

CTECS WORKS

News from the Connecticut Technical Education & Career System (CTECS)

January 2019



Carpentry students learned to pull and spread a concrete floor, a challenging task!

Student Renovation at Historical Site Contributes to Community

It took two years of construction, three technical high schools and four trade areas to renovate the “Michelle House”, a first-of-its-kind resource center for Connecticut residents afflicted with sickle cell anemia. The Michelle House, named after former First Lady Michelle Obama, plans to open in New Haven in early 2019.

“The objective of this project, by and large, is to address the educational challenges that many young people with sickle cell anemia face,” said Jim Rawlings, Chairman of the Southern Connecticut Sickle Cell Disease Association of America.

Through CTECS’s Student Workforce Program, the Association hired Platt Tech HVAC; Emmett O’Brien Tech HVAC; and Eli Whitney Tech plumbing, electrical and carpentry shops to assist in the building repairs. The Workforce Program allows students to work on real projects for real customers and gain hands-on career development experience.

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From the Superintendent

It is my pleasure to welcome you into 2019 and the second half of the school year! It’s always a joy to see students and staff return refreshed and ready to work after the holiday break.

I hope you enjoy this first edition of the *CTECS Works* newsletter. Quarterly, we will share news and accomplishments from across our school system. While there is simply not enough room to cover all the positive stories that come out of our schools, my hope is that this will paint a picture of the work being done to prepare our students to graduate and step seamlessly into the workplace, or into a college classroom, with the skills needed to succeed.

Also included in this newsletter is information about absenteeism and other resources available for families. It’s important to remember that even as children grow older and more independent, families still play a key role in making sure they attend school each day. Flip to the back page for helpful tips on how to encourage good attendance.

I wish you and your family a very happy new year.

Jeffrey Wihbey
Superintendent of Schools



It was all hands on deck for demolition at the Michelle House in New Haven.

it. I knew the kids could handle it, but I didn't know how well they were going to accept it."

According to Lombardo and the other trade instructors, the student's thrived.

"I was impressed with the work we were capable of doing," said Eli Whitney carpentry student Roc'ki Stanley. "Before this job, I didn't know how to take a house apart and put it back together...I feel much more confident now, and I feel good that I'm giving back to the community."

"There is a lot of prep work before students set foot on a job site," said Lombardo. "We watch instructional videos, work out the math, look at blueprints and become familiar with the use of certain tools."

While the technical trade instructors were there to oversee each step of the process, students were responsible for completing the renovation work, which included demolition, removing rotting studs, framing walls, building new floors, wiring furnaces and thermostats, installing lighting and outlets, fabricating ductwork that would adequately heat and cool two floors, running gas lines, and more.

"Everything was installed by our students under really tough conditions - frigid temperatures at times," said Domenic Lemma, Platt's HVAC Department Head. "It gave them a good feel for what they are going to encounter on a real job site."

Lombardo emphasized that safety is a top priority on and off the job site. Every student is required to take a 10-hour OSHA training course that teaches workplace safety and job site hazards.

"I was really proud of them," said Lemma. "With hands-on practice and demonstrations at school, students were able to take what they learned into the real world."

CTECS Student Workforce offers a wide range of services to the public at a fraction of the market price. To schedule a service from any of our Student Workforce Departments, visit www.cttech.org/about/student-workforce.html.

To learn more about the Michelle House and the Southern Connecticut Sickle Cell Disease Association of America visit www.scdaaofsouthernct.org.



Did You Know?

Did you know that each CTECS school has a **Family Engagement Center**?

That's right. We are committed to family engagement programs and activities that lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement. Families are our partners, and we want to be sure they have access to the supports they need to succeed.

What can you find at our Family Engagement Centers?

- Strategies for supporting your children with homework, attendance, time management, and common teen issues.
- A connection to local service agencies and resources such as food banks, or heating and housing assistance.
- Information about special education and 504 services.
- Guidance concerning the legal rights of parents and students.

Call your school's main office for more information.

CTECS Celebrations - Students, Staff & Schools!

Henry Abbott Technical High School senior Jennifer Villa, a Mechanical Design and Engineering Technology student, has been selected by the National Academy of Engineering as an EngineerGirl Ambassador. Only six students nationwide were selected for this program that builds leadership skills in female high school students.



Pictured above: **Howell Cheney Technical High School** electrical students are helping to restore, renovate and preserve Hilliard Mills, America's oldest woolen mill located in Manchester, CT. A nationally listed historical site, the mill now offers modern, energy efficient amenities while honoring the original architecture.

The **Oliver Wolcott Technical High School** boys volleyball team was awarded the Connecticut High School Coaches Association (CHSCA) Sportsmanship Award for the 2018 season. This prestigious award goes to two high schools per year!

