

>> Hello, and welcome to the Valley today. I am your host Janet Michael, we are on the screen today for Laurel Ridge Community College Day, Guy Curtis is with me. He's their Director of Marketing. Joining him today is Deb Taylor. Deb is director of corporate training for Workforce Solutions, that's what we're going to be talking about today, all things going on at Laurel Ridge where corporate training is concerned. Deb, for someone who isn't familiar with what the term corporate training even is, more specifically, what it is at Laurel Ridge, can you give the 411 on how it works, what it is, and who should be participating in these programs?

>> Sure. Thanks for having us today, Janet. Corporate training is a department within the workforce solutions department of the college. We have our programming department, that is the department that puts out our catalog on an ongoing basis with schedule classes, trades classes that focus on specific dates, times folks can sign up for and attend. What corporate training does is we partner with employers in the area, our regional area, our seven counties in Winchester City that we operate in, and we customize training solutions for the employers. It could be a leadership development training, or it could be strategic planning, it could be coaching, it could be a number of different topics and subjects, harassment, DE&I training. We've even conducted plumbing classes on site, and we partner with Po's plumbing for that. It depends on what is needed by the employer. We save the employer's time by coming to them in some cases to their locations and not necessarily having all of their employees come to the college. You have less down time, less down production time, especially for some of our manufacturers and distributors where we can go on site. For instance, I'll throw out Home Depot. We've done on site training for Home Depot for a long period of time, Ashworth Brothers, and we can conduct the training that they need for their employees at their site, working with their schedule. Whether that is first shift, second shift, third shift, for instance, we just ran a training with Z&M Sheet Metal and went to their site, and we stayed throughout different shifts to be able to conduct the training on site for them as they move people in and out of the training throughout the day. It's really a customized approach to learning and development for either employees that are front line employees that do the hands on work that's going on throughout the day. It could be for their front line supervisors, mid level managers or their associate managers or vice presidents. We do level training depending on the needs analysis, we'll meet with the employers, we'll talk to them about what they need. What's going on in their business so that we can get a really good understanding of where are the gaps and where are the gaps occurring in their business and what training they might need.

>> I love the on location aspect of it, because I feel like sometimes when you have to remove your staff from their workplace and send them somewhere else for some training, something gets lost in transition, I guess you could say. Then they have to take what they're learning in another place, bring it back and figure out how to apply it. But by doing it on site, they're right there in the moment, it sinks in a little bit better. They're more open to it because they're

in a comfortable setting that they're in every day anyway. It really checks a lot of boxes to making it more absorbable.

>> Perfect example of that is we partnered with UVA Community Health just recently. I went on site to their Culpepper, their Haymarket, and Prince William locations to roll out their new core values, their new vision and mission for the organization conducted activities to really bring home what those concepts mean to the organization. We were able to, in some cases, remove management so that everybody can brainstorm and feel comfortable and then bring management back in and say, this is what our core values mean to us, this is where mission means to us and our vision means to us. We just completed that a couple of months ago with UVA Community Health, and now we're going back into UVA Community Health for a quarterly leadership training program that is customized to them at their Prince William location. I don't like to say no, so if we can do it, then we're going to do it. We're going to do it in whatever way possible, because that's why we're here to support the businesses. I look at corporate training as we're our own nonprofit, so any of the revenue that we generate goes back into our training programs. We need to make money so that we sustain our salaries, and we're able to conduct the training that we do, but we're not all to make money. We're really here to support the community and help the area businesses develop their people.

>> It's interesting when you talk about going in to someplace like UVA being able to work with their staff on things like their core values and their mission. I think sometimes when people think corporate training, they're thinking, I'm just going to teach my manager how to manage, and it's not always about that. If you have someone in your business or two or three people that are new in leadership positions, and maybe the old person was gone, they got no crossover time where they could be trained by the person who had that position before them, this is perfect to be able to come in and set them up on the right foot right out of the gate.

