

# CareerFocus

PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

FALL 2018 • VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 2

## Need for Qualified Auto Technicians Growing at Meteoric Rate



NON PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
JACKSONVILLE, FL  
PERMIT NO. 1644

Piedmont Technical College  
PO Box 1467  
Greenwood, SC 29648



ECRWSEDDM  
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

**MORE  
ON THE  
INSIDE**

**FUNDS FOR  
THOUGHT**

**EARNING WHILE  
THEY LEARN**

**UNIVERSITY  
TRANSFER**

**WHERE DO YOU  
WANT TO GO?**

PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE PRESENTS:

# TEST DRIVE PTC

**TRY OUT YOUR NEW CAREER, RISK-FREE.**

There are a lot of good jobs out there if you have the training you need to get your foot in the door. But we know going back to school is a big decision. And we know you probably have a lot of questions about how that process works.

**That's why Piedmont Technical College is offering a no-cost, risk-free opportunity to test drive the college's education and training options.**

## AS A PARTICIPANT OF THE TEST DRIVE PROGRAM, YOU'LL:

- Choose between paths such as Industrial and Engineering, Skilled Trades, Business or Health Care
- Get an overview of programs that lead to in-demand jobs
- Receive industry-recognized training
- Learn how to navigate the college's enrollment process
- Connect with HR representatives from area businesses

## WHAT YOU'LL GET AT NO COST:

- Two sessions per week for two weeks and one weekend session
- Opportunity to complete industry-recognized certification such as Lean Six Sigma, Forklift or CPR — a value up to \$149
- A \$250 tuition credit if you complete all sessions

**FREE**  
**\$400**  
**VALUE**

## LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP:

Visit: [www.ptc.edu/testdrive](http://www.ptc.edu/testdrive)

Call: (864) 941-8400

**P**IEDMONT  
Technical College

Questions about the PTC programs and services described in this publication should be directed to the Office of Admissions at (855) 446-3864. Comments or questions about the publication itself can be directed to the PTC Office of Marketing and Public Relations at (864) 941-8669.

Editor: . . . . . Russell Martin  
Assistant Editor: . . . Kristine Hartvigsen, Jackie Mathis

**Visit Piedmont Technical College on the Web at [www.ptc.edu](http://www.ptc.edu)**

**Piedmont Technical College Area Commission**

- Y. J. Ahn—Greenwood
- Cherry Houston Brown—McCormick
- Dr. George P. Cone, Jr.—Greenwood
- Richard Cain, *Vice Chair*—Laurens
- Blake Davis—Laurens
- Jane J. Herlong—Edgefield
- Peter J. Manning—Greenwood
- H. George Piersol, II, *Chair*—Newberry
- Rufus C. Sherard—Abbeville
- Charles Graves—Greenwood
- William A. Whitfield—Saluda
- Thelma Woody, *Secretary*—Abbeville

**Institutional Officers**

- L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D., President
- K. Paige Childs, *Vice President for Business and Finance*
- Jack Bagwell, Ph.D., *Vice President for Academic Affairs*
- Josh Black, *Vice President for Student Affairs and Communications*

**Institutional Mission**

Piedmont Technical College transforms lives and strengthens communities by providing opportunities for intellectual and economic growth.

The College, a member of the South Carolina Technical College System, is a public comprehensive two-year postsecondary institution. Piedmont Technical College contributes to the economic growth and development of the largest and most diverse region of the technical college system, Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties and to the state. The College responds to the academic, training and public service needs of the community through excellence in teaching and educational services. Piedmont Technical College's open admissions policy provides accessibility for individuals with diverse backgrounds the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills for employment in engineering technology, industrial technology, agriculture, business, health, and public service. Piedmont Technical College graduates develop competencies in communication, mathematics, problem solving and technology.

The College offers university transfer; associate degrees, diplomas and certificates in technical and occupational areas; college preparatory programs; student development programs providing academic, career and individual support; and custom-designed credit and non-credit programs to provide training for business and industry and to meet the needs of the community. To optimize access to higher education in the rural seven-county service area, Piedmont Technical College offers distance learning courses through multiple modes of delivery.

CareerFocus is published twice a year by Piedmont Technical College, PO Box 1467, Greenwood, SC 29648 in partnership with Academic Marketing Services.

All rights reserved. No part of the material printed may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage retrieval system without the permission of the publisher.

Piedmont Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status in its admissions policies, programs, activities or employment practices.

For information on tuition and fees, program length, graduation rates, placement rates, and median loan debt, visit [www.ptc.edu/ge](http://www.ptc.edu/ge).

© 2018 Piedmont Technical College

# CareerFocus

## FEATURES



- 2 Facts and Finds**
  - The myth of multitasking
  - How to perk up a windowless office
  - Need help choosing a college? Take a tour!

