

Eyeing Tesla, college offers 4-year degree in logistics

By Associated Press

RENO – A community college in Reno is becoming the first in Nevada to establish a new four-year degree in logistics to help meet anticipated demand for skilled workers at Tesla Motors and other high-tech companies moving distribution hubs to the region.

The state Board of Regents on Friday approved the Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Logistics Operations Management as well as a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Emergency Management Homeland Security – Public Safety.

The new programs will be offered for the first time at Truckee Meadows Community College in the fall semester of 2016.

Truckee Meadows President Maria Sheehan said it's the responsibility of community colleges to respond to changing economic climates as quickly as possible. "And that's the exciting part – when you can do something that is responsive that's going to address certainly jobs for the future and economic revitalization," she said.

The bachelor's degree in logistics will train students for operations planning, warehousing, sustainability, safety and operations.

"Logistics students have not had an option to continue to bachelor's studies in Nevada, and we want to keep these talented students in the state," said Mari Murgolo-Poore, dean of the college's Business Division.

The importance of such a program grew last fall when Tesla announced it's building a \$5 billion gigafactory at the Tahoe

Reno Industrial Center along Interstate 80 east of Reno to manufacture lithium batteries to power its electric cars.

The community college said the Tesla gigafactory will bring 3,600 construction jobs and 6,500 factory jobs to northern Nevada in the next three to four years. The majority of those jobs will require more than a high school diploma, school officials said.

"There's an absolute tsunami coming of opportunities," said Michael Pender, the managing director of Porous Power Technologies who works with companies that are moving into the area. The vast majority are looking for a trained, experienced workforce, he said.

Applied logistics is an integral part of all distribution hubs, Pender said, and that's why his original company decided to locate in the area in the late 1990s. "Distribution and logistics are key to so many industries that are here now and industries that are coming," he said.