



FROM School

At West Hall High School in Gainesville, some 400 juniors and seniors enjoy a recent assembly to learn about educational options at Georgia's technical colleges.

TO
SKILLS

Georgia's
technical
colleges help
high school
students
jump-start
careers

THINK BACK TO YOUR FIRST JOB after high school. Most likely it didn't involve opportunities for advancement or a sizeable salary.

These days, though, the scene couldn't be more different for some of Georgia's high school graduates. Thanks to collaborative projects between technical colleges and high schools, the transition from high school to college has been streamlined, and students can earn college credits and technical certificates while still in high school, smoothly moving from graduation to good-paying jobs almost immediately.

Consider the case of Terri Nuckles:

She began taking health occupation classes in the ninth grade at West Hall High School and by her senior year was working as a nurse's aide. When she graduated and enrolled at Lanier Technical College, she already had a solid grounding in nursing. She's now an LPN and plans to become an RN.

Or Toby Hughes:

While in high school, he attended programs offered through the Central Educational Center in Coweta County. By the time he graduated from Newnan High School in May 2001, Hughes was a certified fiber optic technician. By summer, he was the project manager on a high-tech construction job, making an annual salary of \$52,000.

Then there's Keith Jenkins:

Born with physical challenges, he had to attend special-education classes. But through a collaborative training program with his local technical college, Jenkins not only graduated with his class but also completed the Certified Manufacturing Specialist program while in high school and now works at J-M Manufacturing in Adel.

And Brooke Carson:

An honors graduate from Stephens County High School, she received her diploma from North Georgia Technical College in Applied Business Technology last September. She had taken Certified Customer Service Specialist courses as a junior through dual-enrollment programs, and continued with online, evening and summer classes to complete the diploma. Carson's part-time job at a local bank served two purposes: She received credit toward her

Applied Business Technology diploma and applied the skills she learned to her job.

These are only a few success stories resulting from collaborations among technical colleges, high school systems, communities, and business and industry. The idea is to give students the skills they need to move from one level of education to another, and from success in education to success in a job.

And it's working. More and more high school students have recognized the value of getting a jump-start on success. Participation in these collaborative programs has increased dramatically in the past few years. In 2000, 3,783 students took part. In 2002, the number almost doubled to 7,361.

FROM HERE TO CAREER

Many of these programs are developed through the DTAE's School to Work initiative, which develops partnerships among schools, businesses and community organizations. According to a preliminary evaluation recently completed by the Occupational Research Group at the University of Georgia, 306 of 392 high schools in the partnerships' service areas participated in School to Work activities during 2001-2002.

Each partnership has unique goals that reflect community needs, but all focus on increasing career awareness, expanding employer involvement, strengthening student achievement, and building systems that are supportive of youth and economic development.

School to Work partnerships encourage programs such as dual-enrollment and postsecondary options, which enable students to earn credit hours that count as college credits as well as

toward high school graduation requirements. In addition, many schools join directly with area businesses to provide on-the-job training to familiarize students with various business fields.

The result is that students get the best education possible, and businesses get qualified employees. During the

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Terri Nuckles got a head start on her nursing career while still in high school.

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— Patt Stonehouse, state coordinator of School to Work for DTAE

2001-2002 school year, 4,086 private employers and 851 public and nonprofit employers participated in these School to Work activities.

“Everyone should be prepared to the same level,” says Patt Stonehouse, state coordinator of School to Work for the DTAE. “We’d like to help shape the technology and career curriculum in high schools because we’re dedicated to building the best workforce for Georgia.”

THE REAL WORLD

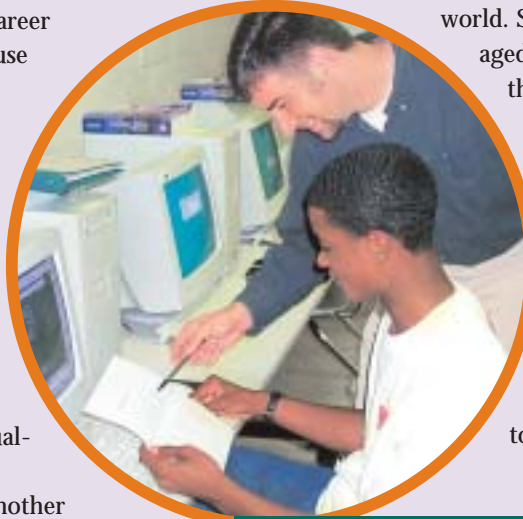
“Mr. Thomas would be a good person to talk with about that,” says Rudy Tabares, the drafting teacher for Griffin High School and Spalding High School, when asked the benefits of Griffin Technical College’s dual-enrollment drafting program.