### 3 Funds for Thought



- 8 University Transfer**  
Seeing The Forest for the Trees'

**On the cover:**  
Automotive Technology student Zane Ferguson of Greenwood

## PTC PROGRAMS

### 4 Earning While They Learn



### 6 Need for Qualified Auto Technicians Growing at Meteoric Rate

## SUCCESS STORIES

### 5 Travia Thompson From Dual Enroller to High Roller

### 7 Jason Cooley Planets Align for PTC Graduate's Small Automotive Business

### 9 Julie Miller From Associate to Bachelor's, and Beyond

## IN EVERY ISSUE

### 11 Where Do You Want to Go? PTC programs A-Z



## On the go?

Get career and college tips anytime online at:  
<http://ptc.mycareerfocus.org>

It's the easy way to share articles, access Piedmont Technical College resources and get on the path to a new career.



# Facts and Finds

## How to perk up a windowless office

If you've ever spent a lot of time in a cubicle, chances are you have a greater appreciation for nature. It's no joke! Studies show that people who work in natural light-deprived spaces are much less satisfied and suffer more stress.



While you probably can't move into an executive office, you can improve your mood with a stop at the greenhouse. Researchers found that students performed better on cognitive tests when surrounded by plants than at plain desks and they experienced less fatigue.

Lack of windows and exposure to sunlight can be bad for humans as well as plants, but finding the right plants may be just the touch of outdoors needed to perk you up. Here are several foolproof, classic plants for offices and darker homes.

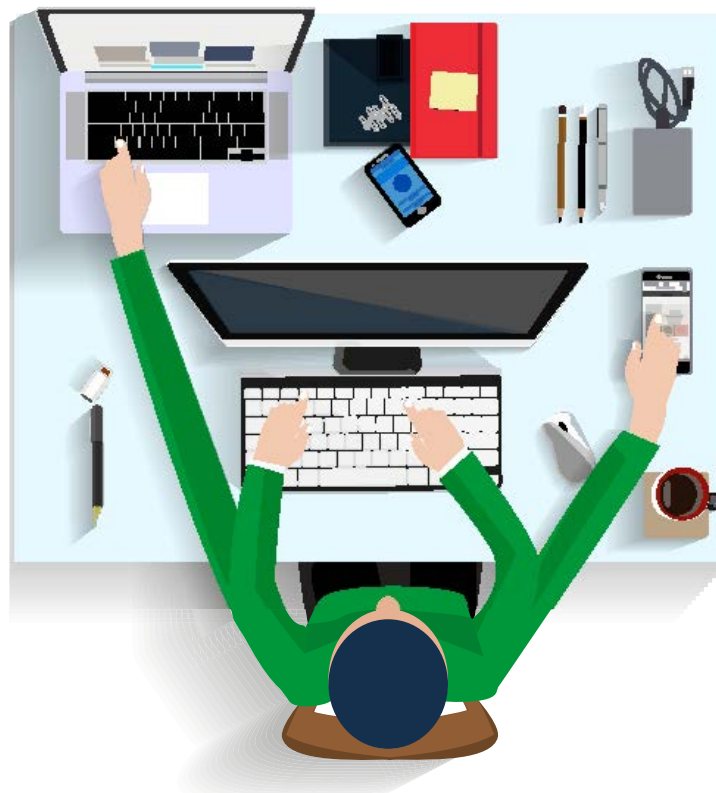
- Snake plant, or mother-in-law's tongue, with stiff leaves bearing green and gold markings.
- Cast iron plant, tolerant of low light, dampness, and dust.
- Peace lily prefers moist soil and average interior temperatures, producing a large flower.



- Dracaena and philodendrons have variegated leaves, splashes of alternate color and can thrive in artificial light areas.

Source: Gardening Know How: Windowless Houseplants: Learn About Using Plants For A Windowless Room  
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/hpgen/windowless-houseplants.htm>

## The myth of multitasking



In today's business world, companies do more with less and employees are asked to work harder and longer hours. Many spend time bouncing back and forth between tasks, believing multitasking makes them more efficient. New studies, however, have found that multitasking is not a skill to brag about, but to worry about. These studies suggest that multitasking actually causes us to make more mistakes, retain less information, and change the way our brain works.

The prefrontal cortex of the brain begins working anytime you need to pay attention. This area of your brain helps keep your attention on a single goal and carry out the task by coordinating messages with other brain systems. Working on a single task means both sides of the prefrontal cortex are working together in harmony. Adding another task forces the left and right sides of the brain to work independently.

Scientists at the Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (INSERM) in Paris discovered this when they asked study participants to complete two tasks at the same time while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). The results showed that the brain splits in half, causing us to forget details and make three times more mistakes when given two simultaneous goals.

Source: *Psychology and Neuroscience Blow-Up the Myth of Effective Multitasking*  
<https://www.inc.com/scott-mautz/psychology-and-neuroscience-blow-up-the-myth-of-effective-multitasking.html>

## Need help choosing a college? Take a tour!

Many students report campus visits as the most influential factor in deciding where to go to college. Potential students who visit campus by attending an open house find this critical in making a decision to enroll or not to enroll. Call your local community colleges for information on open house events coming up, usually at the beginning of each semester.

