First Class of Construction and Renovation Certificate Program Graduates Eight Students

STANTON/WILMINGTON - When eight students from John Dickinson and Thomas McKean high schools entered a pilot program with Delaware Tech during the 2012-2013 school year, none of them had clear plans for the future. Nearly two years later, they are preparing to graduate with both a high school diploma from their home school and a handful of nationally recognized certifications and course completion certificates that give them a variety of opportunities and choices that they didn't know existed.

Several of the students plan to continue their education in college or an apprenticeship, while others plan to jump into the workforce. They hold a distinct advantage over other recent high school graduates, with training in construction, blueprints, tiling, plumbing, painting and HVAC.

The program is a partnership between Delaware Tech and the Red Clay Consolidated School District and is an example, according to Red Clay superintendent Mervin B. Daugherty, of how the public school system can work with post-secondary institutions and the private sector to create meaningful programs for young people.

Based on the success of this pilot, similar partnerships are being created in the state. Recently, a partnership was announced between Delaware Tech, the Delaware Manufacturing Association, and Delaware's school districts to allow students to earn professional manufacturing certificates by the time they graduate from high school.

In the meantime, the first graduating class of the Construction and Renovation Certificate Program are excited for the future and are realizing dreams they never thought possible.

Juan Vasquez, a graduate from McKean High School said enrolling in the program was the best choice he could have made. He plans to enter the workforce, while exploring educational opportunities. "This program gave me direction and valuable experience," he said.

Bob Blyman, the lead HVAC instructor at Delaware Tech's Innovation and Technology Center, worked closely with the students and said the group has worked as a team, supporting and helping each

other along the way. “At the end of the day, these guys were able to get the same experience as any other adult learner,” he said. He looks forward to continuing to use his 40-plus years of HVAC experience to teach and mentor more students who come through the program.

Source URL:
https://www.dtcc.edu/about/news/2014/06/04/first-class-construction-and-renovation-certificate-program-graduates-eight-st