

# Porter County Career and Technical Education

A Division of Porter County Educational Services

www.pccte.org

2013 Annual Report Accountability Report to the Public

## SOLID VALUES EMBRACED

Respect the old while embracing the new.

That could be the mantra of Career and Technical Education students.

On the one hand, Max Whitcomb and Jeremy Personius are on the roof checking the status of the solar energy project. They might be brushing snow off the solar panels from which electricity is sold to NIPSCO under a 15-year contract. They might be checking the efficiency of solar panels or comparing the energy production of various wind generators.

On the other hand, Ashley Latham is over at the Portage Auto Services Technology class. She has discovered an old knurling machine, circa 1940's, that was created to make pistons like new. She has cleaned up and fixed the machine so it operates in its original condition.

"It is a really interesting machine," said the PHS senior. "I am happy to save it from the scrap yard."

Meanwhile, Kat Spurgeon and Niki Day are using the latest materials and techniques to work with their young charges at Hobart High's Brickie Kidz Preschool. And yet

Ashley Latham, Portage, senior, checks out the vintage Nurlizer with instructor Robert Barnes.

the work they do in Early Childhood Education is based on Indiana skill standards such as maintaining a safe physical space and analyzing the abilities and needs of the children.

CTE students are certainly looking to the future as they earn college credits in many programs and leave high school with a college transcript. Junior and senior participants in 2012-13 earned 3,804 dual credits at no cost. They also snapped up certifications from Certified Nursing Assistant (C.N.A.) to Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and more.

For example, Chad Stockman of Hebron High School earned 18 dual credits in Welding last year and may earn 18 more this year.

Stefen Brewer of Valparaiso High School earned six credits from Vincennes University in Criminal Justice last year, plus CPR and DNR Hunters Safety Certification. He can add six more dual credits this year in Criminal Investigations.

Good, old-fashioned work ethics and a positive attitude make Jacob Henderson a valued porter at Arnell Chevrolet through Chesterton's Work Study program.

"If you need him, he's there," noted Mike Duncan, service manager. Jacob assists wherever he is needed, from service to new car sales.

Former CTE students are having success, too. Alex Schreier and Matthew Mues both received Indiana's Award for Excellence in 2013. Alex is studying nursing at South Dakota State University, while Matt majors in public safety management at IUPUI.

Local industry has also lauded the value of CTE programs.

A quick survey by Urschel Laboratories' David Whitenack showed that about 10 per cent of the employees and interns at Urschel in 2013 went through PCCTE programs.

"Your training program is our only local consistent source of talent!" the plant manager added in an email.

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"Some people dream of SUCCESS while others wake up and work hard at it." - Barbara Rubel

Brandon King and Ryan Downey get hands-on catering experience at Valparaiso University's Harre Union.

The Porter County  
Career & Technical Education  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

is a yearly communication tool to  
area businesses and to the taxpayers.

We welcome comments and  
questions about this report.

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Please visit our website:  
[www.pccte.org](http://www.pccte.org)

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*Participating High Schools  
Porter County Career and Technical  
Education is proud to be supported by  
the following high schools:*

Boone Grove  
Chesterton  
Hebron  
Hobart  
Kouts  
Morgan Township  
Portage  
Valparaiso  
Washington Township  
Wheeler

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# Director's Report



*"The number one predictor of  
post-secondary success is having a  
mature and realistic career goal."*

-- Kenneth Gray, author, *Getting Real*

Career and Technical Education helps students prepare for college and careers. With the high cost of college today, it is imperative that students experience careers while still in high school before paying for expensive college classes. We prepare our students for entry level employment in high paying careers, and we direct them to future fields of study that will provide them with a lifestyle they can enjoy. Our classes are open to all students who attend any Porter County high school and Hobart High School. Students earn college credit in many of our classes.

The Porter County Career and Technical Education system is composed of 35 different vocational options. About 1/3 of those programs are located at the Porter County Career and Tech Center in Valparaiso. Another 1/3 of our programs are located in Portage. Some of those are in Portage High School (Dental Careers, Graphic Imaging, Health Science Education I and Work Study) but we also have a Construction Technology and an Auto Services Tech program housed at Willowcreek Middle School. We have an Early Childhood Education program at South Haven Elementary School so our students can experience real teaching experiences in the early elementary grades. Our Diesel Service Tech class, which is one of only four in Indiana, is located next to the Portage Schools Transportation Dept. so they can share resources.

The remaining 1/3 of our programs are located throughout the county in various school buildings. Our Horticultural Science program is at Morgan Twp. High School where we are using a newly constructed greenhouse. Our Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management classes are at Boone Grove HS, our Law Enforcement Academy is at Wheeler HS, and another Early Childhood Education program is located at SELF School. Chesterton High School hosts its own Construction Tech, Computer Tech Support and Work Study programs. Hobart HS hosts our Cisco Networking class, our Emergency Medical Services/Fire Science class, a section of Marketing Field Experience and our Fundamentals of Sports Medicine class. Another Early Childhood Education program is at Hobart HS so students can work in the on-site day care center.

The Career and Tech Center offers Auto Technology, Computer Aided Design and Animation, Electronics and Computer Technology, Entrepreneurship/ Sports and Entertainment Marketing, Health Careers, Health Occupations, Marketing Internship, Precision Machining and Video Productions.

Our classes are for juniors and seniors, those students who are ready to accept the responsibility of adulthood as soon as it is offered to them. We are looking for students who are planning for the future and students who want to find a passion for an occupation that will enhance their entire life. We expose all of our students to career skills and work with them to develop workplace competencies. We work hard with all of our students to create a future career and educational plan. We help many of our students find good paying jobs right out of high school while others go on to college where the college credit they earn in our classes can be applied toward a degree.

