

In the Spotlight

TIDEWATER TECH GIVES BACK ON THANKSGIVING

By Cassandra Jones, Director of Compliance and Administration

Wednesday, November 23, 2011 Tidewater Tech faculty, staff and students partnered with Mr. Jamar Blyther and the Veterans Administration to pack approximately 500 bag lunches for homeless veterans to be distributed on Thanksgiving Day. According to Mr. Blyther, many veterans living in homeless shelters are given breakfast and sent out of the shelters for the day. It is often not until dinner time before they are able to have another meal. This was our opportunity to provide a nutritious mid-day lunch to less fortunate individuals in our community. The lunch consisted of a sandwich, fresh fruit and bottled water. Partnering with the Veterans Administration was an eye-opening and rewarding experience for all who participated.

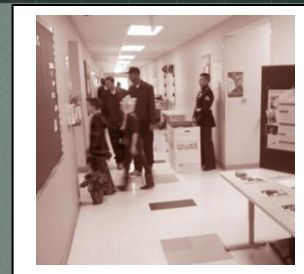
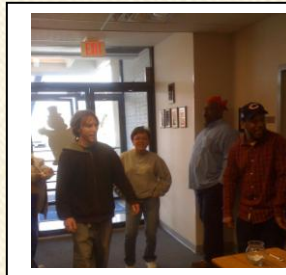
Tidewater Tech Open House

By Cassandra Jones, Director of Compliance and Administration

Saturday, December 10th Tidewater Tech hosted its Open House and Holiday Event. The theme for the Open House was "Tidewater Tech Gives Back". The day was filled with laughter, good will and cheer.

The festivities offered something for everyone: pictures with Santa and crafts for the children, rides on the flight simulator from the Aviation Institute of Maintenance, Virginia Employment Commission providing information on their services, vendors from the welding field: ESAB and Airgas and the Classic Custom Corvette Club and the Southeastern Virginia Mustang Club. Many community members came out to provide donations for Toys for Tots, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Southeastern Virginia Food Bank. Individuals who made donations were able to enter their name to win a raffle prize!

During the month of November, faculty, staff, and students collected non-perishable items and clothing that were added to the contributions for the Open House. Current students utilized the Open House as an excellent opportunity display their skills. The Admissions Staff provided tours and information about the school to visitors as well. The Tidewater Tech team came together to show the community our appreciation and to spread the word about Tidewater Tech's educational opportunities.



In the Spotlight

Securing the Future, Improving From the Past

By Erika Flowers, TTT

The Goal: to be successful in my program in efforts to, at graduation or soon after, achieve gainful employment. This is the goal that new students walk into the doors of Tidewater Tech have embedded in their minds as they kick-off their journey in their program. With distinct and varying backgrounds, each student prepares himself for the road ahead in order to reach the ultimate goal of obtaining employment in their field.

With the journey ahead there are elements that these eager students must consider. One of these elements is having a challenged background. Students from the beginning, while in admissions, question the probability of achieving gainful employment if they have a challenged background.

“We explain that it is NOT impossible to achieve employment if they have a challenged background. We also explain that obtaining a skill in a trade makes the student marketable in the workforce,” said Kevin Benton, Director of Admissions.

Tidewater Tech has a pilot program that assists the students in sharpening their professionalism in the areas of self-presentation, written communication, goal-setting, financial responsibility and much more. In this course the students touch on presenting themselves to employers, even when answering questions about their background.

“A lot of students have had negative experiences trying to find jobs with a challenged background. I try to explore this with them and explain that sometimes it’s not the challenged background that is keeping them from an employment opportunity, but the way they are presenting themselves. There are right and wrong answers to interviewing questions and most employers are just looking to hear that you recognize you’ve made a mistake and have taken steps to change; namely by coming back to school,” said Sarah Heath, Professional Development Instructor.

With the faculty and staff assisting the student in being successful in their programs, they begin their job search in Career Services, where they are coached on how to approach the inevitable question that will be asked concerning their challenged background. The student has successfully paved their way by their achievements within their program to prove that they are far removed from their mistakes in the past.

Securing the Future, Improving From the Past (continued)

By Erika Flowers, TTT

Mr. Gerald Smith , a Graduate of the HVAC program, who knows first-hand what obstacles present themselves when job searching with a challenged background, was successfully hired in a position related to his field upon graduation.

“You have to keep pushing and keep a positive attitude. You might be turned down a lot but the more you pursue, the more opportunity opens up. Just a week ago, I received a security clearance!” said Gerald Smith.

Students often have the goal of starting their own business. The motivation is partly due to not having to worry about the inhibitors of a challenged background. Mr. Alvin Mitchell, a Graduate of the Auto program, successfully started his own business in his field, A to Z Mobile Automotive Services, this summer.

“I took the goals that I had for myself and put them in my own hands. I didn’t want to let anyone else determine whether or not I met my goals because of challenges in my past,” said Alvin Mitchell.

