WESTERN ARKANSAS TECHNICAL CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS – FORT SMITH

UNIVERSITY of ARKANSAS FORT SMITH

PEAK INNOVATION CENTER

UNCONVENTIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Western Arkansas Technical Center isn't your typical educational center. And that's exactly why WATC graduates are so sought after by employers.

Since 1998 WATC has delivered cutting-edge technical and career education to high school students in 22 districts throughout the River Valley. In that time nearly 10,000 juniors and seniors have earned more than 100,000 college credit hours and gained the skills necessary to advance their careers.

WATC's career-focused programming is designed in conjunction with some of the nation's leading industry partners and taught by experienced faculty from the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith. Students take a hands-on approach to learning using industry-leading technology at the UAFS campus and now, thanks to a partnership with Fort Smith Public Schools, at the new multi-million dollar Peak Innovation Center.

Through programming and industry exposure, students receive a direct connection to career opportunities in the region. Students who complete these courses can earn a competitive salary upon high school graduation and are better prepared to thrive in college.

The coursework students complete through WATC seamlessly transfer to UAFS, reducing the time and expense of earning a college degree.

Advanced Instruction. Cutting-edge Technology. Unconventional Excellence.

This is the Western Arkansas Technical Center at UAFS.

UNIVERSITY of ARKANSAS
FORT SMITH

At a Glance

Campuses: University of Arkansas – Fort Smith & Peak Innovation Center
Size of Learning Spaces: UAFS Baldor Center (100,000 square feet) – Peak Innovation Center (80,000 square feet with plans for future expansion)
Facility/Equipment Investment: Approximately $40,000,000
Facility Partners: University of Arkansas – Fort Smith & Fort Smith Public Schools
Academic Partner: University of Arkansas – Fort Smith

Programs

Applied Technology (UAFS Campus)
- Automotive Technology
- Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Welding Technology

Health Sciences (UAFS Campus)
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Medical Office Assistant

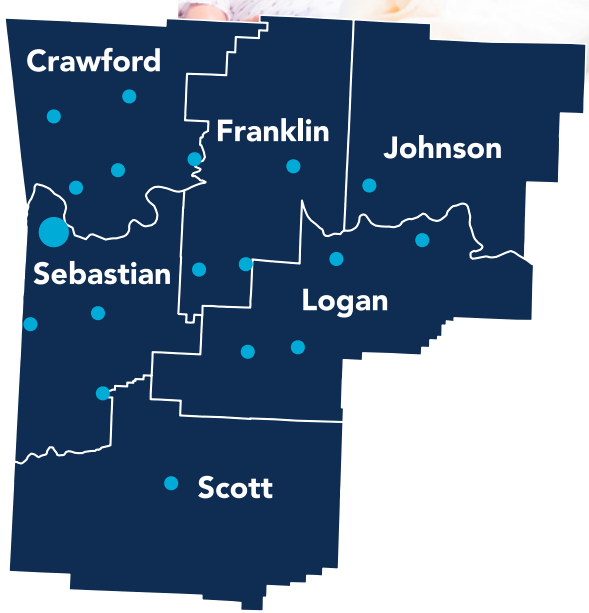
Advanced Manufacturing (Peak Campus)
- Computer Integrated Machining
- Electronics Technology
- Automation/Robotics

Information Technology (Peak Campus)
- Network Engineering Technology
- Unmanned Aerial Systems

Health Sciences (Peak Campus)
- Practical Nursing
- Emergency Medical Services (EMR, EMT)

School Districts Served

Alma
Arkansas Connections Academy
Arkansas Virtual Academy
Booneville
Cedarville
Charleston
County Line
Fort Smith Public Schools
Future School of Fort Smith
Greenwood
Hackett
Johnson County
Westside
Lavaca
Magazine
Mansfield
Mountainburg
Mulberry/
Pleasant View
Ozark
Paris
Scranton
Van Buren



PATHWAYS

APPLIED TECHNOLOGY

The need for skilled technicians and specialists continues to grow, especially in the automotive, construction, and digital graphics industries. The complexity of the modern manufacturing sector requires employees with advanced, experience-based knowledge and the ability to work in a team setting.

WATC's Applied Technology pathway offers three programs:

- Automotive Technology
- Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Welding Technology

These programs lay the foundation students will need to stand for industry certification and advance their academic careers.

