example, we provide a site for those working on master's degrees to link with their Fairbanks-based class by a video link. This permits local employers

to encourage such continued education because their employee might be gone for only a two-hour block of time rather than all day if they had to drive to Fairbanks.

17. Describe how your training center benefits your local community or region.

Our program is life changing. A high school graduate with no clear direction might find that the summer academy an avenue to career awareness and developing a work ethic that employers ask for on a regular basis. Another graduate might benefit from dual credit and other University classes that can put them a step ahead if they plan to attend college. Someone looking to advance in their career can benefit from taking practical classes at the Center. We provide teaching opportunities for the area resident with specific skills and training to deliver through one of our partners' classes that help residents get ahead. We purchase locally as often as we can—renting equipment for the academy locally and placing academy participants in locally owned lodging. Furthermore, the high school would have a far less enriched career and technical education component. We have been described as a model for the state because the emphasis has been on working collaboratively, cost efficiently and effectively as a consortium of educational partners who can deliver their programs without each needing individual facilities or duplicating the efforts of others.

18. Please share highlights and needs of your training center.

Since 2003 our educational partners have accomplished the following:

- Begin **Construction Trades** program at the high school. *100 + high school students since fall 2002, several of whom have been accepted into the Trades*
- Build a facility in which partners deliver education and training programs for workforce development. The **Delta Career Advancement Center opened in January 2005** and is jointly operated by the Delta/Greely School District and Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc.
- Hold first **Industry Roundtable** in 2005. We held our eighth Industry Roundtable in November 2013 to update our supporters and discuss with them their needs for future training and education.
- Hosts since 2006 an intensive summer **Introduction to Heavy Equipment Operator Academy** with outreach to rural communities, accepting students from Delta, Tok, Juneau, Glennallen, Barrow, Copper Center, Dot Lake, Stevens Village, Tanacross, Nulato and Nikolai.
- **Incorporate as Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc.** in 2007 as a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit.
- Named by the State of Alaska Legislature a **Regional Training Center in 2008**.
- Deliver for-credit and non-credit classes reaching 400+ students.

Partners for Progress in Delta operates, jointly with the Delta/Greely School District, the Delta Career Advancement Center. The **founding educational consortium partners**—Delta/Greely School District, Alaska Works Partnership, University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College and Cooperative Extension Service—deliver a range of workshops, testing services and classes for credit and non-credit skills building classes, as well as skill certification opportunities at the Delta Career Advancement Center. Partners for Progress in Delta is a **gateway for learning in the region** which includes Pogo Mine, the oil pipeline and Fort Greely. The Center houses a workshop for welding, metals and Construction Trades programs, a computer lab and a smart classroom. The Delta Career Advancement Center hosts nights for students and parents career planning, as well as the annual Industry Roundtable through which we share information about what we are doing and hear about area employer needs.

In addition, our annual summer academy exemplifies life changing for many. Since 2006, more than 82 young adults have been introduced to the safe operation of heavy equipment through our **Introduction to Entry Level Heavy Equipment Operator Intensive Summer Academy**. Partners for Progress in Delta offers this academy each June in cooperation with the Alaska Operating Engineers and Employees Training Trust and Alaska Works Partnership. The past two years we have added an emphasis on heavy equipment mechanics as there is a growing need for skilled heavy equipment mechanics in the state. Most recently we have learned that our training program will be approved as a pre-apprenticeship training program providing direct indenture into the Operating Engineers without an application process. Since 2006, we have had 20 apprenticeship placements resulting from the summer academy and high school Construction Trades classes; the 20th was accepted by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) as a direct indenture from the Construction Trades high school program, and he was recognized at the May 2013 high school graduation.

Of these 20 placements, many were young adults who previously had not thought about their future and how they might fit into the workforce. Not all plan to attend college right after high school.

- In one instance a bank teller left her position to become a heavy equipment operator who is earning a good wage working throughout the state.
- In another instance someone who took the high school sequence is pursuing a career in the U.S. Coast Guard as a journeyman electrician.
- Yet another academy participant is working on a civil engineering degree at UAF—he wanted to understand what it meant to move dirt so he could be a better engineer.
- A young man from Nulato who was “mechanic-oriented” during the 2012 Academy was accepted into Operating Engineers Local 302 as an apprentice heavy equipment mechanic. He went from Delta to Palmer for more training, graduated from the program at the top of his class, and in the summer of 2013 got a job with a contractor working in Boundary.
- Another success story is that of the high school student who took the high school Construction Trades classes, participated in the summer academy, was accepted into an IBEW apprenticeship, is now a journeyman and currently is working on a college degree by taking classes at the Delta Career Advancement Center.

We survey all of our academy participants annually and many tell us they appreciate the “hands-on experience and the opportunities to learn to get a well-paying job.” Additional comments include statements such as the following:

- “It was very helpful in teaching me how to operate equipment the correct way...it was a great experience.”
- “This center helps students find their career. People here have connections with employers.”
- “I learned, practiced a lot.”
- “I learned how important a good work ethic is on any job.”
- “It made me realize what I wanted to do.”

Our **Delta/Greely School District** partner uses the facility throughout the year for delivery of many of its career and technical education classes. **In FY13, 138 Delta High School students used the facility for AutoCAD, Metals, Welding, Construction Trades, Word and Excel, First Aid, QuickBooks and Automotive classes with Aviation introduced in FY14. Dual credit is given for English, welding and**

Certified Nurse Aid courses. There is a School-to-Apprenticeship Agreement in place with the Trades since 2003.