But he’s not talking about another teacher or administrator. He’s talking about Adrian Thomas, a lanky high school junior taking his first drafting class this year.

“The class is very good,” Thomas says, as he maneuvers the computer mouse to draw the next line of his AutoCAD assignment. “I like to work with computers and design things.”

He is interested in pursuing a career in engineering, but he’s also considering the multitude of options available to a skilled designer. “There are more and more career fields opening up with computers and design,” he says. “I’m trying to buy

Adrian Thomas (seated) goes over an assignment with drafting instructor Brent Center.



AutoCAD for my computer at home so I can explore it more.”

Addressing students such as “Mr. Thomas” in a businesslike manner is just one of the many ways Tabares helps prepare them for the real world. Students also are encouraged to develop portfolios of their work that they can show to colleges or potential employers. They also complete an “Employability Skills” worksheet each week, grading themselves on timeliness, teamwork, effort and other work habits that are important to employers. Reviewing the

INNOVATIONS

Technical colleges across Georgia are finding solutions that work. Here is a sampling of the efforts that are making a difference around the state.

• Industry Education Partnership

Certified specialist programs are popular as dual-enrollment programs in many high schools. Southeastern Technical College decided to use that popularity and take the programs a step further. Through a partnership with the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, the school has added part-time work as an option for students. Approximately 20 students at Montgomery County High and Vidalia High Schools are participating, getting job experience and pay while having the opportunity to apply what they learn in the classroom.

• Treutlen Co. Workforce Training Center

Located in the new Jim L. Gillis Jr. Building, this center offers four technical certificates of credit to students at Treutlen County High School. Classes in Web Site Fundamentals, Web Design Specialist, Database Development and Help Desk Technician allow students to earn credit toward a diploma or associate’s degree from Swainsboro Tech while completing their high school requirements.



Commissioner Ken Breeden and son Matt (far right), a junior at West Hall High School, join other students in viewing a race car at a recent career day highlighting Motorsports Vehicle Technology and other programs at Lanier Tech.



sheets helps Tabares determine which areas need work, and it helps students understand that being on time and prepared for work is just as important as what you do when you're there.

Adding even more business-world reality to the classes are Brent Center and Maury Moseley, two professionals who team-teach the drafting classes with Tabares. (Center teaches at Griffin High, and Moseley teaches at Spalding High). Both work as engineering design draftsmen with Caterpillar's Electric Power Product Group.

In the classroom, Center and Moseley share their experience and explain real-world applications of drafting. Along with Tabares, they show students the many options available in the engineering field, including mechanical, civil and architectural engineering.

"We're sparking an interest here," says Center.

The three teachers know that not all the high school students they work with will go on to attend

Griffin Tech or end up working at Caterpillar, but that's not why they teach the classes. They know that inspiration can take many paths, and they just want to help support young lives.

"Someone gave me the opportunity, and [these students] need an opportunity just like we had," says Moseley. "The classes provide some technical and computer knowledge that is valuable for any job they move on to, whether or not they become engineers."

Like other dual-enrollment programs, the drafting program allows students to receive college credit for courses taken in high school. By earning high school and college credit simultaneously, Center says, "students receive the knowledge needed to accelerate their entrance into the workforce."

The program is in its second year, and the prospects for many students look good. Mike Howard, drafting instructor at Griffin Tech, says, "There are a number of students in the program who are now looking forward to coming here. The program lets the students know we're here and gives us more exposure to the high school crowd."

The support of Caterpillar management has made the program possible, Howard claims. "It's a good opportunity for the students, and having instructors coming from industry is very influential," he says. "Caterpillar really sees the opportunity here and the importance of this kind of preparation."

Center says, "With the partnership between Caterpillar and Griffin Tech and the high schools, we're doing good things for the community."

Center and Moseley take time off from their jobs to teach at the high schools, with full management support.

"Caterpillar looks at it as an investment down the road and also an investment in the community," Moseley says. "We're giving students a jump-start. That's what it's all about."

OFFERING OPPORTUNITY

Many technical colleges across the state work with their local secondary schools to provide a seamless transition between high school and college and help students get a head start on technical certificates or degrees.

