From Technician To Manager In Four Years

ATI Employee Places 3rd In Race Building Windmills In South Dakota
PRESIDENTS CORNER

As Summer enters full bloom, many students are torn between their enthusiasm for the class work and spending time outdoors pursuing recreational activities. It is hard to keep your focus on the prize when the fish could be biting or your car needs some work. As tough as it is to stay the course, maintaining your focus is critical to your ultimate success...graduation and successful employment!

Distractions are all around us. Summer weather isn’t the only challenge. Some students are struggling with class work challenges, while others are homesick and feel drawn to return home before they complete their education. Sticking to your guns and keeping your eye on your goals can help to keep these distractions in perspective.

Staying the course is a true measure of an individual. It speaks to the importance of their goal and the commitment they made to themselves and to their families. Often times, there are many people supporting a student’s decision to come to school. Everyone involved has invested in the success achieved once the student has walked across the stage with their diploma or degree and is beginning a career he/she once only imagined possible.

There are no short-cuts in education. It takes lots of hard work to make dreams come true. The students at ATI work harder than most. Many students attend school 5.5 hours a day for a year or more to achieve their goals. Those goals are being realized everyday. No one ever said it was going to be easy, but then, nothing worthwhile ever is.

At ATI, we applaud your hard work and continued commitment to your future—a great future begins with you!

Dick

Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.

Tom Landry

From left to right: Steven Carter (Norfolk, Virginia), Josh Wyche (Courtland, Virginia), Christopher Stefenack (Moyock, North Carolina), KaTwan Cherry (Ahoskie, North Carolina), and the Campus President, Dick Daigle.
**ATI’s Spring Open House Celebration**

Prospective students toured ATI during the Spring Open House on April 23rd. There were elaborate displays and plenty of food and fun. Many of the visitors were from out-of-state and it didn’t take much to impress them with the beauty of Va. Beach.

Thanks to all ATI students who volunteered to make our visitors feel welcome and show them around the ATI campus. ATI’s next Open House will be on June 25th from 10am to 1pm. Tell all of your friends to come on out and join us for a day of fun and hot dogs!

---

**Welcome Chuck Brandt To Career Services**

Please welcome Chuck Brandt to ATI Career Services. As an ATI graduate Chuck can offer students a great perspective on what to expect as a student and a graduate. He is an ATI 2011 Tractor Trailer Driving Program graduate and a 2015 HVAC with Service Management program honor graduate. As a graduate of the Tractor Trailer Driving program, Chuck drove locally and regionally for Salmons Farm hauling containers to local ports, and grain trailers to North Carolina and Delaware. As a HVAC graduate Chuck worked in the Commercial HVAC industry for AERO Mechanical as a service technician. Before attending classes at ATI he retired as a Navy Chief Petty Officer. During his military service Chuck worked as an (AT) Aviation Electronics Technician. He spent the majority of his career working on F-14 and FA/18 aircraft. Chuck’s responsibilities with ATI include assisting students in the Automotive and Diesel programs. Chuck is available to assist morning, afternoon and evening students, stop by and see him if you need student services or career service assistance as you prepare for a new career in the auto/diesel industry.

*Kirk Clayton, Campus Director of Career Services*
**ATI’s HVAC Program Coordinator Chaired State SkillsUSA Competition**

In 2014, SkillsUSA President Dr. Lee Ross selected ATI to chair the HVAC competition for all Virginia state events. April 16, 2016 marked ATI's first year hosting the HVAC competition.

Seventeen competitors from technical schools across Virginia came to the Fredericksburg Expo Center, pitting their skills against each other for a place in the SkillsUSA National Event. HVAC Program Coordinator Dave Philpott was Chairman of the competition with HVAC instructors Mike Bartz, Ben Lloyd and Will Jones judging the event stations. Kirk Clayton, Director of Student Services at ATI served as a judge, as well as author and technical writer Dick Wirz.

The event consisted of a written exam followed by four event stations and a mock job interview. The competition was designed by ATI's HVAC department, testing the students' knowledge and skills in the areas of troubleshooting, fabrication, component identification, and wiring/schematics interpretation. All equipment used in the event had to be transported to the competition arena and assembled; after the event the equipment was disassembled and brought back to the HVAC campus.

The 2017 SkillsUSA State event will be held in Fredericksburg, also. In 2018 and 2019 the competition will be brought to the HVAC campus at 1429 Miller Store Road. ATI has hosted the local district competitions for over 10 years; hosting the state competition is an honor.

_Dave Philpott, HVAC Program Coordinator_

---

**ATI Competes In Stair Climb**

For the second year in a row a team from ATI raced up the tallest building in Virginia (The Va. Beach Town Center Westin Hotel which is 37 floors) in support of “The Up Center” a non-profit organization that raises money for underprivileged youth. Members of the ATI team were Chad Marts, Rey Lizan, Janet Maddox and Dick Daigle. Chad Marts placed 3rd overall out of 302 participants with a time of 4 minutes and 20 seconds.

Everyone else did great and when Dick Daigle, Campus President was asked how he enjoyed the climb, he responded “It was fun! I was the only one in my age group, so it was an easy 1st place finish.”
EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

Tidewater Express

As citizens of Hampton Roads, we fear the radio reports that come bearing the news that a vehicle has stalled or broken down in one of the tunnels that allow us to flow between all the cities in our region. The reason that collective groan never grows louder than a dull roar however, is due to the one company, a locally owned and operated organization known as Tidewater Express. This is because, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, they are poised and ready, continuously on stand-by prepared to tow and remove all obstacles clogging up those tunnels.

