



Building



Connecting



Leading

Skills for work—skills for life—skills for a stronger Florida

Issue **9** May 2008

## ■ A Success Story: From High School to Career

**Name:** Jared A.

**Graduate:** 2006

**Program:** Heavy Duty Truck & Bus Mechanics.

**Employed:** Government Fleet Maintenance.



Jared was a junior in high school when he first started coming to **Mid Florida Tech's** Heavy Duty Truck &

Bus Mechanics program. He learned about the program during an Open House at his school. He felt it was a great opportunity to start learning a skill while still in high school so that he would be prepared once he was done. "Also, it was much shorter than going to college where you still may not reach your goal," he said.

Jared attended Mid Florida Tech for two years in high school and then came back as an adult on a scholarship to finish the program. "Every day was something different, so you looked forward to going back to class (each day) to finish what you were working on."

Jared participated as a competitor in SkillsUSA where he placed second in the state as a high school student and second in the state as an adult student.

"Heavy Duty Truck & Bus gave me real life labs to work on; we did not just read black and white—we worked in a

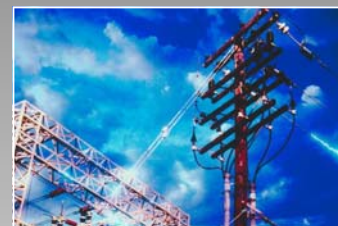
shop." Jared said. "I plan on coming back to MFT and take a welding class in the near future. Anyone considering a technical career should go on campus and take a tour and you will be sure to find a program for you. And if you happen to choose Heavy Duty Truck & Bus, tell them I sent you."

## ■ New Skills, New Opportunities

Roni Metzger, Tavares, needed to update her skills in the shortest possible time. After losing her job due to the construction slowdown, Roni decided to attend **Lake Technical Center** in Eustis. She started the Legal Administrative Specialist program May 2007 and will graduate June 2008.

According to Roni, "I picked the Legal Administrative Specialist program because in my previous position I lacked the experience to deal with contractual issues on a construction site. I was attracted to Lake Tech since the program was one year and I needed the confidence that I could balance work and school."

Roni works at Lowe's Home



Technical education contributes to Florida's well being. Individuals like Roni Metzger, who needed to gain new skills after a layoff, benefit from technical education. Instead of collecting unemployment, Roni is working again. Partnerships like the one forged between Withlacoochee Technical Institute, Progress Energy, and the Bechtel Power Corporation help keep Florida's lights on. Whether the needs are for one person or an entire industry, Florida's technical centers make a difference.

**Florida's minimum wage: \$6.79**

Florida's average wage for an experienced **Licensed Practical Nurse: \$20.72**



# Technical Education TODAY

expand a future pursue a passion express success

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Improvement Warehouse of Mount Dora. She started as a part-time sales representative and was quickly promoted to a full-time position. Her Lake Tech certification should increase her opportunities for career advancement with Lowe's. Roni's dedication to her studies and perfect attendance resulted in being selected as a recent Lake Tech Student of the Month. Roni plans to continue her education and enroll in college while working full-time at Lowe's.

## ■ Education—Industry Partnerships Forged

**W**ithlacoochee Technical Institute in Inverness, Citrus County is currently working with Citrus, Levy, Marion County Workforce, Pinellas Workforce Development, Tampa Plumbers & Pipe Fitters Local 123, Progress Energy, and the Bechtel Power Corporation to provide construction training opportunities for the Crystal River coal fired power plant and the proposed nuclear facility in Levy County.

Recent Florida labor projections for construction at power generating facilities indicate an 81% increase in certified welders. This study which focused on Florida and neighboring states called for a regional increase of ten thousand skilled pipe fitters and pipe fitter welders from 2007 to 2009 with prospects for continued above-average growth for the region.

There is not a shortage of available workers, but a shortage of skilled craft persons. With many of the US office and clerical jobs moving to other countries the future for steady employment and high wages can almost be assured for skilled and certified crafts- persons. A skilled welder is at the top of the list for

today's construction labor needs and will remain there for many years to come.

The outlook for construction in the utility industry is strong. Existing energy generation, distribution and transmission facilities will

need to be maintained, and new facilities will be needed to meet demand. The current lack of skilled craftsmen will threaten economic expansion unless the growing need for workers can be met.

Technical institutes throughout the State of Florida are working diligently with their local business partners to meet the needs of this industry.



## ■ Ag Students Groom Turf for Pros

**T**he Tournament Players Championship (TPC) at Sawgrass attracts professional golf's best to Northeast Florida. As you watch the pros tee off, do you ever wonder how the greens and acres of shrubbery appear as though they came from a Kincaide painting? With the assistance of **First Coast Technical College's** (FCTC) Agriscience program, of course!

