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obtain their CPA licensure at a reduced cost.

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By Brianna Kudisch, nj.com (TNS)

Recent college graduates can save money on their way to becoming certified public accountants through a new initiative at Rider University.

The new Rider University CPA Apprenticeship Program allows new graduates of accounting programs to earn the required credits to obtain CPA licensure in New

Jersey at a reduced cost, university officials said.

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Although other universities offer similar programs, the university's non-degree program is the first of its kind in New Jersey to offer a variety of accounting firms for partnerships, said Tatiana Sciancalepore, a university spokeswoman.

Other schools' programs focus on a single firm, she said.

Seton Hall launched a one-year pilot program for an [accounting apprenticeship](#) last year. The pilot was successful, and the school renewed the program for a second year, officials said.

The new programs come at a time when [apprenticeships are on the rise](#) in the state and nationally.

There are more than 9,000 active apprentices in the state, according to federal data. Unlike unpaid internships, apprenticeships usually combine formal instruction in a trade or industry with a paid, on-the-job learning program.

The [state's apprenticeship website](#) has more information about programs available in New Jersey. The state recently invested more money in promoting apprenticeship opportunities, including \$10 million last November to expand existing training centers and create new ones.

To become a CPA, individuals must earn 150 credit hours, in addition to working one year under the supervision of a licensed CPA and passing the CPA exam, university officials said.

Through Rider's new program, recent graduates can fulfill their credit hours through as many as five online courses while also working at least 34 hours per week with participating firms. Each course is worth six academic credits and offered at a reduced cost of \$250 per credit.

The courses will also be supervised by faculty from Rider's accounting program.

The university is currently establishing partnerships with firms and companies,

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Interested participants in the program must have a bachelor's degree and core accounting classes at fewer than 150 credit hours, university officials said.

They must also obtain employment with a company or firm doing meaningful and substantial work as an accounting professional, working more than 34 hours per week.

For a full list of requirements and more information, visit rider.edu/cpa-apprenticeship.

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