



# InSight

York Technical College Fall 2009

## Building on Success in Chester

When looking for a new career in a changing economy, some students may not want to invest years of their time learning a new skill. They're looking for a program that will quickly equip them to re-enter the workforce with marketable skills, such as can be learned in York Technical College's heavy equipment operator program.

In just five weeks, students can get basic instruction on the four most common pieces of construction equipment: backhoe, excavator, front-end or skid-steer loader, and bulldozer. Once students complete the program, their transcripts are compiled for the National Center for

Construction Education and Research (NCCER), where they can be accessed by employers across the country, a huge benefit for a student looking for a construction job, according to instructor Ben Ross.

"If one of our students moves to California and applies for a construction job, the employer can pull up the student's NCCER file," Ben said.

Students and staff are excited about moving into their new, state-of-the-art facility adjacent to the heavy equipment grounds, in Chester Industrial Park which makes classroom and

hands-on-training simultaneously possible. This building is in addition to the new Chester Center off of Highway 9.

Students spend four hours in the classroom out of the 48 hours of instruction on each piece of equipment. The eight-hour instruction days are held Monday through Friday, with Saturdays as rain dates. This schedule was recently changed to add more classes per year; however, the total number of hours didn't change. Upon completion of the program, students

*Continues next page* ▶



Photo by Joe Polinski

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are prepared for entry-level jobs on all of the equipment. They can expect their responsibilities and pay to increase as their skills improve.

"This program is designed to help students get their foot in the door," Ben said. "When they really become efficient so that they don't have to think about what they're doing, it becomes second nature. That just comes with time."

Ronnie Miller of the Rodman community is enrolled in the current heavy equipment class. When he lost his long-time manufacturing job, Ronnie turned to York Tech's program to learn a new set of skills.

"It's something I really wish I'd gotten into a long time ago. I'm really enjoying it," he said. "It's something where I can get in there and get back into the workforce."

Ronnie said he hopes to find a job in road construction that may arise out of recent federal legislation or at nuclear reactors being built near Gaffney and Jenkinsville. According to Ben, The Shaw Group, the company overseeing the reactor construction, has said it wants to interview every York Tech heavy equipment graduate for the many construction jobs that will be opening up, a testament to the quality of York Tech's program.

Though the program includes long days of intense training, York Tech instructors are there for students every step of the way, Ronnie said. The work can also be a lot of fun.

"The skid-steer is fun to ride in and work with," he said. "About every boy's dream is to work with some type of heavy equipment."

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Story courtesy of Heather Williams

# Patient Care Package Has Flexibility

Shakeitha Johnson, at right, knew she wanted to go into nursing, but she also knew working full-time and raising her son would make a two-year nursing program difficult. When she found out that York Technical College was offering a patient care technician package that would enable her to get certified nursing assistant skills with more flexibility, she was sold.

"I really wanted to take the program because you learn so many other skills," she said. "I know that when I go to work I'll be able to work with patients or on the computer. The more you know the better off you are," she said.

Instructor Dorothy Mitchem agrees. "Even if students plan to be a nurse, they can take these programs because they are inexpensive, enable you to work

**“The more you know the better off you are.”**

while learning, and give you a head start in medical training. When you start nursing training you are so nervous, but having these classes can really relieve your fears."

One of Shakeitha's favorite parts of the program was the clinical aspect because she worked with patients and saw how beneficial her cross training could be in a work environment.

"This is a great package for the length of time it takes to finish. It gave me the chance to better myself while still enabling me to handle the other responsibilities in my life." Shakeitha

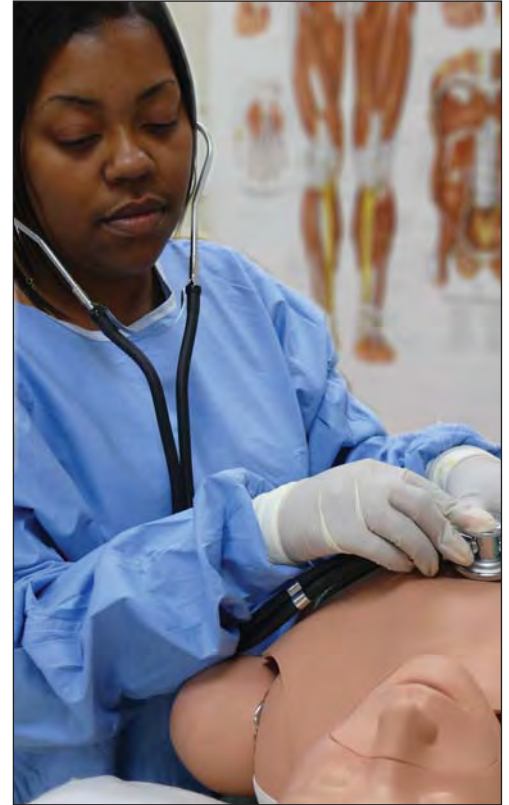


Photo by Kimberly Starnes

was also impressed by her instructors. "They didn't just throw the information out there and expect us to grab it," she said. "They were good at giving us the material that we needed and prepared us for the field."

