By ROSEANN HERNANDEZ
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

WASHINGTON — The chugging sound of metal tools works with a team of students in the construction energy management class at the Cabrillo College Watsonville Center.

Teresa Hurna/Register-Pajaronian

“Students can work with their hands, not just their heads; it is incredibly exciting to have that opportunity.”

— DR. LAUREL JONES, CABRILLO COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Teresa Hurna/Register-Pajaronian

Dr. Laurel Jones, president of Cabrillo College, gets a hands-on feel for the Construction Energy Management program at the Green Technology Center.

Solaris Green Tech Center programs expand

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Juan Gutierrez Nava (left) echo through the workshop as students break into groups and set to work on a row of small-scale buildings at the Solaris Green Technology Center in Watsonville on Tuesday.

Among the students is Mark Amott, a real estate analyst for Driscoll’s who is taking the Cabrillo College construction and energy management course as part of his ongoing training with the company.

As part of his job, Amott has to manage construction projects remotely, and the skills he is learning at the community college help him stay up to date with all the latest innovations in green building and construction.

“It keeps it fresh,” he said of the hands-on course that takes students through all phases of the building process, from layout to setting the roof.

Later in the afternoon the 25 students will have a lesson on plumbing, with each person assigned a fixture they have to install in their replica house.

Both under-floor and above-floor plumbing is taught.

Looking over at his fellow students, whose average age is 29, he said the course provides “real world insight into the industry,” Amott also had warm words to share about the course instructor and program chair,