>> I have a tour this Thursday with an employer, and they do not have a internal leadership development training program, and they're really looking for a mentor program, in some cases. Because of turnover and because of the number of generations that are working in the workforce right now, we have five generations working in the workforce. How do you transfer that knowledge and how do you transfer those skills amongst many different levels and types of individuals as you experience turnover. I'll be going in with my content developer and touring their facility and creating a program with them for them with their HR manager and their CEO to make sure that we're hitting the right chords, and what is sustainable when we back out of the training. If we back out of the training, what can they sustain then as a program and stand it up and keep the success of the program after we back out of it. We're even helping them from a consulting perspective in that regard.

>> That's great because going out and doing a tour, you're going to have an

objective perspective. It would not have occurred to me that five generations of workforce are in under one roof. That may not occur to someone to put their finger on as to where there might be a problem. Having someone like you come in from the outside and look at all of these things, you may be able to point out something that they haven't considered that could be part of the problem that they just haven't been able to put their finger on.

>> A completely different perspective. I always loved that whenever I was in business where you had somebody come in, in fact, I did not run my own strategic planning process at NW works. I had a consultant come in and do it for me because she was able to see some other things that I may not have been able to see.

>> You've got several programs, you've got a couple of events, a lot of them revolve around leadership Guy Curtis and I have talked about leadership Institute. We've talked about base camp, we've talked about leader cast that's coming up in May and in June. Let's take a break, and when we come back, let's jump into what some of those programs are, who they're for, how people can sign up and all of that thing. Does that work?

>> Perfect.

>> We are on the screen for Laurel Ridge Community College Day. Guy Curtis is with us, he is their Director of Marketing. Joining him is Deb Taylor, Deb is Director of Corporate Training for Workforce Solutions. We're going to talk more about training when we come back in just a couple of minutes.

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>> Welcome back to the Valley. Today I'm your host, Janet. Michael, it is Laurel Ridge Community College Day, 2nd, Thursday of every single month. Doug Curtis is on the Zoom with us. He is Director of Marketing for Laurel Ridge. Deb Taylor is joining him. She is director of Corporate Training for Workforce Solutions. That's what we've been talking about, Deb Gave is a pretty good overview of what corporate training is and it pretty much applies to virtually any employer out there that needs help training employees that needs help training management, that needs help developing their leaders. If any of those things rings a bell with you, then Deb is definitely the person that you want to reach out to. Deb do you do a ton of different programs that if somebody can't commit to having their own customized program, they can

participate in things like Basecamp where they can send their employees to that and they can learn the generals in addition to also offering a customized version of that.

Correct. We just kicked off our Basecamp in March, Basecamp meets every other week for 10 weeks. There's 24 hour sessions that folks work their way through. They have what we call a learning journal so that they're capturing what actions out of the training and the content that we instruct and take it back and able to implement it into their businesses. We even have businesses that want to send them with a mentor or they go back and report back to a mentor so that that mentor holds them accountable for putting actions into place based on what they're learning. March kicked off this Basecamp. We have businesses involved such as Tore Plastics, Culpeper County Public Schools, Tristate Nissan. Even the city of Winchester is participating in this Basecamp in an individual Berryville Graphics, Winchester imaging. You have a variety of different types of businesses. But because of the content and what the meaning of the content is and what the reach is into that job for that supervisor, new manager, new supervisor, or lead supervisor, they can take that and apply it back at their job and learn those skills and develop through the program with Basecamp.

Doug Curtis, we've talked about this in the past, is the ability for Laurel Ridge to create programs based on the feedback that you're getting from employers in the area. That's how Basecamp started. It came out of COVID with employers reaching out to the college saying they needed help.

