



## Shale potential spurs efforts to train home-grown workers

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On Oct. 7, a group of Zane State University graduates picked up certificates that put them in the oil and gas business. It was the first class in a three-week program that qualifies students to work on a drilling rig.

Sinking and operating gas wells aren't jobs usually seen as needing college-level training. After all, some of the jobs have names like "roughneck" and "tool pusher." But it does take special skills to open a well, keep the product flowing and not get hurt. The only two ways to get it are on the job and in the classroom.

As gas and oil companies get ready to drill into shale formations in eastern Ohio in earnest, Ohio's colleges are getting a work force ready. A study by energy industry groups said shale gas production could lead to more than 200,000 jobs in the next four years.

Initially, most companies will have to import workers from states where there already has been lots of drilling, such as Texas and Oklahoma, said **Will Darroh**, co-founder and senior partner of Piper-Morgan Associates Personnel Consultants, a Houston company that specializes in recruiting and filling jobs in the energy industry.

Some people would be able to find work even if they had never been on a rig – welders, pipe fitters, electricians and general construction workers, he said. But the less specialized the job, the lower the pay. The least skilled person on a rig might earn only \$10 an hour, he said.

Read the full article here: <http://www.bizjournals.com/columbus/print-edition/2011/10/28/efforts-under-way-to-train-workers.html> (may require subscription)