UNIVERSITY of ARKANSAS FORT SMITH

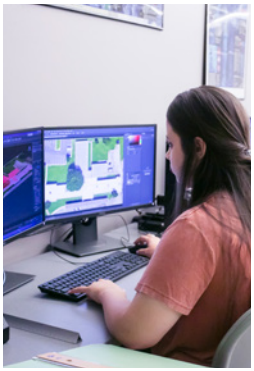
AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

With nearly 300 million registered vehicles on the road, the United States is one of the world's largest automobile markets. If you're an analytical thinker, love technology, and working with your hands then WATC's automotive technology program is for you.

Certified by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, Inc. (NATEF), this program provides students with the skills needed to inspect, maintain, and repair automotive engines and complex vehicle computer systems in order to begin a career as an entry-level automotive technician. Successful completion of the courses can lead to certification by the National Institute for Automotive Services Excellence (ASE).

Career Titles: *Automotive Technician, Service Technician, Field Service Technician*
Industry: *Automotive Dealerships, Independent Repair Shops, Manufacturing, Agriculture*
Outlook: *4 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$38,970*

COMPUTER AIDED DESIGN (CAD)



Combine your love for technology with your passion for creativity and enjoy a fun and lucrative career by becoming a computer graphic technician. You'll learn how to use the latest technology to create drawings, illustrations, graphics, and more.

In our program you will actively use computers to understand, analyze, and create models while gaining competency in basic drafting and design skills. Beginning with traditional 2-D board drafting and progressing to advanced 3-D animation, you'll learn skills in solid and parametric modeling using advanced computer aided drafting and design techniques.

Career Titles: *Digital Designer, Graphic Artist, Graphic Designer*
Industry: *Communication, Multi-media, Corporate, Manufacturing*
Outlook: *4 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$44,750*

WELDING TECHNOLOGY

Welding is essential to the United States economy, but as the current workforce ages, we find ourselves facing a welding shortage. You can help fill this gap, start a great career, and keep our economy moving by gaining the skills necessary to become a welder.

In this program you will learn basic and advanced welding in three areas (arc, tungsten inert gas, metal inert gas) along with basic welding layout and fabrication. Students must reach the American Welding Society (AWS) certification test standards for both structural and high-pressure vessel welding. Upon successful completion of both years of the program, you can earn certificates of proficiency in ARC, TIG, and MIG.

Career Titles: *Welder, Cutter, Solderer, Brazer*
Industry: *Construction, Manufacturing, Aerospace, Oil & Gas*
Outlook: *3 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$40,000 – $89,000 (varies by specialty)*

PATHWAYS

HEALTH SCIENCES

As our population ages, so too does the demand for skilled healthcare provider, making the Health Services sector one of the nation's fastest growing fields. If you're driven by a desire to make a real difference in the lives of others and enjoy a fast-paced environment, then this may be the field for you. Beyond the security and flexibility of an in-demand career, healthcare providers traditionally enjoy one of the highest levels of job satisfaction.

Two pathways are available with distinct programs to introduce students to a variety of healthcare career options and provide the foundational knowledge needed to enter this fast-paced, rewarding field.

The Health Science pathway programs combine practical instruction with clinical experience to provide you with the foundational knowledge needed to begin a career in health care or obtain advanced credentials through continued higher education.

Programs:

- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Medical Office Assistant
- Practical Nursing*
- Emergency Medical Responder*

**Students will complete these courses at the Peak Innovation Center*

UNIVERSITY of ARKANSAS FORT SMITH

CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT (CNA)

The certified nursing assistant program introduces students to a variety of health careers and the related medical terminology. Students are actively engaged clinical settings, working directly with residents of local long-term care facilities. Upon successful completion of this one-year program, students may fulfill requirements to take the CNA certification exam.

Career Title: *Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)*
Industry: *Home Health Care – Personal Care Aides – Nursing Assistants*
Outlook: *8 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$26,000*

MEDICAL OFFICE ASSISTANT

Students learn to assemble patient health information, ensure proper completion of all forms, and record information using various computer applications in addition to proper management of patient records and medical coding and billing. The curriculum emphasizes high standards of proficiency in communication, technology, and information management.

