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CROWNPOINT - The welding program at Navajo Technical University concluded the 2017 fall semester with nine of its students earning their American Welding Society (AWS) certifications and seven graduating with a certificate in Welding Technology. The students who successfully completed the AWS exam include Ericson Chavez, Shawndell Francis, Elway Gordo, Livia Garcia, Ulrich Morgan, Daryl N. Yazzie, Julio Sombrero, Victor Billy, and Hector Lapahie.

“These students showed their commitment to this program and their work is a good example of what we have here for students wanting to be professional welders,” said Christopher Storer, instructor for the Welding Technology program at NTU. “Why would students want to go to Tulsa when you can learn it all and more right here at Navajo Tech?”

Mr. Storer arrived at NTU’s welding facility as an instructor for the program in spring 2017, and has since reconstructed the learning and demonstrational facility by building welding bays with individualized ventilation ducts. The upgrades to the learning site created more opportunities to reinforce student learning, while also expanding NTU’s capacity to award certifications through the AWS.

“The previous learning and welding classes were inadequate for students to properly learn the techniques necessary,” Storer said, who did the facility upgrades with the help of students. “They did a good job of creating a space they can engage and demonstrate what they are here for - to learn how to weld.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has concluded that career pathways in Welding Technology will have a job growth in the years to come, while the New Mexico Workforce website lists potential

career fields in welding to include: support activities for mining; construction of buildings; petroleum and coal products manufacturing; and oil and gas extraction. NTU developed its welding program in 2015 to meet the demand from these industries, which it hopes will translate to students earning gainful employment.

NTU's certificate in Welding Technology requires 32 credit hours, with 20 credits of core welding courses. Students gain an overall understanding of welding machines, welding processes, and hands-on welding proficiency, but they also develop skills in blueprint reading, welding inspection, destructive and non-destructive testing, metallurgy, computer-aided drafting, and precision machine tool operation.

For more information about the welding program at Navajo Technical University contact Chris Storer at cstorer@navajotech.edu or visit NTU's website at www.navajotech.edu .