Many colleges also offer individual tours. You can schedule a walking tour often led by a student representative. This is a great opportunity to get an honest perspective on campus life. Ask your guide about public transportation, their favorite places to study at school, the best nearby coffee, or any other questions you might have.

Source: Barnes & Noble College. "Getting to Know Gen Z: Exploring Middle and High Schoolers' Expectations for Higher Education." Barnes & Noble College Insights. Retrieved from <https://www.bncollege.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Gen-Z-Report.pdf>

Secore, Scott. "The Significance of Campus Visitations to College Choice and Strategic Enrollment Management." *Strategic Enrollment Management Quarterly*. 4.5, 2018. Web. 28 Sept 2018



# Funds for Thought

In traversing the world, it's been said that the wind and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators. Unquestionably, the savviest navigators use effective tools to help guide them along their way. And when it comes to financing college costs, the ablest navigators take advantage of the experience and wisdom of seasoned advisors.

Piedmont Tech's financial aid staff are there to reduce what may seem like an intimidating labyrinth into a practicable path to reaching one's higher education goals. With the most affordable tuition in the region and myriad scholarships and financial aid opportunities available, they are demonstrating that a college education actually can be both achievable and affordable.

## Getting Started

The average financial aid package at PTC is more than enough to fully cover the cost of PTC's tuition and fees. To find out how much financial aid you can receive, you'll first need to apply through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). If you don't have a

computer, you can visit any PTC campus to complete the application. The FAFSA is used to determine how much federal and state aid you may qualify for in an academic year. Depending on the contact information provided, you will receive your Student Aid Report either by email or U.S. mail.

There are a variety of financial aid options at PTC, and many students receive more than one form of aid in combination. These options include federal aid (such as Pell Grants), state aid (such as SC Lottery Tuition Assistance, LIFE Scholarship and needs-based grants), loans and scholarships.

## We Have Your Back

Through the generosity of donors, the Piedmont Technical College Foundation offers a variety of scholarships available to current students after they have completed 12 credit hours in their program major at PTC with at least a 2.5 GPA. Scholarship applications are available during January, May and September. Applicants must have an instructor who will submit an online recommendation and cannot have received a Foundation scholarship within the past 12 months.

Learn more about scholarships and aid at [www.ptc.edu/fininfo](http://www.ptc.edu/fininfo). ■



**90%**  
of Piedmont Tech  
students receive  
some form of  
Financial Aid.



**50+**

**Scholarships are available at PTC.**

# Earning While They Learn

The promise of a good job in a rapidly changing economy is nearly as important as the enviable compensation that comes with the careers pursued by Piedmont Technical College students. In many cases, students find a strong pathway to their career through the many apprenticeship opportunities available through the college. Specifically, this option allows students to learn on the job and in the classroom while also receiving a paycheck—a collaboration that works as well for the employer as it works for the student.

Apprenticeship programs across South Carolina are proliferating rapidly as local employers realize their potential and return on investment.

“The number of companies (and industries) that Apprenticeship Carolina™ works with continues to grow,” said Amanda Richardson, apprenticeship consultant with Apprenticeship Carolina™. “Most companies are using registered apprenticeship programs as a way to grow their own workforce and create a critical talent pipeline to meet their current and future needs. The company and apprentice both benefit from this proven ‘earn while you learn’ model.”

In the seven-county area served by PTC, these opportunities have continued to expand as well.

“We have 34 active apprenticeship programs running,” said Rusty Denning, PTC’s associate vice president for economic development and continuing education. “Our industry customers appreciate Piedmont Tech serving as the liaison between them and the state funding agency to augment the cost of employer-sponsored apprenticeships. In a nutshell, it’s high-quality training made affordable.”

The apprenticeships are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor as part of federal funding awarded to the SC Technical College System specifically to expand apprenticeship in South Carolina. It is hoped that apprenticeships can address unmet needs for skilled workers in such fields as advanced manufacturing and construction.

“The industries participating in these apprenticeships benefit greatly because of the enormous return they receive from their discounted



investment,” Denning explained. “They come away with more skilled workers who, in turn, become even more loyal to the companies that invest in them.”

Students can enter these programs at all points along their path to developing needed workforce skills. For instance, some apprenticeships start as

early as high school, while others are hosted at local companies for existing employees. Here are just a few of the ways in which PTC is driving student and business success through apprenticeships.

## Professional Development at Velux

The apprenticeship program that quietly launched in 2016 at Velux in Greenwood has gradually attracted notice, and more employees say they want in.

“Our apprentices have all been current employees,” said Brad Setzler, human resources generalist at Velux. “Piedmont Technical College (PTC) provided all the training and materials. PTC coordinated everything, including helping secure the funds through Apprenticeship Carolina™.”

The apprenticeship program in leadership at Velux is wrapping up its two-year run, and another two-

**“The industries participating in these apprenticeships benefit greatly because of the enormous return they receive from their discounted investment. They come away with more skilled workers who, in turn, become even more loyal to the companies that invest in them.”**

**Rusty Denning,**  
PTC’s associate vice president for economic development and continuing education

year program has begun to provide SAP (Systems, Applications and Products) training. The SAP training is completely online, which is popular with employees because they can participate when it is convenient for them.