Crowley Auto Group presented the **Bristol Technical Education Center's** automotive department with a donation of \$2,660 to be used for extracurricular activities.

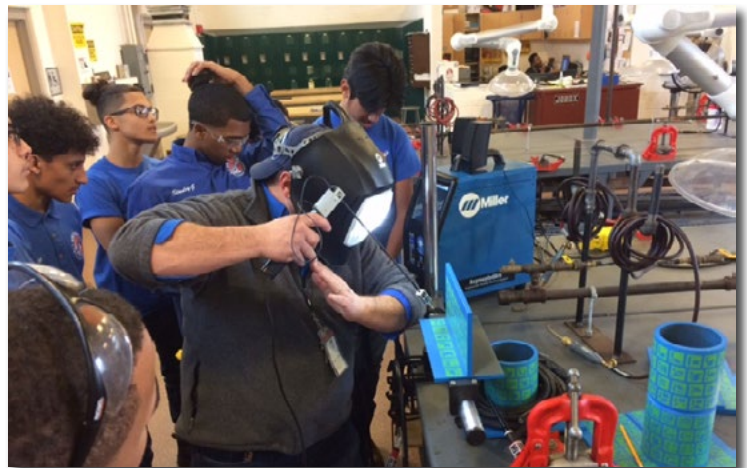
E.C. Goodwin Technical High School culinary students were busy this season catering a holiday party for CIGNA. Students created 2,500 individual desserts, as well as an assortment of cookies! Interested in hiring CTECS students? Visit www.cttech.org/about/student-workforce.html

Information Systems Technology students from **Vinal Technical High School** visited Green Monster Electronics Recycling Center to see first-hand how the disposal of electronics relates to environmental policies and local municipal programs.



Pictured above: In recognition of **Bullard-Havens Technical High School** being named Automotive School of the Year by Tomorrow's Technician magazine, Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim proclaimed November 27 as Bullard-Havens Day.

Bio-Science students from **A.I. Prince Technical High School** competed in a poster contest against GIS professionals from UConn, environmental engineering firms, and the Department of Public Health, among others. Prince students took home first prize with their urban tree mapping project.



Pictured above: Plumbing and heating students at **Wilcox Technical High School** and **Eli Whitney Technical High School** got a cutting-edge training experience with Miller Welders augmented reality welding. The benefit? Individualized training with immediate feedback; safe practical experience prior to moving onto live systems; and less waste.

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Students at **Harvard H. Ellis Technical High School** raised \$545 and collected toiletries for the homeless during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Windham Technical High School and **Norwich Technical High School** had the opportunity to video-chat with a graduate student scientist from UC Davis who specializes in soil recovery after wildfires; an extremely relevant educational topic given the recent wildfires in the West.



Pictured above: **J.M. Wright Technical High School** students get some real-life work experience at Edgehill Benchmark Senior Living. Students shadow resident care advisers as part of their certified nursing assistant education thanks to a partnership between the school, Edgehill and Norwalk Community College.



Pictured above: **W.F. Kaynor Technical High School** students placed 800 flags on gravestones at Calvary Cemetery in Waterbury with State Representative Stephanie Cummings.



Pictured above: The Auto Body Association of Connecticut presented a \$10,000 donation to CTECS automotive collision repair and refinishing program during a ceremony at **Platt Technical High School**. Pictured, Platt Tech students pose with Senator Blumenthal, Senator Maroney, Milford Mayor Ben Blake, and State Representative Kim Rose, among others.

Apply today to our full-day adult training programs for Aviation Maintenance Technicians at **Connecticut Aero Tech School** or **Stratford School for Aviation Maintenance Technicians!** Classes start on March 19! Visit www.cttech.org/adult-education/aviation-maintenance-technician.html

Bioscience and environmental technology students from **Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Regional Technical High School** helped create a rain garden at the Groton Human Services property. The 450-square-foot garden will filter water from the parking lot to keep pollutants from entering the Poquonnock River.

Emmett O'Brien Technical High School's physics class participated in UConn's 8th annual Cardboard Boat Race, which drew students from 25 other Connecticut high schools. Students paddled O'Brien's full-sized cardboard boat to a first place trophy in their heat and third place in the finals.

Want to stay up-to-date with CTECS celebrations?
Connect with us!
@CTTechHS



Students Take Advantage of CTECS College Connections

More than 1,000 Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) students are working to get a jump start on college and their careers thanks to partnerships with colleges and universities throughout the state and beyond.

The College Career Pathways (CCP) program partnerships allow students to enroll in academic and technical courses at community colleges and earn college credit while still in high school – at no cost. Students can also participate in the UConn Early College Experience program (ECE) and take academic courses at a reduced per credit charge.

