



**CLEVELAND COUNTY
RECOVERY PROGRAM**



Cleveland County partners with Moore Norman Technology Center to stand up Aerospace Training Facility

Commissioners commit \$1 M in ARPA funds to purchase equipment for new aviation program

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NORMAN, Okla. (April 17, 2023) - On Monday, Cleveland County Commissioners voted to allocate \$1 million to Moore Norman Technology Center (MNTC) in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal funding to purchase equipment for Moore Norman Technology Center's new [Aerospace Training Program](#).

"This in-person program will prepare students to become certified as aviation maintenance technicians in three different areas — General Aviation, Airframe, and Powerplant — and will take approximately three semesters to complete," said Brian Ruttman, Moore Norman Technology Center superintendent and CEO.

MNTC's mission is consistent with Cleveland County's commitment to invest ARPA funds to support the economic success of the county and its residents.

"The aviation and aerospace industry is the second-largest industry in Oklahoma behind oil and gas. This new program will help meet the growing workforce demand and allow many Cleveland County residents whose jobs may have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 to gain the training they need to return to work," said Commissioner Rod Cleveland. "Our community asked us to focus the \$55 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal funding on projects that would provide critical support for our residents while also improving infrastructure and mitigating the economic impacts of the pandemic. This new aerospace program is the perfect example of how we can leverage those dollars to create long term impact."

Following a rigorous FAA approval process that began in December 2020, the MNTC program is poised for final approval next month. Construction of the new Aerospace Training facility is currently underway, and MNTC is expected to welcome their first cohort of students in August 2023. Adult students will comprise the first Aviation Maintenance Technician class. However, leaders hope to target younger participants through programs like the Oklahoma Aviation Academy, a partnership between Norman Public Schools, the University of Oklahoma and MNTC, where high school students can explore aviation and aerospace through STEAM-focused curriculum beginning their freshman year of high school. This early high school foundation will allow students to choose a career path before they graduate, with MNTC available to students who want to further their mechanical training beginning their junior year of



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high school. Moore Norman expects to have the high school program up and running in the next few years.

“MNTC’s new facilities are very impressive, and we should all be proud to have this outstanding resource right here in our backyard. I look forward to the benefits it will bring to our community,” said Commissioner Rusty Grissom. “The tools, hardware and aircraft elements being purchased with these ARPA dollars will enable students to learn about different aviation systems that are essential to the program's success.”

Investing ARPA dollars in this way creates long term economic impacts for the county as well.

“Many people don’t realize that about 30 percent of Tinker Air Force Base’s workforce lives in our county, and we want as much of that 16,000-plus civilian workforce as possible to continue to live, work, and play right here in Cleveland County,” said Superintendent Ruttman. “With this new program, students coming out of high school or those looking to retool from a lower skill/lower wage pathway could be making \$60,000 per year in just 18 months with little to no debt.”

“A strong, resilient, and diverse workforce for critical occupations and multiple industries, including aerospace, is imperative to Cleveland County’s economic recovery,” said former Commissioner Darry Stacy. “MNTC has a stellar track record of workforce development and is an important asset to our county and state. I am personally excited to see us investing ARPA dollars in a program that is sure to pay dividends in the future.”

For more information, please visit www.mntc.edu/aerospace or call (405) 801-5000.

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About MNTC

Moore Norman Technology Center is viewed as one of the nation's premiere career and technical educational training institutions within Oklahoma's globally recognized CareerTech System. By providing career-focused learning to high school and adult students, and customized training for businesses in Cleveland County and beyond, MNTC is committed to strengthening Oklahoma’s workforce through innovative and transformative instruction.

About Cleveland County

Cleveland County covers more than 500 square miles and a steadily growing population of close to 300,000 people (2020 census), making it the third most populous county in Oklahoma.

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