Career Titles: *Medical Office Assistant – Administrative Specialist*
Industry: *Hospitals, Healthcare Offices*
Outlook: *19 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Pay: *$31,000*

PRACTICAL NURSING

This program, approved by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN) offers the opportunity to earn a technical certificate in practical nursing. Admission into this program is competitive, but accepted students will receive a combination of classroom instruction in a state-of-the-art facility with clinical experience in the care of clients at local healthcare facilities. Practical nursing graduates are able to apply for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN) upon reaching the age of 18.

Career Titles: *Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurse (LPN, LVN)*
Industry: *Hospitals, Residential Care Facilities, Physician Offices, Government*
Outlook: *9 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$40,760*

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONDER

Peak offers certifications in emergency medical technician (EMT) and emergency medical responder (EMR), careers that combine a love of helping others with the desire to work in a fast-paced environment. An EMT has the practical medical knowledge and skills necessary to quickly evaluate and stabilize patients. The knowledge gained at this level provides the foundation for all future certification. EMR's are typically first to respond to emergency situations, delivering life-saving care to patients and providing assistance to higher-level personnel both at the scene and during transport to a hospital.

Career Titles: *Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) – Paramedics*
Industry: *Ambulance Services, Hospitals, Government*
Outlook: *6 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$34,660*

ADVANCED INSTRUCTION

Students accepted into the Western Arkansas Technical Center will be taught by some of the region's most accomplished instructors. WATC faculty are the same professors leading advanced coursework at UAFS. These seasoned professionals bring decades of industry experience into the classroom, ensuring WATC graduates have the skills necessary to excel in their collegiate and career pursuits.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

In addition to expert faculty, WATC students have access to multimillion-dollar facilities and laboratories in which they receive hands-on experience utilizing industry-leading equipment. The Baldor Technology Center at UAFS offers students access to 28 laboratories, advanced technology, and a suite of student support services. Thanks to a partnership with Fort Smith Public Schools, WATC students now have access to the remarkable Peak Innovation Center, a multi-million dollar facility delivering new programs and opportunities for WATC students to learn and succeed.

EARN YOUR DEGREE

Courses offered through WATC can be applied toward bachelor degrees. Save time and money earning your degree and get a head start on your future.

LOCATION MATTERS

Western Arkansas Technology Center students benefit from the services offered at two locations, with access to ultra-modern technical training at both UAFS and the new satellite campus at Peak Innovation Center.

WATC graduates receive more than workforce-ready skills; they also receive a head start on their college dreams. Completed course credits can be transferred to UAFS at no cost, saving students thousands of dollars in tuition.

All WATC students receive a UAFS ID which provides many additional benefits including:

- $10 per semester for printing on campus
- Access to the Recreation and Wellness Center (RAWC)
- Free entry into all UAFS athletic events

Also provided at no cost are transportation, books, fees, supplies, and fees to earn industry certifications.


PEAK
INNOVATION CENTER

WATC and the Peak Innovation Center

Students accepted into WATC have the option of selecting programs and coursework delivered at the Peak Innovation Center. These courses are delivered by UAFS faculty, designed to industry standards, and focused on the student's career success.

The Peak Innovation Center offers three program pathways:

Advanced Manufacturing
- Computer Integrated Machining
- Electronics Technology
- Automation/Robotics

Information Technology
- Network Engineering Technology
- Unmanned Aerial Systems

Health Sciences (program descriptions found on page 7)
- Practical Nursing
- Emergency Medical Responder

The Peak Innovation Center is a partnership between Fort Smith Public Schools and UAFS that delivers cutting-edge technical and career education to high school students in 22 school districts throughout the River Valley.

PATHWAYS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing in the 21st century is highly automated and designed to continuously operate in efficient, clean, climate-controlled environments. In order to maintain this level of productivity, employers need a skilled workforce that's adept in modern technology, computerized production processes, and strategic workflow methods. If you love to work with your hands, as well as your mind, our Advanced Manufacturing pathway is for you.

Peak's Advanced Manufacturing pathway offers three distinct programs:

- Computer Integrated Machining
- Electronics Technology
- Automation/Robotics

Each pathway builds on a common set of classes to provide you with fundamental knowledge that will benefit your long-term goals. This foundation gives you the opportunity to more easily delve into specialized manufacturing fields in future academic courses. Through Peak you'll become a specialist rather than generalist, and better prepared for a successful career.