"The apprenticeship program helps provide developmental opportunities to our employees," Setzler said. "It's continuing education to further their skills on the job. We liked it because we could keep the education and training local, which was big for us."

Setzler said that feedback on the program has been overwhelmingly positive.

"They want more of it! Participants and their managers all spoke highly of the training they received. They want it every year now. It was really beneficial," he said. "We would not even have known about it without PTC reaching out to us and helping us through the process."

### Going With the Flow at Menardi

Navigating a sometimes turbulent marketplace requires vision, experience — and the right balance to stabilize the ship. Management at Menardi Filter Elements in Edgefield County realized that sailing along the same way as always only brings the same results. All the while, their competitors were changing tack in the midst of an approaching sea change.

"We have been in business for a long time, and the market has changed for us," said Kirk Trykowski, vice president of finance and general manager at Menardi. "We continued to try to run our business the way it was in its heyday but realized the market has changed, so we had to change with it."

Trykowski and HR Manager Kerry Watson both knew that staying competitive required not just a training solution but an overall cultural shift. And that meant swimming against the longstanding current.

"When I started a year ago, my overall goal was to get people training," Trykowski explained. "Kerry and I both came from a largely pro-training environment." At the time, some Menardi employees hadn't received any training for several years. "Kerry and I are trying to bring that forward," he said.

The two saw apprenticeship, in partnership with Piedmont Technical College, as an opportunity to secure training and update employee skills at a significantly lower cost while, at the same time, instigating a progressive shift in mindset. To begin, they asked the company's supervisors and managers to identify promising candidates in various areas. "They put a list together along with suggestions for bringing in an instructor," Trykowski explained. "We just followed that list verbatim."

### The Bottom Line

The "earn while you learn" apprenticeship model is proving to be an effective, affordable tool for growing a skilled workforce.

For more information, visit <http://apprenticeshipcarolina.com/>. ■

## PROFILE

# Travisia Thompson

## From Dual Enroller to High Roller

Just three years out of high school, Piedmont Tech graduate Travisia Thompson may be earning upwards of \$60,000 a year.

Let that sink in for a moment.

A proactive maintenance apprentice program among partners Piedmont Technical College (PTC), Laurens County Development Corporation (LCDC), Laurens County School Districts 55 and 56, and ZF Transmissions in Gray Court is making this seemingly pie-in-the-sky opportunity available to qualified Laurens County high school students.

That's right. HIGH SCHOOL.

This virtually unheard-of earning potential is quite literally possible.

Accordingly, Thompson started her education at PTC as a dual enrollment student while still in high school and graduated in December 2017 with a degree in mechatronics technology. She is currently working to complete the maintenance apprenticeship program she began at ZF, where she has made quite an impression.

"Travisia is just fantastic. I wish I had 10 more just like her. For whatever reason, this is a male-dominated field. She is the only female I have in the program," said Robbie Ellis, apprenticeship supervisor at ZF. "Travisia steps up and volunteers for things. She is definitely a leader. She is very intelligent and doesn't mind taking charge."

ZF has made an impression on Thompson as well.

"They have great opportunities here, and you always have the opportunity to excel and level up," Thompson said. "I have built a foundation here at ZF Transmissions. I look forward to staying on here."

"It's hard work, and it's a factory, but it's not as it seems," Thompson added. "ZF is actually a clean environment. It's a great environment. ... I get the same respect as guys. Just because I am a lady, they don't treat me any different. I want to be treated just like everybody else."

Ultimately, an individual apprentice's experience and success say it all.

"I am able to get on-the-job training and gain knowledge before beginning my career. That's the best part. And I have people mentoring me and guiding me along the way," Thompson said. "I highly recommend it to anyone coming out of high school. I graduated college with no tuition debt. ZF took care of everything." ■



# Need for Qualified Auto Technicians Growing at Meteoric Rate



More than six months after it was launched into space, Elon Musk's bright red Tesla Roadster with "Starman" at the wheel continues to zoom across the galaxy at an estimated 2,246 miles per hour. It has exceeded its 36,000-mile warranty more than 7,800 times over. And if the growing shortage of auto mechanics and technicians continues, earthbound customers seeking repairs and service for their increasingly high-tech vehicles could feel as lonely as Starman while they wait for service scheduling with a shrinking pool of qualified technicians.

"I talk to lots of shop owners. They don't have problems getting applicants, but they do have problems getting qualified applicants," said Gerald Sartin, PTC automotive technology program director and instructor. "The average age of an auto technician right now is about 50 years old. There will be a huge demand in the future for qualified technicians. We are trying to meet those needs with the younger generation."

And while many may not be aware of the program's recent accreditation from the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF), industry veterans take note. NATEF accreditation is an exhaustive process requiring onsite evaluation by outside experts.

"They send in an evaluation team to come in and assess our program," Sartin explained. They leave no carburetor unturned. After conducting its thorough evaluation, NATEF recommended PTC for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification. Departments of education in all 50 states support ASE certification of automotive programs to ensure that training programs meet or exceed industry-recognized standards of excellence. "We are very proud of completing this process and being able to meet the high standards required by ASE and NATEF."

