

The latest updates on what is and is planned for the Uniquely Abled Project.



Welcome to the Uniquely Abled Project Newsletter

September 2016

An update as to what has been happening with the Uniquely Abled Project, and plans for the future.

Visit Our
Website

The Uniquely Abled Project

The UA Project Newsletter is to keep all those interested in the UA Project informed as to events and available resources.

The purpose of the Uniquely Abled Project is to

- Shift the societal paradigm from "disabled" to "uniquely abled".
- Provide vocational opportunities to uniquely abled folks

The UA Project currently has two programs: Uniquely Abled Jobs and Uniquely Abled Academy.

Send an e-mail to IRosenberg@UniquelyAbledProject.org to be added to the UA Project Newsletter mailing list.

How can you make a major (non-financial) contribution to the UA Project? Strike the word "disabled" from your vocabulary and only use the term "uniquely abled." Our experience is that almost everyone immediately "gets it" and is delighted with the new insight. Encourage others to do the same. Eventually "disabled" will disappear as have other pejorative and limiting words.

Celebration of Cohort 1

On August 26 the UA Academy at Glendale Community College celebrated the completion of the training portion of the program by the 13 students of Cohort 1 (the first UAA class). [Click here](#) for a copy of the Celebration Announcement.



After a welcome by GCC Superintendent/President Dr. David Viar, by VP, Instruction Michael Ritterbrown, and by [Ivan Rosenberg](#), UAP founder, many of the folks who had been involved in the program as instructors and support personnel shared their experience of the program.

A highlight were remarks by two of the students, [James W. Mollen](#) and [Armen Touloukhian](#) (click on their names to download a copy of their remarks).

All students were presented with Certificates from Glendale Community College, and acknowledgement certificates from Assemblymember Mike Gatto and

Supervisor Mike Antonovich.

Some students have decided to take additional CNC courses this Fall before starting jobs, and others will be exploring job opportunities right away.

Cohort 2 will start in the February/March 2017 timeframe, with applications opening probably in around October 2016. Watch the UAP website UniquelyAbleProject.org for announcements.

UAP Board Formed

A Board of Directors has been formed for the Uniquely Able Project as part of the organization's incorporation. The UAP Board members are:

- Yudi Bennett, Director of Operations, Exceptional Minds
- Scott Bowling, CEO, Exceptional Children's Foundation
- Evan Ingwers, Vice President, Wells Fargo Bank
- Jay Phillips, General Manager, Haas Factory Outlet
- Ivan Rosenberg, Founder and Executive Director, Uniquely Abled Project
- Jim Watson, President & CEO, California Manufacturing Technology Consulting

We anticipate filing of incorporation to take place during September, with the first Board meeting in October.



Video by American Built Media

On August 9 and 10, the UA Academy at Glendale CC was visited by a video team from [American](#)

[Built Media](#) (now named *Titans of CNC*). [Click here](#) for an article on American Built Media. Led by Titan Gilroy and his son, Tyson, the team interviewed and taped the operation of the UA Academy for broadcast later this year.

Titan and Tyson also shot a [short video](#) at GCC (posted on their Facebook page - requires logging into Facebook).

Titan owns a machine shop in Grass Valley, Calif., and attributes his learning CNC machines to his successful life after prison and the transformation of his son (who has Asperger's Syndrome) from someone who didn't talk to one of his best supervisors.



Titan's enthusiasm and advanced knowledge is inspiring. He firmly believes that American machine shops have the ability to outcompete on a world stage, if they would only take advantage of the latest technology and methods. For example, Titan runs his machines at 240 inches per minute

instead of the typical 10 inches per minute.

It was a stimulating day!



\$100K Gift from the Gene Haas Foundation

On August 10 the [Gene Haas Foundation](#) made a gift of \$100,000 to Glendale

Community College for the Uniquely Able Academy. Gene Haas is the founder and owner of Haas Automation, Inc., America's leading builder of CNC machine tools, which he started in 1983. His foundation and company have been exceptionally generous financial supporters of CNC training programs across the county.

Glendale Community College and the Uniquely Able Academy express their deepest thanks to both the Foundation and the company. The funds will be used for scholarships to help students attend who might be otherwise stopped.

[Click here](#) to read the story in the Glendale News-Press.

State Grants Funding for GCC UA Academy

The State of California Employment Development Department, in coordination with the California Workforce Development Board and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, gave the Verdugo Workforce Development Board \$178,571 to support the Glendale CC Uniquely Able Academy. The funds will be primarily used to support Cohort 2 to start in early 2017.

[Click here](#) to read the story in the Glendale News-Press.

[Click here](#) to read the Press Release from the Verdugo Workforce Development Board.

The Uniquely Abled Jobs Program

The UA Jobs program is focused on jobs that do not need specialized training, generally jobs with a high degree of repetition such as electronic assembly, deburring, buffing, filing, scanning, organizing, inventory management, etc.



Employers interested in hiring uniquely abled folks under the UA Jobs program can contact [Brian Larson](#) at the Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF). If the employer is not in ECF's service area, we will find the appropriate agency for that employer.

The Uniquely Abled Academy Program

The UA Academy program is focused on careers that require specialized training. The approach is to identify the unique abilities of folks with a particular diagnosis, and then match jobs in demand that require those unique abilities. The first career for which training is being provided is CNC (computer numerically controlled) manufacturing machine operator for those diagnosed with high functioning autism.



Projects underway:

- Identifying potential employers who could use good entry-level CNC operators
- Modifying the UA Academy program based on lessons learned from Cohort 1.
- Preparing for Cohort 2 at Glendale CC, to begin in February or March 2017
- Writing the UA Academy Guidebook to provide guidance for new sites
- Preparing the American Built Media video shot at Glendale CC for broadcast.

What's Next

Our main task over the next month will be to incorporate lessons learned from Cohort 1 into the UA Academy Program. We will also be preparing for Cohort 2, with the application period probably opening around October.

We also will be preparing a business plan and budget for operation of the

UA Project after incorporation.

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