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Carr Announces Initiative on Community Colleges as Pipelines for 5G Jobs

WASHINGTON—Graniteville, SC - FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr visited the [Tower Installation Program](#) at Aiken Technical College today, which provides the practical and classroom training that enables workers to find jobs as tower climbers. Carr delivered remarks on ensuring the United States has the skilled workforce in place to build next-gen wireless networks and win the race to 5G. In particular, he identified the need for more Telecom Tower Technicians (known as “TTT-1”s) and how the U.S. can achieve that goal by expanding on Aiken’s model program.

“A skilled workforce is essential to winning the race to 5G and building next-gen networks in communities across the country,” said Commissioner Carr. “I’ve seen firsthand the work that tower crews are doing to deploy this infrastructure and the challenges they face in meeting the exploding demand for their services. Wireless crews estimate that they need an additional 20,000 skilled workers to complete this build. Here at Aiken Tech, Gemma Frock and her team have built a seven-week program that provides climbers with the right mix of physical, safety, and technical skills to land a good-paying job in this field. It’s time we build on the success here at Aiken and stand up similar tower training programs in community colleges and technical schools throughout the U.S. Doing so will address our country’s need for more TTT-1 certified workers and help close the skills gap by turning our country’s community colleges into pipelines for 5G jobs. I’m already working toward that goal with efforts underway through the National Wireless Safety Alliance to establish similar programs in other communities.”

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The [Tower Installation Program](#) at Aiken Tech trains students in accordance with the standards and internationally-recognized certifications, including [TTT-1](#), established by the National Wireless Safety Alliance. Nearly 100 percent of the program’s graduates are placed with a tower company in the Carolinas or in Georgia. As an accredited program, students have access to Pell Grants, VA funding, and other tuition assistance programs to support their education. Tower companies report that hiring a TTT-1 as opposed to a green hand reduces training time and churn, and saves thousands of dollars that can be put toward other purposes like hiring more workers and deploying infrastructure.

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