Median wage figures from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. www.bls.gov

PEAK INNOVATION CENTER

COMPUTER INTEGRATED MACHINING

Today's manufacturing world is complex, fast-paced, and reliant upon sharp minds as well as advanced processes, technology, tools and equipment. In the Gene Haas Computer Integrated Machining Lab, students will be trained on state of the art equipment and technology and will receive theoretical and practical education on machine shop operations, manufacturing and machining processes, use and care of tools and machines, technical drafting (CAD/CAM) and interpretation of blueprints, computer numeric control programming, and requirements for quality work.

Career Titles: *CNC Machine Operator, Machinist, Machine Tool Operator, Tool and Die Maker, Advanced Manufacturing Technician*
Industry: *Manufacturing, Public Institutions, Government, Specialty Machining Shops*
Outlook: *3 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$37,340*

ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY

Students who enter the electronics technology program will gain the skills needed to solve complex problems through the use of technology. In the ABB Electronics Technology Lab, students will learn how to install, maintain, and repair machinery, equipment, and processes used by manufacturing and industrial companies. The courses in this pathway cover a range of integrated fields such as advanced manufacturing, engineering, sciences, and technology.

Career Titles: *Industrial Maintenance Technician, Advanced Manufacturing Technician, Engineering Technician*
Industry: *Electromedical, Manufacturing, Governmental, Engineering Services*
Outlook: *2 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$62,080*

AUTOMATION/ROBOTICS

Advancements in industrial innovation, productivity, and global competition have led to an increasing demand for automation and robotic technicians and programmers in advanced manufacturing operations. In the ABB Automation and Robotics Lab, students will develop the skills necessary to design, develop, and maintain automation and robotic systems as well as build automation solutions and program robots to perform intricate assignments.

Career Titles: *Automation Technicians, Robotic Technicians, Advanced Manufacturing Technicians, Engineering Technicians*
Industry: *Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation, Engineering Services*
Outlook: *3 percent growth*
National Median Wage: *$39,810 - $58,350 (varies by specialty)*

PATHWAYS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

As technology advances so does the industry's need for skilled professionals to deliver effective, efficient, and secure information technology services. This pathway prepares you to go directly into a specialized career in computer networking. With the number of cyber attacks on the rise and confidential information becoming increasingly vulnerable, the need for networking specialists and information security analysts is expected to grow.

Peak's network engineering technology (NET) program will teach you to design, administer, maintain, and support local and wide area networks (LANs and WANs). Those who graduate from the unmanned aerial systems (UAS) program will be introduced to both the operational and analytical aspects of UAS systems.

The Peak Information Technology pathway offers two programs:

- Network Engineering Technology
- Unmanned Aerial Systems

NET graduates will be qualified for exciting technological roles in network design and installation, infrastructure security and maintenance, incident response, inter-network communications, network monitoring, and administration and cyber security. UAS graduates will have the foundational skills necessary to succeed in this burgeoning career field.

NETWORK ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Turn your love of computers and virtual networks into a lucrative career by becoming a network engineering technician. Network engineering technicians, also known as network architects, combine programming skills with imagination to construct robust computer networks for businesses and their employees.

This program equips students with the skills they will need to enter the workforce as a computer network support specialist progressing to the level of a network and system administrator. Courses of study that will allow high school students to qualify for a technical certificate include:

- Introduction to Program and Networking
- Wiring and Cabling
- Electrical Circuits and Components
- Fiber Optics
- Cloud-Based Computing
- Network Security

Certificates of proficiency will be awarded in networking technology and supporting technology customers.

Career Titles: *Network Engineer, Network Architect, Computer System Administrator*
Industry: *Educational Services, Computer systems Design, Government, Finance & Insurance*
Outlook: *4-8 percent growth*
Arkansas Median Wage: *$39,450 - $63,380 (varies by specialty)*

UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

Much more than toys or hobbies, unmanned aerial systems (popularly known as drones) have become a vital tool for industry and a lucrative career option. A 2019 study by Research and Markets predicts the global drone service market will grow 51.1 percent by 2027. Licensed operators are sought after by employers in a variety of industries including real estate, agriculture, manufacturing, oil and gas, and much more.

Our program has been selected by the Federal Aviation Administration for inclusion in its Unmanned Aircraft Systems-Collegiate Training Initiative. This UAS-CTI designation ensures graduates stand out from competitors in the workforce. The relatively recent availability of this career field limits historical salary ranges but according to PayScale, drone operators make a median salary of $48,000.

