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NMJC Industry Day event offers public look into oilfield training

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NEWS-SUN

Attendees at the New Mexico Junior College Industry Day received a guided tour of the school's training facilities Wednesday afternoon.

The NMJC Training and Outreach center's first-ever annual Industry Day, was open to the public, city and county representatives and elected officials, as they learned more about the type of training offered for those interested in the oil and gas industry.

After listening to various speakers educate listeners about topics including transportation and workforce training, attendees took a tour bus, which stopped at various campus training facilities.

The oil and gas training facility was an out-

door oilfield design to simulate the real thing.

Kelly Tooker, the school's director of oil and gas technology, showed the group the training equipment that included frack tanks, a pulling unit and a backhoe, among other items.

The training program, scheduled to begin in June, will take about 1-2 weeks, he said.

Antonio Martinez from Newbourne Oil Company was one of the people in the tour group. He said he came to Industry Day because he wanted to tell his employer about the information the school provided.

He took the tour to look at the equipment and "see what they've got," he said.

The tour group was also able to board a sim-

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KIMBERLY RYAN/NEWS-SUN

Jeff Bryant of Xcel Energy drives a truck simulator while touring the CDL training program and testing site Wednesday at the NMJC Training and Outreach Center's Industry Day.

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ulator, in which trainees learn how to drive an 18-wheeler truck. Luiza Ruiz, the school's director of transportation training, invited a participant to sit behind the steering wheel in front of a 42-inch flat screen that displays a mock highway scene through which the trainee must navigate. The trainee can practice driving, shifting and backing, among other

skills, she said.

"You can crash this thing, and I hit a button to restart it," she said, smiling.

A female group member took Ruiz's dare and got behind the simulator wheel. She sped the mock truck past 80 miles per hour, then twisted the wheel, causing a crash.

To the viewers' amusement, large cracks appeared on the screen, simulating a shattered

windshield.

Ruiz also demonstrated that the screen could also simulate rain spatters and hail hitting the windshield, posing an additional driving challenge for the trainee.

Four group member Sal Hernandez, who works at Divine Energy Service, said he came to Industry Day because he wanted to "show support for the oil and gas industry."