

MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
U.S. Department of Transportation
Center of Excellence (CoE) for Domestic Workforce Training and Education

Hinds Community College – Raymond & Vicksburg, Mississippi

The Secretary of Transportation redesignates Hinds Community College (HCC) as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE) for its strategic location, comprehensive inland waterway programs, and strong workforce consortium partnerships. Operating as the only maritime training center along a 600-mile stretch of the Mississippi River between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Paducah, Kentucky, HCC serves as a critical workforce engine for river commerce and coastal industries.

Operational Footprint & Assets

Raymond Campus (Primary Main Campus & Technical Hub):

- **Ashore Technical Pathways:** Serves as the primary instructional center for state-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) tracks supporting maritime manufacturing, shipyards, and port infrastructure. Programs include Electrical Technology, Welding and Cutting Technology, Electro-Mechanical Technology, Mechatronics Technology, and Precision Manufacturing & Machining Technology.
- **Ashore Logistics Hub:** Integrates specialized Logistics Technology AAS degree tracks at co-located centers to train supply chain, procurement, and materials management personnel.

Vicksburg-Warren Campus (Dedicated Inland Waterway & Maritime Hub):

- **Afloat Career Track (Marine Transportation Technology):** Delivers the state-approved AAS degree, a Technical Certificate (Tankerman Option), and a Career Certificate (Deckhand Option). Core courses cover Basic Marine Safety, Lines & Rigging, Vessel Security, Cargo Systems, and Loading Operations.
- **Inland Waterway Maritime Academy Expansion:** Actively expanding its Vicksburg campus footprint through a \$1,000,000 Mississippi State Legislature appropriation to renovate a 15,000-square-foot dedicated training facility across from the River City Early College High School.
- **USCG Approvals & USACE Robotics Training:** Delivers USCG-approved courses for Tankerman / Tank Barge Dangerous Liquids and Firefighting. Provides specialized robotics training to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) River Operation personnel for the Armor I Mat Sinking System and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for levee/bridge inspections.

Workforce & Regional Impact

- **High Volume Throughput & Placement:** Trained 1,220 unduplicated mariners between 2014 and August 2023, achieving a near 100% post-training employment rate with partner companies upon program completion.
- **High Completion Metrics:** Achieved a 95.24% program completion rate (140 out of 147 participants completed) during the July 2022–August 2023 reporting cycle.
- **Maritime Consortium Fleet Partners:** Maintains direct hiring and apprenticeship partnerships with major river towing and shipbuilding operators, including Golding Barge Line

(hiring over 450 deckhands through HCC), Yazoo River Towing, Magnolia Marine Transport, Big River Shipbuilders, and Ingalls Shipbuilding (structural fitting and shipfitter pipeline).

- **K-12 Early College & Apprenticeships:** Partners with the Vicksburg Warren School District and Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) under WIOA to deliver dual-credit maritime CTE tracks, creating a seamless transition from high school into registered apprenticeship programs and full-time maritime careers.

Strategic Outlook

Supported by state capital investments and federal workforce initiatives through AccelerateMS, Hinds Community College continues to expand its Inland Waterway Maritime Academy to deliver advanced training for higher-paying positions, including tankermen and river pilots. By integrating autonomous aerial surveying, industrial robotics, structural steel fitting, and traditional deckhand seamanship, HCC ensures the operational continuity and safety of vital commercial fleets navigating the Mississippi River Basin.