

DATE: September 23, 2021

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**NORTHWEST STATE AND PAULDING COUNTY PARTNER
TO OFFER FREE STNA TRAINING AT VANCREST OF PAYNE**

ARCHBOLD, OHIO – Sometimes it only takes a simple conversation, a spark that lights the fire of collaboration and community partnerships. The simple conversations between OhioMeansJobs-Paulding County and the Paulding County Economic Development Office led to a meeting of the minds between the aforementioned pair, Vancrest of Payne, and Northwest State Community College. With clear and concise goals, the group has now partnered together to offer free STNA training at the Vancrest of Payne facility for both incumbent workers and all other residents with a high school diploma. All involved hope that this training opportunity will not only assist Vancrest in finding skilled healthcare professionals, but will lift Paulding County as a whole.

The OhioMeansJobs-Paulding County Office continues to lead the way, not only in Paulding County, but in the region. Since June 2020, the Office has supported workforce projects in welding, construction, automotive, and now healthcare. Tiffany Dargenson, the Workforce Supervisor for OhioMeansJobs-Paulding County, and her team not only assist with local residents that may be looking for a new career, but also assist local businesses that are looking to upskill their current workforce. *“This collaboration is another great example of how OhioMeansJobs-Paulding County is partnering with area businesses to offset some of their training costs to strengthen the workforce. This partnership with Vancrest, Paulding Co. Economic Development and NSCC is another instance of a local team working together to help our communities with skilled employees.”*

The local Economic Development Director, Tim Copsey, was the catalyst behind the initial talks about offering a training opportunity. After reaching out to several different facilities, it was Vancrest that stepped forward to pursue the opportunity. *“We continue to reach out to our county businesses to keep a pulse on where our biggest workforce gaps are. There is a demand for STNA positions at all of our healthcare facilities in the county. Once we shared this information with Northwest State they immediately set out to find a host site that could be state approved as a training facility for new STNA students. Vancrest in Payne was able to be that site. In partnership with Ohio Means Jobs, we will immediately begin training for incumbent employees from around the county to gain this certification and help fill these open positions. We once again appreciate the partnership of NSCC, OMJ and now Vancrest in allowing us the opportunity to close this gap.”*

Headquartered in Van Wert, Ohio, Vancrest has six facilities across Northwest Ohio. Shane Stewart, the Chief Operating Officer at Vancrest, has been key in the development of this partnership. *“Being an employer in Paulding County it was important to us to be part of a solution that offered resources to individuals that would not only offer certified training to become a State Tested Nursing assistant but a potential career path to becoming an LPN or RN.”* As with many industries, the pandemic has put immense pressure on the current workforce. According to Shane, the fatigue is being especially felt in the healthcare industry. *“The healthcare workforce is fragile. “The pandemic has caused COVID fatigue for many individuals causing them to exit*

healthcare and keeping others from entering. I believe this partnership will assist us in bringing these quality individuals into the healthcare workforce within Paulding County.”

Northwest State Community College continues make an impact in the Paulding County workforce community. Over the past year, the combination of NSCC and Paulding County have seen a high school welding course and apprentice level manufacturing course be offered and completed. Jim Drewes, VP of Workforce Development, believes this new adventure is the start of a career pathway for interested learners. *“This public private partnership will allow learners to gain the STNA credential and 4 hours of college credit locally. This credential is an entry level healthcare class and a prerequisite to many LPN and RN programs. Local collaboration helps build the workforce pipeline in Paulding County.”*

If you would like more information or would like to apply, call or text Matt Kibler at (567) 245-1259.

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Northwest State Community College is an accredited two-year, state-assisted institution of higher education that has served northwest Ohio since 1969. Northwest State is committed to providing a quality, affordable education with personal attention and small class sizes. The College offers associate degrees with numerous transfer options, short-term certificate programs, and workforce training programs designed to meet the needs of local businesses and industries. For more information, visit NorthwestState.edu or call 419.267.5511.