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March 11, 2014   (916) 358-1802

California Prison Industry Authority Launches
Technology Training Center for Female Offenders

FOLSOM – The California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA) along with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) announced today they are expanding education and job training programs for female offenders at the Green Valley Training Center, above Folsom State Prison and the Folsom Women's Facility.

In response to correctional realignment and the opening of the Folsom Women's Facility last year, CALPIA converted all programs at the Green Valley Training Center from male to female.

CALPIA is launching the Computer-Aided Design (CAD) program, a certification within the Career Technical Education division that enables female offenders to learn CAD produced by software company, Autodesk, in order to design products in the manufacturing and engineering fields.

Graduates will work alongside CALPIA engineering staff to improve existing correctional industry product designs and to develop new products for CALPIA.

The new certification program will also assist offenders in obtaining jobs upon parole in Architectural, Mechanical or Engineering fields.

"This program ensures offenders have the job skills they need to stay on a positive path toward employment when they are released," said CDCR Secretary and Prison Industry Board Chair, Jeff Beard.

This program is the first-of-its kind in the nation since it will be the only authorized Autodesk Training Center (ATC) housed at a state prison.

"Providing this high-tech program to female offenders is a win-win for Californians, not only will these women benefit from the training when it comes to getting a job, it reduces the likelihood they will return to prison, ultimately saving taxpayers money in the end," said Charles Pattillo, General Manager of CALPIA.

The average offender costs California taxpayers $60,000 a year in state prison. With a recidivism rate of less than 15 percent, CALPIA's CTE programs are some of CDCR's most successful vocational training programs.

Last year CALPIA's pre-apprenticeship Carpentry and Laborers programs at the Green Valley Training Center were converted from male to female offenders and the CAD program is the 3rd of four CTE programs available for the soon-to-be paroled women. The fourth program will be a Computer Coding course set to open this year.

Course participants are required to have some computer experience, math skills, and have a GED, at a minimum.

This course prepares the women to take an exam for certification through Autodesk in two different types of software: Autodesk Inventor (3D) and AutoCAD (2D).

There are 24 participants in the classroom and the certification program takes approximately 6 months to complete.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, there is a 10 percent increase in job growth for Mechanical Drafters with CAD certification in California and the annual average salary in this state for this occupation is $54,000.

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