Career Titles: *UAV Pilot - Drone Pilot, Drone Operator*
Industry: *Oil & Gas, Construction, Agriculture, City/State Government, Law Enforcement, Self-Employed Contractor*
Outlook: *100,000+ jobs by 2025*
National Average Pay: *$51,000 - $70,000 (varies by certification/experience)*


TECHNOLOGY
PEAK
INNOVATION CENTER
AUTOMATION


ADVANCED MANUFACTURING
GENE HAAS
COMPUTER INTEGRATED MACHINING LAB


Mercy

BELIEVE. BELONG. BECOME.

Student,

The information on the previous pages represents the culmination of more than four years of brainstorming, strategic planning, collaboration, development, and investment by countless individuals and organizations. The Peak Innovation Center leverages investments topping $20 million, and throughout the work it has taken to bring Peak to life, you should know that you have been the focus of our efforts.

As business, industry, and community leaders, we take our responsibility seriously when it comes to driving the economy of our region forward. With the help and commitment from many, we work hard to be good corporate citizens as well as the financial engine for thousands of employees, who are our families, friends, and neighbors. Ultimately, the efforts we make at providing career opportunity and community support, are only possible if the workforce in our region continues to be skilled and experienced. As a young adult, we understand that your ability to experience career opportunity is incredibly important, and that is why the Peak Innovation Center is something we hope you will consider.

At Peak career and college bound students will have the chance to learn hands-on in a cutting-edge environment directed by University of Arkansas – Fort Smith instructors who bring industry experience to the classroom. Through programming and industry exposure, you'll receive direct connection to career opportunities in our region. Preparing for one of those careers not only provides you the ability to earn a competitive salary right out of high school, but better prepares you for any college ambitions you might have. The coursework you complete as a Peak student will seamlessly transfer into enrollment with UAFS, and in some cases you can graduate high school very close to the completion of an associate degree.

We hope you'll choose to believe in yourself, decide to belong at Peak, and become a highly skilled professional in our community. Share this information with a parent or guardian and talk with your counselor to find out how to enroll.

Best wishes,

Industries of Western Arkansas

APPRENTICESHIPS

To supplement classroom exposure, students gain practical experience during later-term apprenticeships which are modeled to provide real-world learning throughout the student's senior year, allowing them to capitalize on the technical concurrent college credit offerings at Peak and WATC. The ongoing, aligned support of our K-12 partners is critical to a student's successful transition into the workplace or their pursuit of a college degree.

Changing perceptions about the value an apprenticeship has for both students and industry requires an adjustment of delivery methods and expectations. Students are expected to hone the professional and technical skills that will allow them to become competitive candidates in the workplace.

Our apprenticeships hold high expectations for industry partners. In order to participate in the program and engage with the diverse and proficient talent being produced through the technical centers, companies will be required to demonstrate their commitment to our modern apprenticeship model.

UNCONVENTIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Western Arkansas Technical Center at the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith is the River Valley's preeminent choice for advanced technical and collegiate preparatory programming. Why wonder about the future when you have the power to create it? Follow the simple steps below to start your professional and educational journey with WATC and UAFS.

Next Steps

- **Sophomores:** You have the opportunity to tour–either virtually or in-person–the WATC programs during the early spring semester. Tours can help you choose the career path that is right for you. You will begin the application process during the December/January time period.
- **Parents:** You have the opportunity to participate in a virtual preview night. Preview nights are the perfect opportunity to learn more about a specific career path and ask questions of program leaders and administrators.
- **High School Juniors and Seniors:** Follow the process below to be considered for admission to WATC.
    - o **Complete a WATC Registration Packet:** Return the completed application to your counselor before the last school day in March to receive priority consideration for the following school year.
    - o **Complete a UAFS Online Application:** This application is open and available on the front page of the UAFS website (uafs.edu).
    - o **Attend the New Student Orientation Night:** Orientation night takes place in late April. Attendees will learn about specific career paths and have the opportunity to ask questions of program leaders and administrators.

The pathway to a successful future awaits at the Western Arkansas Technical Center at the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith. Learn more by visiting us online at **academics.uafs.edu/watc** or by calling 479-788-7720.

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Western Arkansas Technical Center
Baldor Technology Center
5100 Kinkead Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72913
479-788-7720 • academics.uafs.edu/watc

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5900 Painter Lane, Fort Smith, AR 72903
479-785-2501 • peakinnovationcenter.org