With trucks able to handle a load capacity of up to 50 tons, there is no job too big or too small for this tour de force of an organization.

Started by owner Mike Pelfrey in 1988, Tidewater Express now boasts three locations in Chesapeake and Hampton, and owns and operates two Midas stores on the Peninsula and Auto Craft Collision in Virginia Beach. So, not only are they pulling the big rigs off the road when they break down, but they are also fixing those machines to get them back on the road quickly for their customers, including roadside service for when a shop isn’t needed.

Towing and recovery of these giant vehicles isn’t something someone can just pick up and do their first day on the job, so Tidewater Express started its own training program in order to prepare their wrecker drivers for the rigors of the road and what they can expect.

“We need Class A, CDL drivers that have an understanding of weight for heavy hauling,” Pelfrey said. “They are driving a 40,000 pound wrecker and sometimes towing an 80,000 pound tractor trailer. I feel that the drivers that I get from ATI have a good understanding base to work from with the time they get in class. ATI has the best qualified drivers.”

Towing is only one part of the equation for Tidewater Express, however, and that is why Pelfrey has begun to expand his relationship with ATI and is now planning to bring on entry level diesel technicians to work in his shops.

“We work on all types of vehicles, brands and models,” Pelfrey said. “That is what I like about ATI. Students are learning on all types of equipment, varieties of trucks and all different types of repairs.”

Michael O’Brien, Career Services Advisor

http://www.tidewaterexpressinc.com
Student Success

Doing What He Does Best

Originally from Louisiana, the military brought Chris Willingham to Hampton Roads. He served 9 years in Naval Aviation. The military training Chris received is what motivated him to pursue diesel technology.

“I grew up around equipment and worked on the equipment at my wife’s family farm. I guess I have always been a hands on kinda guy,” Chris said.

Chris now works for Coastal Equipment, Inc., in Va. Beach and loves his job. He said they send him out to troubleshoot and is traveling quite a bit.

Chris graduated from ATI’s Diesel Technology program in 2013, and also completed the Commercial Driving (Class A, CDL) program. When asked why Chris chose ATI, he said, “It was convenient to work and the hours worked great for me. I really liked that ATI had so many tools to work with. Diesel isn’t going anywhere, we will always need diesel guys!”

Mama Trucker

Donna Byers didn’t know anyone who was a commercial truck driver, but being her own boss, with good future income possibilities really attracted her to this new challenge. So, why not give it a shot, she thought.

“I had previously worked four years as a hair stylist for JC Penney’s.” Donna said, “I like challenging myself and stepping out of my comfort zone, and by learning to drive one of those big rigs, it was a challenge at first. I really learned a lot from the instructors at ATI, and I would recommend anyone interested in driving, go there. It’s funny,” Donna said, “my kids affectionately now call me mama trucker!”

Donna said, “What I really like the best about driving is the freedom to listen to my music and see the countryside with its beautiful sunsets. I have been from coast to coast and plan to spend the rest of my career as mama trucker!”

From Tech To Manager In 3 Years

ATI graduate Rebecca Krininger has been back to ATI several times since she graduated from the Automotive Technology program. But her past visits were to talk with ATI students about how she started as a general service technician at Pep Boys.

Rebecca completed ATI’s Automotive Technology with the Service Management program, and graduated in 2011. She started her career with Pep Boys as a technician but was quickly promoted to Assistant Service Manager. Now Rebecca is a Retail Sales Specialist at Pep Boys’ Hampton location.  

Continued ........
ATI Donates Frame Rack To The Pruden Center

In March ATI donated a Chief Impulse frame rack and Vector computerized frame measurement system, as well as two tool boxes full of auto body tools, to the Pruden Center for Industry and Technology. Director Andre Skinner and Auto Collision Technology Instructor, Andrew Lenoir accepted the equipment on behalf of the center. Mr. Skinner and Mr. Lenoir were grateful for the equipment and stated that it was a great improvement over the center’s current rack.

Mr. Skinner said, “This helps with our goal to upgrade the Pruden Center, work with local industries, and improve the ability to train students in technical fields.”

Pruden Center is a regional public school serving Isle of Wight County and Suffolk City Schools.

Dan Mittendorff, High School Representative
The Tidewater chapter meeting of the American Welding Society (AWS) was held at ATI’s welding facility in April. AWS members and local trade representatives from Hampton Roads came for a facility tour and to learn about the welding program that is offered to our students. Those in attendance were impressed with the depth of our curriculum as well as with all the high-tech training aids we have available to our students. Attendees were invited to test their skill on ATI’s Virtual Welder which rapidly became a friendly competition and a highlight of the evening.

Also discussed was our newly earned status as an Accredited Test Facility for the American Welding Society. This hard earned distinction brings national recognition to ATI and spotlights the quality control and quality assurance measures of our testing procedures and our Certified Weld Inspectors and testing staff. Students who pass either their pipe or plate certification test will now be listed on a national database for rapid credential verification by prospective employers.

Ric Rosenberger, Welding Program Coordinator

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Maimonides