In addition, the Delta Career Advancement Center has been the hub of the Delta High School Career Day programs for several years, including the fall 2012 daylong “Women in the Trades” focus. The school district launched an Aerospace program in fall 2013 with an eye on building career awareness in the aviation field, as well as providing a practical environment for understanding the value of math and reading skills.

Below is a sampling of classes offered as needed and as demand warrants—for credit and not-for-credit through **UAF Community and Technical College**:

- Arctic Engineering, (graduate level) was video conferenced from the main UAF campus
- Birds of Alaska
- Certified Nurse Aide course through a combination of in-person instruction at the Center, videoconferencing and hands-on training in Fairbanks. Of the 2013 spring graduates, four were hired to work at the newly opened Quality Care Center for seniors in Delta. The enclosed newsletter features a story about the CNA program.
- Computer Business Applications: Microsoft Word and Excel
- Developmental Math
- Digital Photography
- EMT II
- English 111
- English as a Second Language
- Fundamentals of Oral Communication
- Information Technology (distanced delivered from Nome)
- Introductory Russian
- One student joined the Cisco Networking Academy training twice weekly in our facility. Another student took a distance delivered Communications class via video conferencing throughout the semester.
- Private Pilot Ground School
- Quick Books
- Small Business Marketing
- Welding I and Welding II
- Graduate student working on a master’s degree in Natural Resources Management took a class vis-à-vis video conferencing at the Center

In addition we offer a number of **workshops** on a variety of topics to **build skills for employment**.

- Archaeological Fieldwork—an introductory class to build entry level skills for work on archaeological digs—developed in cooperation with the U.S. Army Garrison—Fort Wainwright.
- CDL Prep Class and a CDL 10-hour intensive driving class with testing at the end. Worked with the Center for Employment Education to offer a pilot 10-hour Commercial Drivers’ License (CDL) driver training and testing in Delta. Of eight applicants four were interviewed and selected for this pilot training. Three of the four earned their CDL license.
- Alaska Works Partnership offered two Weatherization classes

- Certiport
- Culinary Arts classes
- Drinking Water for Emergencies—meets the needs of the Alaska State Defense Force, a 16-hour training on decontaminating water in the event of disasters
- English as a Second Language workshop
- Heating Efficiently with Oil (Systems and Controls)—a CEU course for operating oil burners offered in cooperation with the Alaska Science Building Network
- ServSafe for food handler certification

Our **Cooperative Extension Service** (CES) increased its use of the Center with a series of videoconference classes, workshops and discussions. The local CES 4H program depends on the Delta Career Advancement as a place for its monthly meetings.

- Alaska Residential Building
- DOT Trucking Regulations
- Solar Energy for Alaskans
- Required pesticide applicator classes are delivered from Delta at the Center via video conference to link with Anchorage, Kodiak, Juneau, Fairbanks and other areas around the state.
- Workshops on “Raising Chickens” and “Raising Fruits” were delivered from Fairbanks to the Center for local participation.
- Introduction to Specialty Food, Business, Family Child Care, as well as several sessions commemorating the 150th anniversary of the land-grant 1862 Morrill Act, were available through videoconferencing.
- Small Business Development video conferenced workshops kicked off this spring to provide intensive one-day training on everything from “Starting a Small Business” and “Writing a Business Plan” to “How to Get a Business Loan” and “Social Media and Mobile Marketing for Small Business.”
- The Harvest Wrap-Up is a casual event bringing researchers, along with representatives of Alaska Division of Agriculture and CES together with area farmers to discuss successes and failures of the past crop season. The researchers share information from the various trials that they are currently engaged in and discuss future research projects. The event at the Center encourages dialog among producers, and an opportunity for producers to provide some direction toward prioritizing research needs. This also allows for networking among the researchers to make the best use of personnel and resources and to minimize duplication of efforts.

The Delta Career Advancement Center also serves as an important site for testing for appropriate placement in classes with Accuplacer testing, Center for Distance Education (CDE) testing, and the ACT tests offered throughout the year as the Center is now listed as a testing site.

As required by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development we annually survey our students and area employers. Student respondents to our annual survey consistently say they would take another class or recommend others to take a class at this center. The satisfaction level among students who comment on the facility and the instructors runs around 95-99%. Employers tell us that they urge employees to take classes and training and in most cases are satisfied with the work ethic of employees hired who took classes at the Delta Career Advancement Center.

At a February 2013 Delta Junction Chamber of Commerce Meeting we shared our vision and plans for construction of a stand-alone expansion facility, and attendees were asked if they supported us. We heard an enthusiastic “yes.” For this reason the board is committed to working with the community to continue to offer a range of classes and training that can make a difference for the residents of our region. Continued TVEP funding is critical to this effort. In FY1 we received \$45,000 toward preparation of an architectural schematic; and in FY14 we received a \$1 million capital appropriation toward construction of the facility.

19. Are there other regional training centers you feel should be receiving TVEP funds?

Regional Training Centers work within their regions to benefit their communities. We work hard to listen to our community to deliver the programs they need to help build Alaska’s workforce.

20. Do you believe in the current allocation structure for distributing TVEP funds is adequate and fair? If not, how would you recommend adjusting it?

We would probably all like to see a larger pie to accommodate the many regional needs that exist, but it is certain that any less than what we receive currently cannot lead to any increased capacity.