What makes PTC's ASE-certified program different from others that are similarly accredited? "We provide a more personal setting. We don't focus on any specific make or manufacturer of vehicle," Sartin said. "We transfer knowledge on any make or model from America or Europe."

## State-of-the-Art-Training Environment

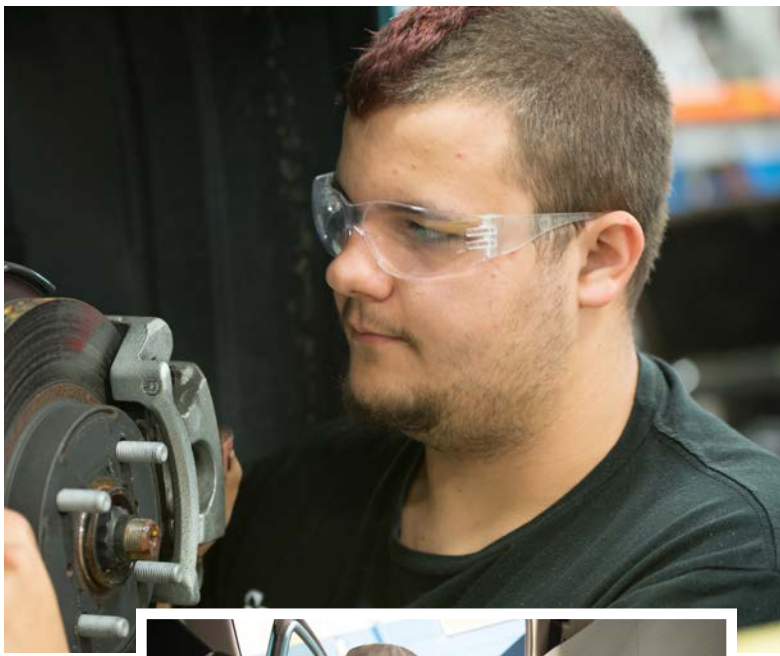
Students in the PTC program learn in an environment that is as close to a real-world automotive shop as possible, Sartin added. They



create repair orders, look up parts and labor, diagnose problems and practice one-on-one communication with customers. "This program can prepare students for a position at any dealership or shop," he said.

Automotive Technology Instructor Bill King concurs, and he should know — before coming to PTC, he worked as service manager at a local dealership for 14 years. And for many years prior to that, he himself worked as an auto service technician.





"As a former service manager, I know the quality of worker they are looking for in potential employees," King said. "My job is to make it real for our students. ... They need to look at their schooling just like a job."

All students in the program are invited to join the Full Throttle Club, which facilitates educational activities outside of the classroom. Members may go on automotive factory tours or salvage yards.

"They learn and really get enthusiastic about this industry," Sartin said. "One student found an exhaust manifold for a Jeep at the salvage yard. He actually found a vehicle he could remove the part from. It was a high-performance part. He Googled it on his phone at the time and discovered that it normally would cost \$300, and he got it for less than \$20. He was ecstatic. ... Many of our students are intrigued and amazed."

### Preparation for Today's Jobs

An advisory board of experts regularly evaluates the program's curriculum to ensure it reflects the current needs of the industry. And essential "soft skills" are not neglected.

"In this industry, there is a lot of diversity, a lot of different types of people," Sartin noted. "We want our students to receive experience working with people who are different from them" and to hone their teamwork, listening and communication skills.

Automotive technicians in today's world, at a minimum, also must have some computer literacy.

"Years past, all service information was in manuals and books. Now it's all online," Sartin explained. "You do have to have computer knowledge. All of our test work and textbooks are online. Students will be asked to use a computer more than they ever have in the automotive industry." ■

## PROFILE

# Jason Cooley

## Planets Align for PTC Graduate's Small Automotive Business

Every once in a while, you might find Jason Cooley gazing at the stars from his auto repair and custom suspension business in Cross Hill. The business day ends at 6 p.m., but that's often when the big projects receive uninterrupted attention. The hours he puts in are his prerogative.

"I have actually stayed here all night long and watched the sun come up over the cow pasture the next morning," Cooley said. "If a customer needs it done in a day, even if it's a two-day job, I will get it done."

Cooley is a 2015 automotive technology program graduate of Piedmont Tech.

About three weeks before graduation, Cooley learned of a job opportunity with a dealership in Greenville. He applied, was hired and worked there for about a year after receiving his degree. But destiny was quietly calling. It began when Cooley's father told him about an available property on three acres of land in Cross Hill and suggested he forge out on his own.

"My dad kept pushing me to do it," Cooley recalled. "I was scared, just like everyone." It was hard to walk away from a steady, substantial paycheck and take on the risk of owning his own business.

Cooley took the plunge in 2016 — opening JC's Auto Repair and Custom Suspension — and hasn't looked back.