A challenged background does not inhibit a student from achieving their career goals. The students of Tidewater Tech have been and will continue to be successful in their career endeavors because they prepare themselves and go in to their job search and interviews with a professional mindset, ready to amaze the employer and secure their career job opportunity.

In the Spotlight

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for John "Jae" Thomas, a recent Tidewater Tech graduate from the automotive program! John's time in the automotive program at TTT was exemplary resulting in him being accepted into the Universal Technical Institute in Charlotte, North Carolina – the first step toward the world of NASCAR. But John, like many other young men, made some life decisions that put him off track.

It Takes a Dream, Time, and Education

By Jane Davis

John, originally from Columbia, South Carolina, came from a home full of encouragement and where educational opportunity abounded. He first attended the Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts School in Orlando, Florida with little success then on to the University of South Carolina (USC), where he pursued a degree in Business Marketing. However, his pursuit of "Partying 101" got him expelled after only six months. From USC, he moved on to Midlands Technical Institute at which time he sustained a work injury that required extensive rehabilitation. So - at the age of 27, John eventually landed at Old Dominion University in hopes of being accepted to the newly established football team but to no avail. Because of all of these failures, John fell into a deep depression eventually deciding that Tidewater Tech would get him to where he wanted to go. He knew he was headed to NASCAR!

Even though John left USC, he was there long enough to prepare a research paper on the marketing affects impacting the depth and breadth of the NASCAR image. He was surprised to learn that there were few minority drivers or members of pit crews. NASCAR was still a "Red Neck" sport, according to his research. But that did not keep John from applying to the Institute in 2007. Even though he was turned down because of his lack of education and experience, he now had two goals – role modeling to other minority young men that with tenacity you can make it and the other goal remained the same - NASCAR.

The decision to come to Tidewater Tech was very significant to his acceptance to the Universal Technical Institute. His instructors saw his abilities and were relentless in their support of his personal goal. "My instructors motivated me when I couldn't motivate myself." His father being a master mechanic had a significant impact on his success as well.

John "Jae" Thomas makes the next step toward his goal because on March 28,2011 he starts his 65 week training program. Then he is already planning the next step * a Bachelors Degree in Automotive Engineering. John is very clear on where he has been and where he is going and stated, "it only takes a dream, clear thought and preparation along with God's help you **will** reach your destination." NASCAR-here I come!



In the Spotlight

...Brighten Your Future and Open Many Doors...

By Terry C. Pass, Jr.

Tidewater Tech on 5301 E. Princess Anne Road will have a lasting impression on me personally and professionally. I have spent the last six and a half months attending the Welding program. The atmosphere of the campus is more like a family home. The dedicated staff in the front office strived to help students in every area within the programs to achieve success. Mrs. Wilson, Ms. Davis, and Ms. Pearson, assisted me in completing the maze of financial aid paperwork to resume writing to job placement.

I have also seen many men and women from different ethnic and economic backgrounds coming through the doors of Tidewater Tech. This illustrates the school's diversity as well as commitment to ensure all students meet the challenges of today's global market to fairly compete and succeed in their various fields of study.

When I first entered Tidewater Tech, I was not certain if I was making the right move. I knew I had some basic skills in welding but my teachers, Mr. Blount, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Clark and others, gave me the necessary information, instructions, guidance, and tools in becoming a master tradesman. They fostered a collaborative partnership between student and instructor and showed their passion and knowledge in the field of welding. If you want to successfully learn a trade, then you should seriously come to Tidewater Tech. The school will brighten your future and open many doors to a rewarding career.



In the Spotlight

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT LEESA THOMAS

By Keristen Howard

(2/10/10) - Tidewater Tech would like to shine the light on Welding student, Leesa Thomas. Leesa has been enrolled at Tidewater Tech since September 2009. We would like to congratulate her on the outstanding improvements she has made in the Welding program. Keep up the great work!

“When Leesa first came in she was so excited, even calling and asking what she had to wear for her first day of school. I’m so proud of her, and thrilled that her excitement hasn’t waned one bit!!! She’s our “little” sunshine.”

Tidewater Tech Increases Industry Training

NORFOLK, VA. (12/27/09)—Tidewater Tech in cooperation with its Program Advisory Committee (PAC) recently included into the welding program specialty metal welding. Metals include aluminum and copper nickel for Gas Metal Arc Welding (GMAW) and Gas Tungsten Arc Welding (GTAW) processes. With increased need for specialty welders this addition to the program will provide the industry with entry level welders with minimal additional training.

Tidewater Tech HVAC Program Goes Green

NORFOLK, VA. (12/27/09)—Tidewater Tech recently purchased new air-conditioning and heat pump training systems with the new ozone friendly R410a refrigerant high-efficiency 15 SEER comfort systems. With the phase-out requirements mandated by the Environmental protection Agency (EPA), the HVAC program is ahead of training future technicians in high-efficiency residential applications before the phase-out deadline.