"I love being of use to people who need me to teach them," says Dorothy. "I'm still as thrilled today as I was 16 years ago. I tell my students they are the eyes and ears of the nurse. They are the foot soldiers on the hospital floor."

Students take CNA training first; then they move to classes where they learn about catheters, wound care, dressings, EKGs, and many other things. "I love this package because it gets people into jobs fast," says Dorothy. "It is great for people who are unemployed, underemployed or just want to better their lives. It is a wonderful way to get started in medicine."

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“Small businesses and microenterprises are the backbone of the American economy. They are what keep the economy moving,” says Paula Chapman, CORE FOUR® instructor, at right. Small businesses contribute 39% of the country’s gross national product and produce more innovations per employee than large firms.

Owning a small business is the dream of many people, but getting started can be confusing. York Technical College offers several programs to assist those who want to take the next step in their small business venture.



Photo by Michael McAllister

on a business and marketing plan in class, but need to have an idea of their business type.

people, money, marketing/sales and operations,” says Paula. “If they don’t have skills in any of those areas, they need to bring people in to help them. An entrepreneur course can help them identify their strengths and weaknesses.”

Small business owners already involved in operating a business may take additional coursework to help them expand and diversify. “Listening to Your Business” is a course that walks business owners through a business analysis process, while the “Growth Venture” course provides the tools necessary to take your business to the next level.

All programs are instructor-led, discussion-oriented sessions which allow participants to share experiences and to apply immediately the knowledge and skills learned to their own enterprises.

For more information about our business programs, contact Brooke Pound at (803) 327-8029 or [bpound@yorktech.com](mailto:bpound@yorktech.com).

## Small Businesses Give the Economy a Boost

For those just starting out, CORE FOUR® is a business planning course in which participants develop a business blueprint and are introduced to the realities and commitment needed to be successful as an entrepreneur.

Business planning concepts are presented in a practical, real-world manner with emphasis on the legwork required to analyze markets, develop solid financial plans, and benchmark the competition.

Participants will also set financial goals, develop contingency plans, identify target markets, and develop communication, marketing and sales skills. Participants will work

Other people in the class act as a sounding board, and discussion can often trigger an idea. Class discussion can often help students realize their ideas aren’t feasible.

Paula encourages participants to attend class with an open mind. “An open mind is the most important thing to bring to class,” she says. “If you come into class and you already have all the answers, or think you do, you can miss the one thing that can make the difference in making you successful. It enables you to be open to different opportunities.”

“One of the most important things to come away with is that there are four aspects to business:



Photos by Kimberly Starnes

*The partnership between Paula Gillman and Company and the College will offer programs for adults and children who want to learn more about the lost art of cooking. Classes cater to every skill level. The photos are of one of Chef Bigham's classes*



# A Feast of Learning for Anyone

The heart of most homes is the kitchen. It is where families gather and, let's face it, here in the South, our favorite way of supporting each other in good times and bad is with food. Chef Bill Bigham, one of five chefs teaching cooking classes through a partnership between Paula Gillman and Company and York Technical College, has found his passion in teaching people to cook.

"I think cooking is becoming a lost art, not only the art of preparing food, but also the lost art of family," he says. "When you cook and have meals together as a family you get time together. I want to get people excited about cooking again."

Bill had the advantage of a mom who loved cooking and inspired him with that love. He tries to do elegant cuisine, dishes you would be honored to serve family and friends but are simple to do once you learn. "They are easy, quick, and something you can be proud of," he says.

Paula Gillman, owner of Paula Gillman and Company, thinks that

many people find cooking intimidating. "Some people may think they won't ask the right questions or won't know how to cook, but the classes are relaxed and participants get to taste test the recipes at the end of class."

Classes are taught on everything from basic knife skills to appetizers or sauces to entire meals. Within the classes, participants learn more than just how to follow a recipe. They learn how to organize, prepare the meal and be more efficient in the kitchen. Another thing the classes concentrate on is taste pairings, which foods go well together and how to choose wines for meals. Classes are also offered for parents and children to take together.

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