"We built out the shop, poured the concrete. It was so empty at first, but within six months, we ran out of room for everything," he said. Now that he owns his own shop, Cooley realizes that Automotive Technology Program Director Sartin actually did know a thing or two. "Before I went to Piedmont Tech, I thought I knew everything about cars. I really did. Gerald knew what he was talking about. The (PTC) program was really hands on. ... Now I know."

It wasn't all smooth sailing. The first year or so was a challenge, just as it is for any new business venture. Cooley endured a great deal of stress operating solo.



"For the first year and a half, I was all by myself. I was doing three to four (suspension) lift kits a week by myself. I had to close up the business whenever I had to pick up a part or take vehicles out on the road. There was no one to mind the store. ... After a year and a half, I hired someone." That someone is Shaun Pierce, who also attended PTC. So now Cooley not only is a business owner but an employer as well. Someday, when his business expands further, Cooley says he likely will turn to PTC for recruits because he knows the program's quality firsthand.

"Gerald tried to make the auto shop as much like a real business as possible," he recalled. "You had to watch what you did and what you said. Wear your safety goggles. Don't leave any greasy handprints. It had a real workplace feel. That's important."

Smart decisions also go a long way, and Cooley took advantage of a great offer to grow his business.

"I did so many lift kits, eventually my supplier made me an authorized dealer of their lift kits," he said. "That was a big boost for my business." Subsequently, Cooley is always on the lookout for similar opportunities, from lift kits to tires.

Cooley said he couldn't have come this far without support and advice from his wife, Holly, who owns a successful hair salon in Greenwood.

"Owning a business is great," he said. "I feel successful." ■

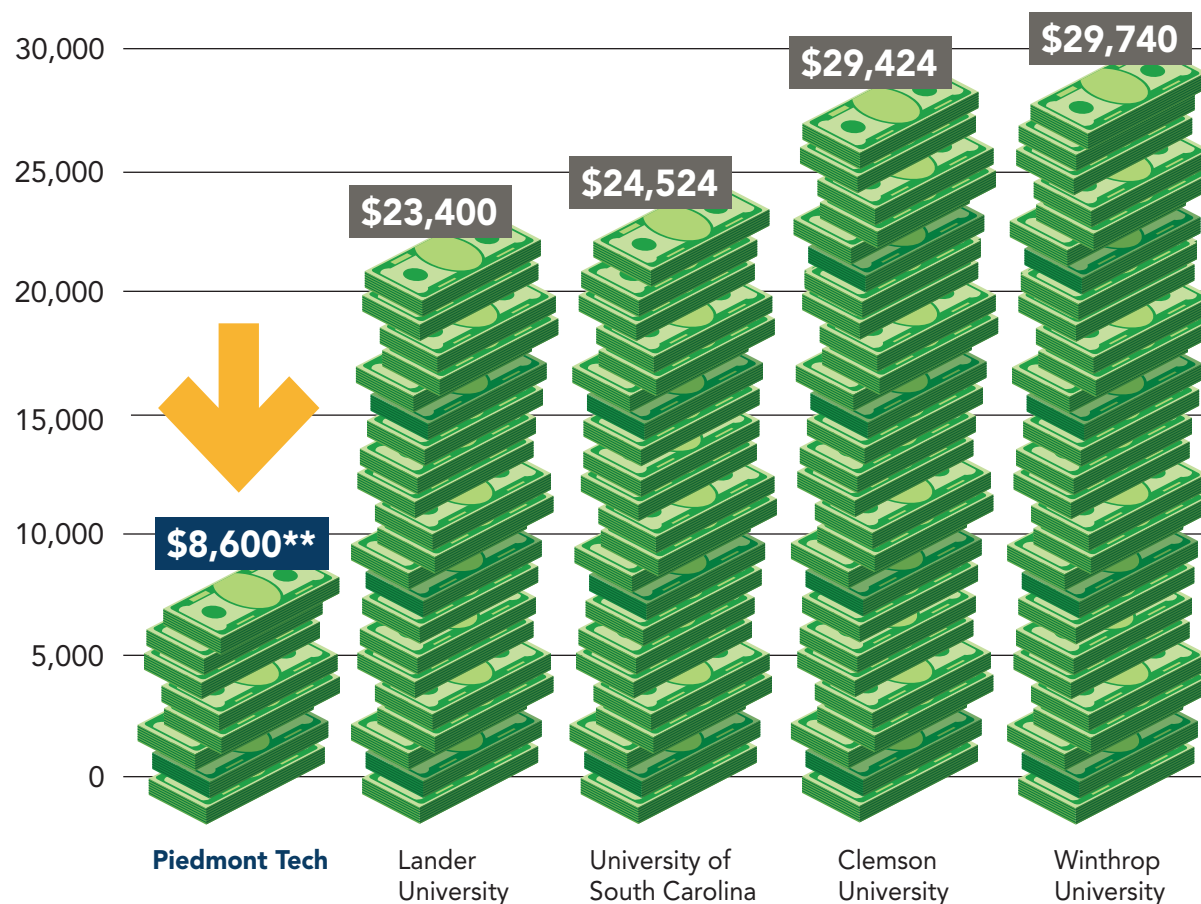
# University Transfer

## Seeing The Forest for the Trees

Have you considered pursuing an associate degree from Piedmont Technical College (PTC) and transferring credits to take your education to the next level? Perhaps your dad wants you to graduate from his alma mater, the University of South Carolina in Columbia. Or maybe mom wants you to consider her favorite, the College of Charleston. Problem is, you're not sure whether these institutions will accept your credits earned at PTC and allow you to transfer into their four-year baccalaureate programs. Relax. There's good news.

