Industrial jobs not all gone
BCCC programs meets demand for welders

Beaufort County Community College is turning out welders hand over fist but not fast enough for local industries. Wesley Beddard, dean of instruction at BCCC, says he is proud of the welding program and of his dedicated welding instructor, Ted Clayton. The welding program is part of the Industrial Technology Division which also includes electronics, drafting, mechanical engineering and machine shop and automotive. "Very few community colleges our size have the number of industrial technology programs and the number of students in those programs that we do," Beddard told the Washington Daily News in an April 4, 2004 article by Eugene Tinklepaugh. "There's almost no school in the entire state that turns out as many welders as we do. We're one of the largest welding programs in the state, even though we're one of the smallest community colleges in the state."

Additionally, Beddard told Tinklepaugh, "We have an awful lot of students interested in (the program), and we are placing an awful lot of people in jobs in the area. Among the companies that have hired welders from BCCC's program are Flanders Filters, P&G Manufacturing, Camfil Far, Nacco Materials Handling, Pungo Machine Shop, C.S. Lewis Construction, Hatteras Yachts, Eastern Omni, Hackney Division of SVC, New Course Steel, Brown & Wood, Smith & Welding and the Naval Air Depot at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. BCCC offers a two-year associate's degree in welding technologies and various short-term certificate programs. Clayton centers his program around the needs and standards required in the industry. Students become certified in a particular area of welding and can land a job requiring that skill at the same time they attend BCCC night classes to work toward another certificate. After accumulating several certificates, students get closer to earning a diploma. With a few more courses, they can earn a degree. This method of working towards a degree in small steps is "unbelievably popular," Beddard said. BCCC also works with area high school students who come to the campus for the last period of the day to take welding courses, which also count towards their college degree. Clayton recruits from Southside, Northside and Washington high schools. The college also maintains a partnership with Mattamuskeet High School near Swan Quarter that keeps a welding instructor at the high school. For more information about BCCC's welding program, contact Ted Clayton, lead instructor of BCCC's welding program, at 940-6224 or the admissions office at 940-6233.