“The benefit of these programs is that they help save money, but also save time, because a student can complete a [college] program in less time, and that means they are job-ready quicker,” said CTECS Education Consultant Mary Skelly. “We are always looking for ways to give our students a ‘leg up’.”

One such leg up is provided to Health Technology students at Norwich Technical High School (NTHS). These students can earn up to 11 college credits through UConn ECE, Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC) and Charter Oak State College.

“We are trying to teach students 21st century skills and best practice for work and higher education environments,” said Health Technology Department Head Lisa Torre Elliott. “As health technology instructors at NTHS, we were all willing to become adjunct professors at both QVCC and UConn...anything to benefit our students.”

Classes for college credit are offered at CTECS schools during the school day and taught by CTECS faculty who have been certified by the credit issuing agency to teach the college-level curriculum. Approximately 100 CTECS faculty are certified by CTECS partner institutions.

“Taking these courses will save money in college,” said senior Health Technology student Mike Exantus. “They also help develop new learning strategies.”

“I feel more confident going on to college now that I know what the expectations will be,” said senior Health Technology student Makenzie Jones.

Students in the Automotive Technology Program at Bullard-Havens Tech, Platt Tech, Eli Whitney Tech, H.C. Wilcox Tech, and Emmett O’Brien Tech can earn three to 15 college credits through the College Now program with Gateway Community College (GCC).

“It’s well known that employers are struggling to fill

their skilled trade positions throughout the state,” said Dan Fuller, GCC Automotive Technology Professor and Department Chair. “A benefit of the partnership between Gateway and the tech schools is that students can graduate with the skills to step right into an in-demand career. Students also have the option to earn an associate degree, which may secure a higher income potential, or they can go on for their bachelors. This program exposes students to a variety of career paths.”

In addition to partnerships with Connecticut’s community colleges and UConn ECE, CTECS students can earn credits and/or advanced standing with The

Culinary Institute of America, Lincoln Culinary Institute, Lincoln Technical Institute, New England Culinary Institute, and University of Northwestern Ohio, among others.

While the cost savings encourages many students to sign up for college-level courses while still in high school, some students have different motives.

“My parents didn’t get any higher education,” said Julia Roberts, a senior Health Technology student at Norwich Tech. “I wanted to set the bar high for me and my younger sister.

What we come from at home doesn’t change what goals we can accomplish or how far we can go in future.”

For more information about opportunities to earn college credit, contact your school’s guidance department. *Note: Program offerings differ by school and prerequisites vary by agreement.*

1,000+
Participating
Students

3,600
Credits
Attempted in
2018-19

20
College
Partners

100+
Certified
Teachers



Social Studies teachers Jason McGarry (Windham THS) and Drew Mizak (Ellis THS) attend a UConn instructor certification event.

Source: ece.uconn.edu/home/partners-home/instructor-certification/

Attendance Matters – Even in the Winter!

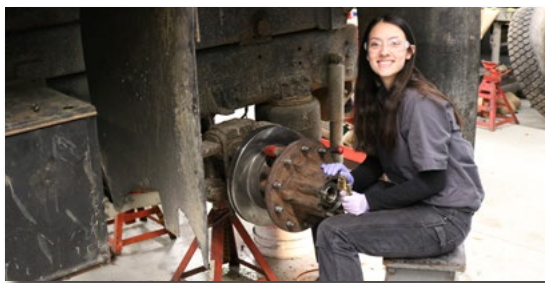
Icy sidewalks, runny noses, whipping wind - this is the time of year when winter weather and illnesses can take a toll on school attendance. But, absences, even if they are excused, can add up to academic trouble. Did you know that students should miss no more than 9 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to graduation? Or that students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks?

There's not much we can do about the weather, but there are several steps parents can take to help avoid absences this year.

1. Do what you can to keep your children healthy. Dress them warmly for the cold and encourage them to wash their hands regularly. If your children are sick, talk to your doctor or the school nurse to see whether they are too sick for school.
2. Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day. Make that the expectation.
3. Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
4. Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
5. Don't let your child stay home unless truly sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety.
6. Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors if necessary. Make sure teachers know how to contact you.
7. Stay on top of your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
8. Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs.
9. Know the school's attendance policy – incentives and penalties.
10. Check on your child's attendance regularly to be sure absences are not piling up.

(Used with permission from Attendance Works. The language has been adapted to reflect local policies.)

What Our Students Are Saying....



“Many people look at the trades as male dominated, especially Diesel, but women can do just as well, and it’s a lot of fun!”
- *Caitlin Christian, Diesel and Heavy Duty Equipment Repair, Howell Cheney Technical High School*



“I really like the wide variety of opportunities at Goodwin. Your options can lead you to college or right into work in your trade area, whatever you want. And the teachers here will help you do it.” - *Eddie Ortega, Manufacturing, E.C. Goodwin Technical High School*

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