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By ROBERT PIERCE

- Daily Leader

Local residents can now get training for an in-demand medical career in their home community – on their home computer.

Seward County Community College/Area Technical School has partnered with Career Step, a leading health care education company, to offer training to individuals interested in pursuing careers in medical transcription.

SCCC/ATS will be hosting an information session at 6 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 21, in Room SW229D in the Student Activities Building at 1801 N. Kansas Avenue in Liberal.

Business instructor Sherry Farrell said Career Step officials will facilitate the program.

“They write the tests for all the places that hire transcriptionists,” she said. “They know what they’re looking for. The program is totally online. You never have to come to class.”

Farrell said the class is open access, which means once a person is signed up, they have a year to complete it.

“You can go through it in six months if you want to if you want to work really hard,” she said. “All the books, equipment, everything is included when you sign up.”

Farrell said once the program is completed, if a person scores with honors on the test, Career Step will provide job placement.

“You can actually work out of your house with this program,” she said. “This is a legitimate program. They partner with colleges. Actual transcriptionists train you.”

Farrell said Career Step officials will show the program at the Jan. 21 open house.

“They will go through it,” she said. “They’ll demonstrate it. They’ll show everybody how it works. They’ll answer all the questions that everybody has.”

Farrell said right now, there is no credit for the program, but she noted it is not needed to do transcription.

“You need the credential that says you know what you’re doing,” she said. “You passed the exam and get the credential. This trains you to do that.”

Farrell said the class has an open enrollment.

“You can start at any time, and you can go right through it,” she said. “If you need longer than a year, you can buy extensions for three months at a time.”

Farrell said SCCC/ATS is working to make the course a credit class.

“We’re going to work on that, hopefully, next year,” she said. “It takes a while to get a program approved. We want to just get it started.”

Farrell said there are many people who want to do transcription, but they do not want credit for the class.

“The advantage of credit is having financial aid and getting a certificate from Seward,” she said. “Some people just want to do the program. They want to get started working. They can do that now.”

Farrell said the program is beneficial for those who are house bound and mothers who can’t find a job or affordable day care.

“This is a good program for them,” she said. “Transcriptionists are in demand. You can also work at the hospital. Doctor’s offices sometimes hire transcriptionists. They are in demand. They’re very needed. They type up the medical records to put in the charts.”

Farrell said people can learn medical terminology and anatomy, but the program does not go particularly in depth about those items.

“They go through everything they need,” she said. “They will get training in how to recognize accents for physicians who are from other countries to listen to that and hear that and be able to type up the stuff that they said.”

Farrell said doctors dictate everything they do, and all of that information has to be typed up and put into patients’ medical records.

“There’s always a backlog of transcription that needs to be done,” she said. “That’s why hospitals will contract with these companies to hire transcriptionists outside of their home. The hospital here even contracts to get some of their transcription done.”

Farrell said transcriptionists can work part time if it is necessary.

“If you have a job doing something else, you can do this at home in your spare time,” she said.

Farrell said Career Step officials will tell how much transcriptionists get paid and show the companies they would work for during the open house. She added sign up does not have to be done that night.

“They can take the materials that will be provided and go home and think about it for two weeks,” she said. “If they still want to do that, they can come out and sign up.”

Those who do register for the class may qualify for a free laptop. Farrell encourages everyone to attend the open house to find out how.

She said the college became interested in the medical transcription class after she started a coding program. She said, at that time, people began asking if that was a transcription class.

“I began to see there were a lot of people out there wanting this program in the community,” she said. “The hospital said they need transcriptionists. They’re even thinking about sending some of their transcriptionists through the shortened version of it to renew their information or to get certified.”

Farrell said registrars at SCCC/ATS had likewise gotten calls about the school having a class for transcription.

“The community was asking for it, and I knew about this company,” she said. “We decided we would bring them in and talk to them, and we decided to go ahead and offer that.”

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