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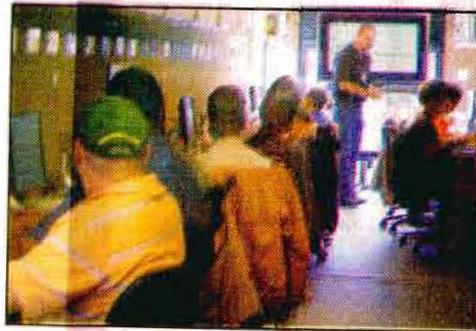
Luvata first in state to use new mobile training facility

262 By LEANN McCOY
Staff Writer

Grenada citizens were offered a look Wednesday into a unique mobile training facility that is temporarily located at Luvata.

According to Dr. Claudia Follet, director of grants and partnership development for Time Wise Management Systems, the mobile training facilities are part of the Rapid Advanced Manufacturing Placement program (RAMP) which is a two-week mobile job training program designed to help workers sharpen their manufacturing skills.

The program is funded through a \$500,000 grant provided from the governor's discretionary funds in partnership with Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Mississippi Partnership, Delta



Staff photo / Leann McCoy
Bob Capehart (standing) instructs 12 students at Luvata Tuesday.

Workforce Investment Area, and Time Wise Management Systems.

Follet said the program is provided at no cost to employers because of the grant.

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"We work with the employers to see what their needs are and try to match and tailor an employee base to meet their needs," she said. "The class of 12 we have in the program right now for Luvata is the first class to be taught by the RAMP program in Mississippi."

She said the mobile unit is outfitted with state-of-the-art equipment where the two-week program teaches workers the latest in manufacturing technology, improving their skills and heightening their chances for job placement.

Gary Golden, district Work Force Investment Act adult program director for Three Rivers Planning and Development, said the RAMP program is an innovative short-term employment program for long-term employment.

"Many of the goals our employers have are to get the right people in the right place, reduce the turnover rate, and keep the employ-

ees long-term," he said.

Derrick Austin, director of human resources for Luvata, said the opportunity presented reinforces the company's commitment to develop its employees.

"When an organization offers to train your employees, it's an opportunity that is hard to refuse, especially when we depend on a highly-trained workforce. It enables us to reduce the amount of time it takes for an employee to become productive."

Pablo Diaz, executive director of the Grenada Co. Economic Development District, praised the program.

"In these challenging economic times, we salute the governor's office's relentless support for economic development and their foresight in funding a program that makes an immediate, positive difference for both employers and employees," he said.

For more information, call Follet at (321) 266-1059.