But how do you help students who aren't in a

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FOR SUCCESS

• MICRO Camp

Valdosta Technical College recently hosted its second annual MICRO Camp for high school students. An acronym for Medicine Is Creating Real Opportunities, MICRO is a three-day camp that spotlights the school's medical programs and gives students the opportunity to explore different areas of the healthcare field. Twenty-three students attended the summer event, participating in interactive games, hands-on activities and demonstrations of various medical fields.

• Aquaculture Research Project

North Georgia Tech is investigating the many ways aquaculture can increase economic development opportunities in its seven-county service area. In a new research project, two self-supporting aquaculture businesses are being set up: one at Franklin County High School, where the career-technology department will grow shrimp and fish inside a greenhouse; and the other at North Georgia Tech's Clarkesville campus, where ornamental fish and aquatic plants will also be grown. One aim of the program is to help find uses for buildings and resources formerly used in the poultry industry, converting structures into growing facilities. Eventually, community farmers will be invited to join a collaborative, which will offer training, resources and support.



Weaving the Web of Interest

Chattahoochee Technical College has many programs available for high school students. But sometimes the problem is getting the word out about them, as well as helping students and parents understand the programs.

To create more awareness about Chattahoochee Tech and its high school programs, the school has increased its presence where many high school students can be found these days — the internet. Chattahoochee Tech has a general website, as do most technical colleges, but it has recently developed a site specifically targeted to current and graduating high school students and their parents.

The website recently won first place in the Internet Homepage category in competition sponsored by the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations, a group that represents marketing and PR professionals at community, technical and junior colleges. The website received near-perfect scores in originality and impact, with judges commenting specifically on its appeal to the younger generation.



"Information about the dual-enrollment and postsecondary programs can be confusing," says Debbie Butler, Chattahoochee Tech's VP of college relations and advancement. "Having more information out there and all in one place is a great way to educate students about the programs." To promote the website, the school presents information packets to area high school counselors.

The site is designed to attract young, internet-savvy high school students. The design is contemporary, and uses the multimedia features that experienced web surfers have come to



expect. By being on the cutting edge, Chattahoochee Tech grabs a visitor's attention and keeps it.

Along with information about the school and various enrollment options (including postsecondary, dual-enrollment and mini-core), the site provides a virtual tour of Chattahoochee Tech's campuses, a course planner, admissions and cost information, and the opportunity to "meet" a few current students and find out about their experiences at the school.

"We are very proud of the site," says Butler. "We think it will be a great asset in attracting and informing potential students."

To visit Chattahoochee Tech's high school website, go to www.chattcollege.com and click on Admissions, then on High School Student. For more information about Chattahoochee Tech's high school programs, you may also call 770-528-4431.

traditional high school setting or who may be at risk of dropping out altogether? Lanier Technical College and Hall County are creating an answer with the opening of Lanier Career Center (LCC).

In partnership with local businesses and the community, Lanier Tech and the Hall County School System are creating LCC to help prepare nontraditional students for a personally and professionally rewarding career.

Thirty acres of land adjacent to Lanier Tech in Oakwood (outside Gainesville) have been purchased, and plans are under way for a 34,500-sq.-ft. educational facility that will include classrooms, labs, offices, conference rooms, an international center and a student center. LCC is scheduled to open in 2004 with approximately 250 to 275 students, with plans for up to 400 students in the future.

The academic programs offered at LCC will be an extension of the current Hall County-Gainesville Evening High School, and will also include technical courses and dual-enrollment options through Lanier Technical College. Students can pursue a high school diploma (in college prep or career and technology) or GED in the High School Diploma Program. Or they can work toward a technical certificate of credit or associate's degree through the Technical College Program.

"A major benefit of LCC is that we will be reaching a population that is currently underserved," says Dr. Linda Barrow, vice president of instructional services at Lanier Tech. "These students don't learn in the traditional way or prefer classes that are more practical and career-based."

Many nontraditional students are those who experience problems that become barriers to academic success, including family issues, frequent family moves, economic difficulties or becoming parents. To address these issues, LCC will bring together community services and provide onsite resources that eliminate obstacles to school attendance.

For example, childcare and preschool will be available through Early Headstart, Headstart and Pre-K classes. There will be a Georgia Department of Labor Development Center on campus to offer career counseling and assessments as well as job placement assistance. Currently, Evening High has a Medicaid person who takes applications for PeachCare and Medicaid, and students have access to health screenings, juvenile court probation services and public transportation to the school. These services will continue to be available through LCC.

The end result will be students who are better prepared for college and for the workforce.

"We are growing a workforce for local business and industry," Barrow says, "and these students are definitely a part of that." 