### How much will I save by starting at PTC?

See how we compare.  
Average college tuition for two years\*



See how we stack up with all state schools in SC by visiting [www.ptc.edu/cost](http://www.ptc.edu/cost).

\*Cost estimates are based on 2017-18 tuition and fees as reported to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education in Spring 2018.  
\*\*This rate is an average of PTC's in-county tuition rates. Your cost of attendance will vary based on your county of residence. Visit our tuition and fees page at [www.ptc.edu/tuition](http://www.ptc.edu/tuition) for the most current information about the costs related to attending PTC.

PTC has bridge and transfer agreements with baccalaureate-granting colleges and universities across the state, including the University of South Carolina, Clemson University and the College of Charleston. Such agreements in place means that transferring to these institutions should be virtually seamless.

#### Cost and Convenience

Overwhelmingly, students tell us the No. 1 appeal of these programs is the cost savings because starting your post-secondary education at a community or technical college and finishing at a university can save you thousands of dollars on tuition toward your bachelor's degree.

A close second is convenience, because students can stay home and take introductory university courses locally for the first two years, saving on housing and/or commuting expense. In cases where PTC has a formal articulation agreement with a partner institution, some upper-level university courses can be taken at PTC, negating the need to commute to the baccalaureate-granting institution and find housing there. Other benefits available in a select number of transfer agreements include personalized case management and advising as well as access to university amenities, campus life and clubs.

#### How the Process Works

Dr. Brad Griggs, PTC dean of arts and sciences, says that it's difficult to nail down a hard number but, as a very conservative estimate, about 12 percent of the college's student body are on a transfer pathway. That figure does not include dual-enrolled students or applied majors.

"Baccalaureate-seeking transfer students at PTC enjoy the ability to start college in a setting that typically features smaller classes. Oftentimes, our faculty are more approachable than in a university setting that may have lecture halls packed with hundreds of people. Our largest classes have maybe 60, and most have 30 or less," Dr. Griggs said. "It gives students the ability to save a tremendous amount of money before they transfer. They can take



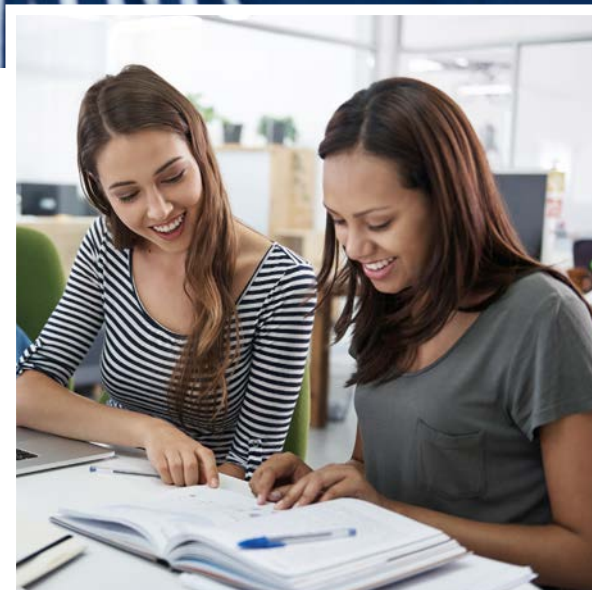
60 hours with us and pay a fraction of what it would cost at their destination university.”

More than 80 courses taught at PTC are approved for transfer to any public university or college in South Carolina. That covers a lot of the initial pre-requisite coursework for a baccalaureate degree.

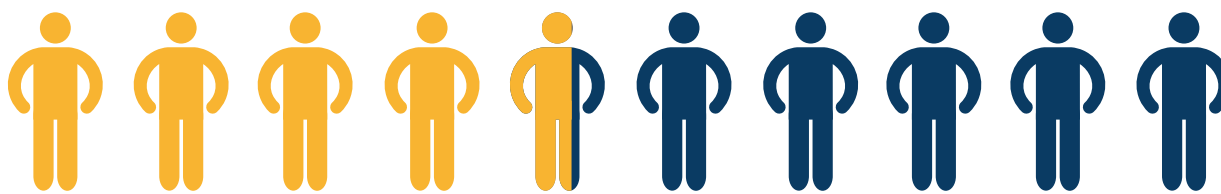
“The process may go more smoothly if a student is in a bridge program, but not all bridge programs are created the same,” Griggs said. “Ultimately, it’s the faculty advisor and the student and the senior institution’s advisors working together to select courses. There is a tremendous advising component to the process. In general the students who are working with their advisors do have a seamless transfer.”