Yeah, exactly. The perfect storm of COVID and what we learned from a post pandemic environment leadership was a big need with many employers. At the time was learning how to remotely manage and lead teams. But today, we've gotten even more dynamic with technology and the ability to Zoom and connect often with our employees and staff. But you're right. That's where Basecamp was the biggest need in terms of leadership development. I was a participant of our leadership excellence program that the corporate training group also provides. There's always a need for leadership development. It seems like it's a topic every single year that comes up, and that's why it's so great to have such a strong arm of our college within corporate training to be able to provide that to our local employers. I think a big point of it too is that it's local training, it's very affordable, flexible, sustainable, and it meets the needs of our local employers. Employers can come locally and not have to necessarily drive out of state or a national conference far away keeping it cost effective and flexible, is probably the biggest pivoting opportunity that this team can provide.

Deb that speaks to the fact that Leadership Institute is already sold out. It's got to be a great program if it's sold out already, and it checks all the boxes guy just mentioned.

It checks all the boxes plus more. Leadership Institute is a program over 11 months, and the really cool and interesting thing about institute is not only is it next level up training and development and upskilling, but we meet at area businesses. Those businesses that sponsor that one day a month program will provide a tour of their facility so that the participants that are going through the program can get to know the other businesses in the area. Southeastern Container, Westminster Canterbury, Navy Federal, is a great partner of ours, Ashworth Brothers, Thermo Fisher and Continental are some of our sponsors this year. The 20 folks, we max out at 20 because we really feel that we need to keep a smaller, class to focus in on the content and the leadership skills. They will go through the training. It's again, 11 months, eight hour days, but they'll take a tour, they'll have lunch at the facilities that we partner with. Which is great. It's a lot of peer-to-peer learning and sharing within the course work that is being done and in some cases, book reading and a little bit of homework thrown in there, too. It's not, hey, we're just going to go, and we're going to sit in class for a day, and we're going to forget about it for a month. No, there is accountability and responsibility. You're a leader, but you're also a student. You have to put yourself in that mindset. They really are able to then come back the last month of the training. All of the folks that go through the program, part of their training is how to present. You and I may have to present at a board meeting or in front of our peers or even run a meeting. They are leaders that have never had to gain presentation skills. Part of the training is how to present, and then the last day of graduation, if you will, they present on what they learned, how they took it back into their organization, and what change happened because of what they learned. All 20 of the participants do a presentation on graduation day to talk about what they've implemented, and we invite in their CEOs or their managers, their leaders, their VPs, whomever was their sponsor, mentor and supporters throughout the program, throughout the 11 months, they come in for lunch so that they can see their employee, their new leader present on what they've learned and what actions they want to put in place to impact the business and organization over time. It's a very unique approach, I feel to make sure that the development transfers back into the business.

Doug Curtis, I have woefully underestimated Leadership Institute, and I am totally putting it on my bucket list now because I need to know about these things.

I sign her up.

It's so wonderful as far as the opportunities there. I've seen some of the presentations given at Leadership Institute and the growth of those individuals as they come forward. It's a great thing. It is tough to dedicate time and energy to leadership development, but it's something you always have to keep up with because there's always a new way and an approach to how you present and work through leadership individually, but also with your teams that you manage and work with. Definitely, it's highly valuable. It's almost priceless in

the sense of what it is offering to you and the larger impact that gaining leadership skills. There's one particular part of the program that presents and talks about the butterfly effect, and how you as a leader impacts so many folks and the waves of folks you potentially touch and become influenced in some way or form with your daily interactions, and very powerful stuff. It's almost hard to explain, but you should dedicate some time and energy into developing your own leadership skill set.

Deb the impressive thing about workforce solutions and corporate training in general is the wide spectrum of people and employees that you serve. We've been talking, I would guess, in some cases, Leadership Institute are some of your CEOs, some of your higher level management. But then you do an entire day dedicated to the administrative professionals, which are, frankly, the people that are running everything that the CEO sometimes get credit for. You're covering both ends of the spectrum when it comes to leadership and training.