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# Striving To Be The Best

PCCTE teachers annually nominate their top students for consideration in the Indiana Awards for Excellence program. A local advisory board along with PCCTE Director Jon Groth reviews these nominations and selects the very best students to represent the PCCTE in the state competition.

*Congratulations to the following Award for Excellence nominees.*



Ambassador Jenna Csepp, right, gives the student perspective on CTE programs to fellow Portage students.

## An effective partnership between adults and students is shaping the future of Career and Technical Education here.

A mentoring program started about eight years ago has grown to involve present CTE students as tour guides and liaisons with their younger peers.

The selected student ambassadors step up in class when visitors arrive to describe their class. They conduct tours of everyone from visiting eighth graders to local business leaders to a state educational official. They help students select their career path in placement of new students.

Some ambassadors help local eighth graders with their Indiana Career Explorer software as they look into career and educational opportunities.

Kelli Ellis and Kate Sorensen, student support coordinators, train and work with the ambassadors to enhance their leadership skills.



## Observing at an Amish birthing center. Job shadowing for a pediatrician and obstetrical nurses.

These are just some of the experiences that have influenced **Paige Smith**, Valparaiso High School senior. This future nurse, doctor or midwife will start out at Ivy Tech Community College, thanks to a three-semester tuition scholarship earned through a Health Occupations Students of America competition.

She appreciates a more natural approach in medicine and has picked up new techniques in Health Careers and Health Occupations through Career and Technical Education.

Paige also serves as a waitress at Bob Evans in Valparaiso and is active in her church and its youth group.



## "Career and Technical Education really helped me plan what I wanted to do."

Those are the words of **Geoffrey Westerlund**, Portage High School senior.

Geoff would like to study nursing at Valparaiso University then serve as a traveling nurse for a few years. He'd also like to attend medical school and serve in a general practice.

Geoff took Health Science Education I/Medical Terminology & Anatomy as a junior and is taking Emergency Medical Services as a senior.

He counts soccer, Natural Helpers, Student Council, National Honor Society and Technical Honor Society among his activities and accolades.



## The "whole different environment" of the Career Center appeals to Madelyne Royter, Kouts High School senior.

Two years of Video Production & Media Studies have led to a job at ValpoLife.com as a videographer and news reporter.

Maddie served as the first anchor and first producer of her Video 2 class's magazine show last fall.

This dancer and NHS member is torn between communications and teaching for the future. She hopes to attend Purdue North Central.

She also does a lot of volunteer work and community service and dances on the pom pon team at Kouts.

# Success Stories

The articles below represent just a few of the hundreds of successful graduates from PCCTE.  
*Please read and enjoy the success our graduates are experiencing.*



Natalie and Kevin Meyne

## Welding program leads to supervisory career

Two years of Welding Technology gave **Kevin Meyne** a start that took him all the way to Lone Star, TX.

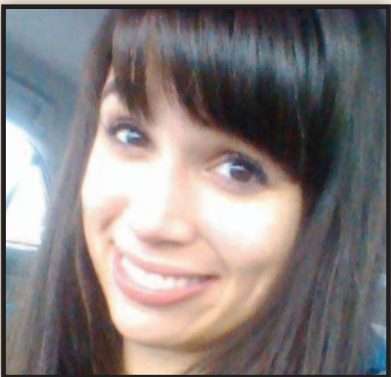
The 2007 Valpo High School grad works for U.S. Steel as a process manager, supervising six millwrights, two electricians and a welder.

He credits his welding experience with getting him in the door at USX as he has earned respect by the workers on his team.

He now holds a bachelor's degree from Purdue and is working on a master's degree in Construction Engineering Management.

"Thanks for what you do for the kids in these programs," offered Lori Meyne, Kevin's mom, in a email to Director Jon Groth. "They can lead to great places for them."

Kevin is married to VHS graduate Natalie Gough, and they own a home in Diana, TX.



Katalina Rivera

## CTE 'helped me as a person', solidified career

A fascination with the human body has propelled Katalina Rivera toward the sciences.

Taking Health Science Education I and then Health Occupations "ensured me that I wanted to be in nursing," said the 2011 graduate of Portage High School.

"I owe so much to the Career Center. They helped me as a person and helped me grow up a lot."

Observations and hands-on work at North Shore Health Center and at area nursing homes provided valuable experience for Katalina.

This busy young lady studies nursing at Purdue North Central and also works in the Progressive Care Telemetry Unit with cardiac patients at Porter Regional Hospital.

She'd love to continue working on the same floor even after she earns her degree. She would ultimately like to serve as a surgical nurse or nurse practitioner.

Her special skills in anatomy resulted in being chosen for a selective anatomy project at PNC.



Former students Alex Smyers, VHS, and Jordan Zawada, WTHS, help a firefighter replace an air tank at the hands-on FDIC show in Indianapolis.

## EMS class helps graduate find a career path

"You have made a big difference in my son's life."

Those are the words of Daniel Zawada. His son, Jordan Zawada, took the Emergency Medical Services class with instructor Jeff Lawley.

The 2013 graduate of Washington Twp. High School decided to go into the medical field, partly because of this class. He is studying nursing at Purdue North Central.

"Mr. Lawley is the best teacher I have had. He made the classes so much fun, and he is very knowledgeable."

Jordan earned six dual credits from Vincennes through the class and is certified in CPR and first aid.

"I would recommend to anyone that is even slightly interested in medical things to take this class," Jordan added.

PCCTE will host open houses Jan. 23 and Feb. 3  
at most locations.

See our website, [www.pccte.org](http://www.pccte.org), for details.