USU Eastern Continues to Lead the Way for Utah’s Mine Safety

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Mining Instructor, Randy Mabbutt

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program at Utah State University Eastern recently received a $240,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration. Since 1979, USU Eastern (then the College of Eastern Utah) has received grant funding to provide the bulk of mine safety training in the state of Utah, according to CTE Director Ethan Migliori.

“Federal law requires that all miners receive basic and annual refresher training, and that all mine operators maintain an effective training plan,” Migliori said. “The grants cover training and retraining of miners working at surface and underground coal, metal, and nonmetal mines. Each recipient tailors the program to the needs of its mines and miners—including specific mining conditions and hazards miners may encounter—and provides technical assistance.”

Using Mine Safety and Health Administration materials, and under the direction of state departments of labor and state mine inspectors’ offices, the faculty at USU Eastern teach everything from new miner training to electrical certifications to mine rescue training. Training supported by the grant is industry-focused and non-credit though some of the training is applicable to certain credit certificates or degree programs at USU Eastern.

The university’s mining department has fluctuated in size over the years, and currently employs two instructors Randy Mabbut and Jeff Paserella—and staff assistant, Tawni Martinez.

Mining classes are offered regularly for new and experienced miners. An annual refresher course for miners pursuing retraining costs $51 and can be completed in one day with an 8-hour training session. New miners begin their training with 32 hours of instruction on underground mine safety at the cost of $91.
Classes are currently limited to 11 people due to social distancing guidelines, so prospective students must reserve their seat before the first date of instruction.

More information is available at eastern.usu.edu/cwd/mining and questions may be sent to Randy Mabbut at randy.mabbutt@usu.edu.

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