The administrative professionals day is these folks are the eyes and ears of the organization. Whatever organization you go into. I used to have an administrative person, and she would size people up before I even interviewed them. You trust these folks to support you, and that's what this is about. It's really a recognition event to recognize the administrative professionals and what they do for their organizations. Nationally, there's an organizational professionals day. On Wednesday, April 24th, we're holding administrative professionals Friday from 8:00-1:00. We have four speakers. They're going to speak. Tim Taylor coming back this year, who is amazing on AI and ChatGPT and how it can be implemented just really cool tips and tricks around AI and ChatGPT. We have G Forman coming back this year. Also, he'll be instructing how to grow your influence because these folks are influential in their businesses and impactful. Rachel Robinson is going to be talking about the impact. That an admin can have on an organization. She is pace certified, so professional administrative certificate of excellence. Pace is a program that corporate training also runs. We run it with the Department of Army, actually. It's a certificate. It's a certified nationally recognized program for administrative professionals. Rachel is going to be instructing that day, and then I'll be doing a peace, no pun intended on the peace index or life balance that is a takeaway from last year's leader cast, Jeremy Kubicek who wrote a book called the Peace Index. I'm going to be doing an activity around life balance as part of the Administrative Professionals Day. I do want to put out a plug. We are still looking for some folks. We're doing vendors this year so that the folks can shop a little bit at the vendors that want to set up, whether you are an independent consultant for Mary K or Avon or Pampered Chef or Sensei, or whatever that might be. We're looking for folks to donate a door prize, and you can set up and sell all day and you get to hear the speakers for free and get a free lunch if you want to set up as a vendor. That's what we're doing for the day. Again, it's on Friday, April 26th, Admin Professionals Day last year. We had a little over 125 people to attend.

Where can people get more information and register for that?

All you have to do is go to laurelridgewforce.com/APD.

That's easy enough, and Guy Curtis will make sure that I have all the links, so you can find those in the show notes page. We've got to wrap up in a couple of minutes, but I don't want to wrap up unless we talk about leadercast because I am really excited about the topic this year. We talked a little bit before we started recording about the fact that this is very action oriented. This is a checklist of sorts through leadercast this year.

It is a leadercast this year is being held at both the Middletown campus and the Fauquier campus, Middletown on May 23, Fauquier campus on June 14. It's 8:30 to 3:30. It is a full day of speakers and activities. It's a simulcast national cast of high level nationally recognized speakers and authors. This year's topic is ghoat G-H-O-A-T or greatest habits of all time. The content is more about what habits do you need to form to be successful in your entrepreneurship, in your role, as a leader, as a manager. What actually has led individuals to be successful? Not just that they are successful, but what do they do to be successful? What habits do you form to be a success? What can you do to be more successful in what you do in your God given talents today and bring those to your job in the way that could form new habits. Everybody has habits. Good batter and different, but these are high level nationally recognized speakers and authors. I'll throw one out, Lisa Bilyeu, who's the co-founder of Quest Nutrition. She's going to be speaking, also Dr. David Horsager who is the CEO of Trust Edge Leadership Institute to talk about what habits good leaders have and how you could put those into practice. Again, just building good business habits, networking, growing their organizations. We are selling tables, and we are selling individual tickets at both locations. Believe we may have sold out last year at our Middletown campus. We had over 150 close to 200 people attending our leadercast last year, and then we do activities to supplement the speakers because it is a simulcast. We will take breaks, and we'll do activities to reinforce the content and takeaways that we're putting together this year for folks to take back to their organizations based on the content. We review it before we show it so we're able to pull those nuggets out and be able to recap them for folks as they walk out the door. We'll give them that information.

That's important to note because I think sometimes people hear simulcast and they immediately discount it. They go, I don't want to go sit and watch TV or watch somebody on a screen talk at me for x number of hours. But the way that you break it up and have different activities based on who you just heard speak about a particular topic really does keep the group engaged, and you get more out of it that way. It's not as boring for lack of a better word as I think people think it is. It's much more interactive and much more engaging.

It is, and that's what we want them to come away with so that whenever they

leave, they're not going to forget about what they just heard.

What are the dates that you're doing leadercast in Middletown and at Fauquier?

Middletown is May 23, Fauquier is Friday June 14.

Where can people get details to register? Because I think you're right. I tried to sign up for leadercast last year and I waited too long and it was already sold out. I almost pulled my guy carts card, but I thought, no, I'm not going to do that.

