

Blue Mountain
Community
College
Central Oregon
Community
College
Chemeketa
Community
College
Clackamas
Community
College

Linn-Benton
Community
College

Clatsop
Community
College
Klamath
Community
College
Lane Community
College
Linn Benton
Community
College
Mt. Hood

Community
College
Oregon Coast
Community
College
Portland
Community
College
Rogue
Community
College
Southwestern
Oregon

Community
College
Tillamook Bay
Community
College
Treasure Valley
Community
College
Umpqua
Community
College

Francis Newton

Frances Newton worked in manufacturing in a temporary capacity at Hewlett Packard in Corvallis for six years when, in December of 2007, she and most of her fellow coworkers were laid-off, just as the economy starting taking a turn for the worse.

“They pretty much cleaned the place out,” Frances said of the area where she worked. “All of the manufacturing for that product was shipped to Singapore, mostly because it’s cheaper to build there.”

Frances always liked working with her hands, and while working at HP, she often spent time helping the maintenance technicians and engineers troubleshoot the equipment and product. At the time of her layoff, Frances was taking engineering classes at LBCC to improve her skills. After a year of classes, she decided engineering wasn’t the career path for her.

“I didn’t really want to sit behind a desk and design things,” said Frances. “I’m more of the hands-on type. I was looking into other programs at LBCC, and the college’s new Mechatronics program looked like a perfect fit for me.”

As the only female in the program at the time, Frances didn’t feel intimidated by her male counterparts. Everyone in the program was very supportive, she says, and she felt just like another student in the class.

After graduating from LBCC in June 2010 with an AAS in Mechatronics, Frances was hired back at HP, again as a temporary employee. Only this time she was hired as a Test Technician 6, the highest level of technician.



“Because of the knowledge I gained through the LBCC program, I now have process and maintenance duties,” says Frances. “I test the product and troubleshoot the proto-type tools, which is what I went to school to learn.”

With an eye on her future, Frances hopes her new skills will lead to a permanent position with the company. “Currently I have a one-year contract,” said Frances. “The difference is now, with my training, the door is open for me to hopefully move into a permanent maintenance position with the company.”