FCTC's Sports and Recreational Turf Management program in St. Augustine, FL trains students to maintain turf grass just like that found at the TPC. The Landscape Management course includes layout, installation, irrigation, and landscape maintenance.

In late April, FCTC students will put their skills

Featuring

# Florida Postsecondary Technical Centers

Learn for life career dreams tomorrow's triumphs

to work and assist TPC professional staff with grounds aesthetics as seen during the tournament.

“The TPC has been an alternate training location for years,” said Eddie Lambert, FCTC instructor. “Nothing compares to the magnitude required there and this experience gives our students the opportunity to see the end result on national TV.”

FCTC’s Agriscience program takes approximately one year to complete and students are trained for employment as specialists in landscaping, gardening, sports turf, or groundskeeping.



Above: Eddie Lambert, Autumn Cunningham, and Adam Smith from First Coast Technical College’s Sports/Recreational Turf program, will assist TPC professional staff with grounds aesthetics in April 2008.

Left: FCTC Sports/Recreational Turf student, Agudias Paulino, dual enrolled at Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, demonstrates a tri-plex mower.



**Do what you can,  
with what you have,  
where you are.**

*Theodore Roosevelt*

## ■ Florida Wages—Experienced Workforce

OCCUPATION	WAGES
Minimum Wage	\$6.79
Bus and Truck Mechanics	\$21.11
Automotive Mechanics	\$20.51
Welders	\$17.74
Legal Secretaries	\$20.67
Executive Secretaries	\$20.45
Word Processors	\$15.30
Landscaping Managers	\$22.72
Groundskeepers	\$12.07
Grounds maintenance workers	\$15.66
<i>Salaries based on experienced workers</i>	

Source: Florida Research and Economic Database



## Your Florida Technical Centers

**Thomas P. Haney Technical Center**  
Bay County Schools

**Bradford-Union Technical Center**  
Bradford County Schools

**Atlantic Technical Center**  
**Sheridan Technical Center**  
**William T. McFatter Technical Center**  
Broward County Schools

**Charlotte Technical Center**  
Charlotte County Schools

**Withlacoochee Technical Institute**  
Citrus County Schools

**Lorenzo Walker Institute of Technology**  
Collier County Schools

**Miami Lakes Educational Center**  
**Robert Morgan Educational Center**  
**Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center**  
**George T. Baker Aviation**  
Miami Dade County Schools

**DeSoto Family Education Center**  
**Workforce Education and Support Services**  
DeSoto County Schools

**A. Phillip Randolph Northside Skills Center**  
Duval County Schools

**George Stone Career Center**  
Escambia County Schools

**Flagler Technical Center**  
Flagler County Schools

**Gadsden Technical Institute**  
Gadsden County Schools

**D. G. Erwin Technical Center**  
**Aparicio-Levy Adult Technical Center**  
**Henry W. Brewster Technical Center**  
**Learey Technical Center**  
**Tampa Bay Technical Evening School**  
Hillsborough County Schools

**Lake Technical Center**  
Lake County Schools

**Lee County High Tech Center North**  
**Lee County High Tech Center Central**  
Lee County Schools

**Lively Technical School**  
Leon County Schools

**Manatee Technical Institute, Main Campus**  
**Manatee Technical Institute, East Campus**  
Manatee County Schools

**Community, Technical and Adult Education**  
Marion County Schools

**Okaloosa Applied Technology Center**  
Okaloosa County Schools

**Westside Tech**  
**Winter Park Tech**  
**Mid Florida Tech**  
**Orlando Tech**  
Orange County Schools

**Technical Education Center Osceola**  
Osceola County Schools

**Marchman Technical Educational Center**  
Pasco County Schools

**Pinellas Technical Education Center**  
**Clearwater**  
**Pinellas Technical Education Center**  
**St. Petersburg**  
Pinellas County Schools

**Traviss Career Center**  
**Ridge Career Center**  
Polk County Schools

**First Coast Technical College**  
St. Johns County Schools

**Radford M. Locklin Technical Center**  
Santa Rosa County Schools

**Sarasota County Technical Institute**  
Sarasota County Schools

**Suwannee-Hamilton Technical Center**  
Suwannee County Schools

**Taylor Technical Institute**  
Taylor County Schools

**Walton County Vocational Technical Center**  
Walton County Schools

**Washington-Holmes Technical Center**  
Washington County Schools



**Technical Education Today** is a collaborative effort of the Florida Leadership for Career & Technical Educators (FLCTE), a division of the Florida Association for Career & Technical Educators (FAcTE). For more information contact:

**Marsan Carr, Executive Director**  
FAcTE  
factexec@facte.org

**Diane Culpepper, President**  
FLCTE  
culpepd@ocps.net

**Article contributions may be sent to:**  
Doug Wagner  
wagnerd@ManateeSchools.net

Leslie Rowe  
rowel@ManateeSchools.net