I can get you in, Janet. Laurelridgeworkforce.com/leadercast.

Everything that we've talked about today, is there an umbrella place that people can go on the Workforce Solutions website to just see all of the things? How does that work to navigate?

You can click on corporate training as a heading. Everything under corporate training, all of our programs are there, our email address is there. If someone is listening and they want to reach out to me, we have a corporate training email address. It's just corporatetraining@laurelridge.edu. They can reach anyone on our four person team to get any information on any of the programs that we just talked about today.

I'll reiterate that there are no dumb questions. No matter how small or large your business is, if you've heard something today that is sticking in your brain, send an email. It never hurts to send an e mail and say, Hey, I heard this. I don't know that it would apply to us, but because you never know what the answer could be, and it could be a great answer that moves you forward.

It's true. I'm so glad you said that. It made me think I mentioned technology a little bit earlier. We did a partnership with the Commissioners of Revenue Association across the state for Excel training this past year. We did Excel Level 1, Excel Level 2, Excel Level 3 for the Commissioners of Revenue Association to upscale the Commissioners of revenue across the state, which was a really cool thing to do, but if they didn't ask, if the question wasn't raised, then we never would have been able to build that partnership.

Guy Curtis, tell me one more time. Where does everybody go to get more details?

Sure, laurelridgeworkforce.com/corporate, or simply workforce site or you the main college site and look for corporate training, and you'll be able to find all the program details there. But I think what Deb just said a moment ago about partnership, they are really partners in your success. Thinking about the needs of your organization and the flexibility, the affordability, and being local, I think is a huge impact. She was talking about earlier about some of the speakers

coming to the events like Ammon Pro and all the training that we do. It is local expert trainers so they're very familiar with our industries in the region. They support a lot of the training programs that we offer, and so I think it's a great opportunity to partner with the corporate training team and your success.

It's so much easier than thinking you can watch a video on YouTube and learn it because you don't get to engage and interact and ask specific questions to those YouTube video people. This way, you actually get a qualified professional trainer who's going to answer the question, how it applies to your specific business. It's so invaluable.

Exactly. I think leadercast to, for me, every year, that's the event where you get national best topics presented to you within a room with folks of you that you know locally. In other words, you're connecting and networking with many other peers within the region. I think that's why I've always leadercast has been my favorite go to because you'll catch all those nuggets from the year in one shot, plus best practices, too, from those national brands or global brands that are representing the best leadership strategy and tactics of the year. Get your ticket while you can before May sells out in Middletown and certainly Fauquier is going to fill up pretty quickly too in June.

Deb, I was telling you during the break. The thing that I love about leadercast this year is it's not just going to be somebody saying, I feel like I'm successful because I was organized, so be organized. They're going to say, I feel like I was successful because I was organized, and to be organized, here are the things that I do on a daily basis. That's what I need. Those little nuggets right there, and that's everything that leadercast is going to have.

Leadercast this year is going to be amazing. I made the mistake as a business professional. I never went. The number of years I've lived in Winchester. I never went and then, last year, when I started working for the college, I was like, my gosh, why didn't I do this before? It's really it's very impactful. As Guy was talking, it's very impactful and the takeaways are going to be great this year.

Deb, thank you for meeting up on the screen today and giving me all the details for this. I've got to clear a couple of my calendars.

Thank you, Janet. I appreciate the time. I really do.

Guy Curtis. It's always lovely seeing your face even if it's through a Zoom screen.

It's spring, it's baseball season. Everything's changing and looking good for the spring and summer months ahead of us. Glad to be on, and thank you so much, and we're looking forward to a next month and we're going to be celebrating commencement at the college. Believe it or not, we have more graduates coming through and we're open for fall and summer registration.

There's a lot more to celebrate next month with the college at Laurel Ridge.

I can't wait to hear about it. I will be back tomorrow with a brand new episode of The Valley today a few minutes afternooon, so meet me here then.