

## CV Businessman To Teach Women Welding Class

By : Emma Krasov : 4/29/08

You can normally catch Scott Miner of Castro Valley working in his dark blue baseball cap, but on any given day he wears many hats.

Besides owning and managing the well-loved Lime Leaf Thai restaurant in the Village with his wife, Noon, Miner works on metal sculptures, is a juror for the future Library art collection, and teaches welding at a community college.

“We are offering a new class for the Fall semester,” he said referring to Las Positas College where he works as a welding instructor.

“In addition to our introductory course on welding, I’ll teach a class for women who want to make it their profession, to become welding engineers, and to succeed in the field.”

Currently, Miner’s female students are mostly artists, who take welding for the purpose of creating artwork, or just to try and see if that’s something they would like to do.

“It’s relaxing, it’s fun, you do your own thing,” he said, describing a casual atmosphere of his class, taken mostly “for fun.”

When the new class opens its doors, it will also open the opportunity for women to learn a male-dominated profession, and to bridge a gap between the retiring welders and the expected 100,000 job openings in the field in the next five years (according to the American Welding Society).

“We do target men, too,” said Miner, “but we can’t forget the other 50% of the population. When women are trained as welders, they can do as well as men. Speaking from experience, women do consider welding as a potential career, and they can make a good living out of it, all they need is training.”

To help this plan come to fruition, Las Positas Community College applied for a National Science Foundation Grant, and succeeded in getting it, administered through the Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science, located in Alameda.

The Institute’s founder and director of 14 years, Donna Milgram, visited Las Positas with an educational workshop for the future classes’ instructors.

“Las Positas is forging a way for other colleges to attract and retain women in traditionally male-dominated professions, like automotive and welding,” she said. “Our Institute provided 500 copies of recruiting posters, and a budget for software helpful for retaining women in the field, also budget for instructors’ training, implementation of strategies, and a learning library.”

The Institute's website, among its other features, offers E-mentoring, an E-Job Center, and Women Tech Talk, where participants discuss any issues they might come across in their everyday work.

"We implement the National Science Foundation Grant to colleges in the form of programs and materials," said Milgram, "Las Positas is one of those progressive venues that is sharing its experience with other colleges to help us involve more women into the traditionally male-dominated professions."

Called Cal Women Tech, Las Positas' program includes an opening of the Women Technicians Club this Spring, just in time for the Women in Technology Open House, slated for May 21.

The Open House will highlight Welding and Automotive Labs during this Ladies' Day, where men are also welcome, and will provide close up lab demonstrations, hands-on experience, and information on career opportunities.

For more information about the programs, please contact Scott Miner (welding) at (925) 424-1171 or you can visit: [laspositascollege.edu/WELD/index.php](http://laspositascollege.edu/WELD/index.php), and/or Brian Hagopian (automotive) at (925) 424-1134 or you can visit: [laspositascollege.edu/AUTO/index.php](http://laspositascollege.edu/AUTO/index.php).

Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science website is found at: [womentechworld.org](http://womentechworld.org).

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