



BMW SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Bringing a traditional German apprenticeship to America



The rapid pace of digitalization, electrification, artificial intelligence, and autonomous driving is transforming the automotive industry. Recruitment and retention of a skilled and talented workforce – at all ages and career stages – is one of the most important challenges in today's business environment. Advancing the skills of our workforce is a priority for BMW Plant Spartanburg.

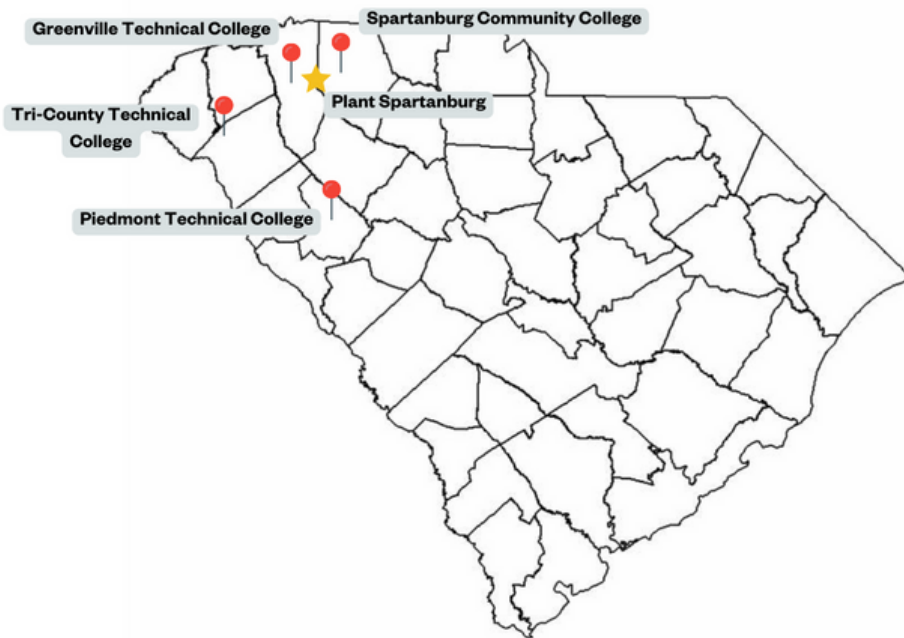
To ensure a pipeline of talented, educated individuals who possess the highly technical skills needed to manufacture and are capable of maintaining some of the most advanced vehicles on the road, BMW's manufacturing plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina offer several recruiting partnerships that deliver two-year, four-year and graduate school employment candidates.

One such program is the BMW Scholars Program. More specifically, this is one of several initiatives that BMW Plant Spartanburg is utilizing to solidify its workforce foundation in advance manufacturing/emerging technologies in areas that includes; high-voltage battery systems, stamping, autonomous driving, robotics, and mechatronics.

SUMMARY

- BMW partners with four two-year technical schools to give hands-on-experience needed to become highly-technical workers.
- Efforts are meant to ensure a pipeline of talented, educated individuals who process the skills needed for automotive manufacturing.

The BMW Scholars Program in particular is an apprenticeship for students enrolled in two-year career paths related to manufacturing technology. Founded in 2011, the BMW Scholars Program is a U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeship program (RAP), and it offers the healthcare and wage benefits of a traditional apprentice program found in Germany with the additional advantage of tuition assistance. In the program, students attend class full-time and work at the BMW plant for 20 – 25 hours per week. This is a great example of how collaboration between the educational and manufacturing sector can lead to employment and far better outcomes and opportunities for the next generation.



BMW partners with four technical colleges—Spartanburg Community College, Greenville Technical College, Tri-County Technical College, and Piedmont Technical College—to offer apprentices part-time, hands-on work alongside their studies.

"The new training center will ensure BMW technicians are highly trained and skilled in the latest automotive technologies and are prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow"

BOBBY HITT, FORMER
SOUTH CAROLINA
SECRETARY OF
COMMERCE



Scholars have graduated in areas, including Automotive Technology, Equipment Services (ESA), Production, Logistics/Supply Chain Management, and Computer Technology, and each graduate is offered a job post-graduation. In the BMW Scholars Program's 11 years, it has produced 364 graduates. In 2018, due to the increased demand for these specialized roles, BMW increased the size of the two-year program to 200 apprentices.

In February 2021, BMW Plant Spartanburg broke ground on a new \$20 million, 67,000 square-foot training center on the BMW campus to house all learning initiatives for the plant population including the new home for the BMW Scholars Program.



- The investment is a continuation of BMW's 2017 commitment to invest \$200 million over five years into workforce training.
- The new facility will open this fall.

“Developing and sustaining a skilled workforce is critical if companies want to stay competitive in the digitalization of manufacturing technology. The BMW Scholars program allows us to recruit, train, and grow our talent so these associates can make an immediate impact in the company.”

**SHERRY MCCRAW, VICE
PRESIDENT OF HUMAN
RESOURCES, BMW
MANUFACTURING**

The BMW Scholars program continues to gain momentum, and in 2021, BMW added two additional programs—BMW Rising Scholars and BMW Fast Track. The BMW Rising Scholars Program is a RAP that allows high school seniors to work part-time at BMW Manufacturing while attending high school and a participating Career and Technical Education (CATE) center. Just like the BMW Scholars Program, Rising Scholars is registered as an Apprenticeship Program with U.S. Department of Labor. The BMW Fast Track Program hires recent graduates or experienced individuals who have an associate degree in a technical field, such as mechatronics or automotive technology, to go through BMW's rigorous qualifications programs and directly pursue full-time employment.

BMW Manufacturing recently held graduation ceremonies for its 11th class of BMW Scholars. The 44 Scholars completed their course work and training requirements and were officially offered full-time jobs at BMW Plant Spartanburg. In addition, 13 high school seniors successfully completed the inaugural Rising Scholars program. "This is an exciting time for these students to know when they complete their education and training requirements, they have a well-paying job waiting for them," said Paul Sinanian, manager for Talent Programs and Training, BMW Manufacturing.