### Take The Transfer

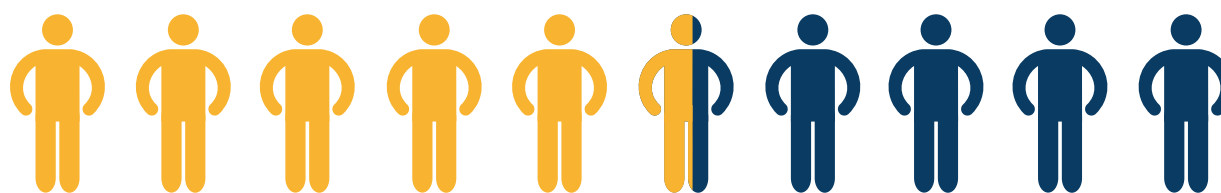
Students who are considering a transfer after PTC should alert their academic advisors and inquire about course substitutions that are approved for transfer in their desired programs. PTC conducts



an annual College Transfer Fair every fall. An admissions counselor can help you go over program options and explain the transfer process. Schedule an appointment at (855) 446-3864, or visit our Admissions Office today. Learn more at [www.ptc.edu/transfer](http://www.ptc.edu/transfer). ■



**48%** of S.C. bachelor’s degree recipients in 2015-16, completed a portion of their coursework at a technical college.



College graduates earn **56%** more than individuals with just a high school diploma.



## PROFILE

### Julie Miller From Associate to Bachelor’s, and Beyond

Julie Miller was in her mid-30s when she started classes at Piedmont Tech. Even so, she was treading water on her career choices.

“I didn’t know what I wanted to do. I changed my major a lot when I was there,” Miller said.

First, she focused on dental hygiene but discovered that it just wasn’t for her. Then she entered the associate in science program, only to find it wasn’t the right fit for her. Then she changed tack again.

“The associate in arts program gave me the broader range of study,” she explained. “I got to study history and philosophy and art, things I was interested in.”

That choice kept the door open for a lot of options later. And as she continued her course of study, she learned a lot about herself. It led her to consider the field of social work.

“I have always been really good working with people and helping people,” Miller said. She looked at the possibilities and learned that the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) had recently launched a human services program online. So she chose a university transfer path that would allow her to seamlessly transition to USCB. It appealed to her because “I could connect with people and work on case studies.”

A Greenwood resident, Miller graduated from PTC with her associate in arts degree in 2015. She received her bachelor’s in human services in 2017. She currently works as a recruiter for a staffing company. Now she’s working on a master’s degree through American Public University. Is a PhD on the horizon?

“That is the plan,” she said. ■

# A Career and a Bachelor's Degree

## Bridge Program Graduate Finds Success at MEC in Greenwood

As he paddled a turbulent section of the Chattooga River between South Carolina and Georgia, Orlando Carrillo couldn't help but take an engineer's interest in the various rock formations and the patterns of rushing water circumnavigating them.

"I remember thinking about the water and the danger of the hydraulics," Carrillo said. "You try to understand how the water assumes a circular motion. I think that is very interesting from an engineering perspective."

The Piedmont Technical College (PTC) alumnus presents anything but the science nerd persona one might expect. He has played soccer all his life and enjoys rugged outdoor sports that include skydiving and — yes — whitewater rafting. Even before he earned his associate in mechanical engineering technology, Carrillo was employed as an engineering technician at MEC (Mayville Engineering Company) in Greenwood, an employee-owned metal fabricating enterprise founded in Wisconsin with locations in multiple states. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree through PTC's Bridge Program with South Carolina State University (SC State). He's now been with MEC for four years, during which time he was promoted to manufacturing engineer.

The SC State Bridge Program enabled Carrillo to "transfer" to SC State without having to commute to Orangeburg. Instead, through an articulation agreement with PTC, he was able to

stay in Greenwood and complete courses toward a SC State bachelor's in mechanical engineering technology on the Greenwood campus.

"The Bridge Program at SC State was designed specifically for people like Carrillo. It brings the classroom to the student, on a platform the student is very familiar with. Carrillo took advantage of the Bridge Program's uniqueness, and the rest is history," said Stanley Ihekweazu, chair of SC State's Department of Civil and Mechanical Engineering Technology and Nuclear Engineering. "The program is still open for those students whose jobs cannot allow them to travel to Orangeburg to complete their bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering technology or mechanical engineering technology. SC State goes to them."

"Based on my personal experience, I often recommend Piedmont Tech to others. I have friends who attend there now because I talked to them about the college," he said. "The professors understand that a lot of the time you are not coming straight from high school and have responsibilities with a full-time job, and some students may have kids. They show that they are willing to work with you. ... With PTC's flexible schedules, online learning and night classes, I was able to finish my degree while working."

Carrillo's relationship with PTC began at the college's Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CAM) in Laurens, where he was taking basic classes to learn machine programming. While there, professors encouraged him to consider the mechanical engineering technology program. After receiving his computer programming certification, he enrolled in the engineering technology program. During that time, several PTC instructors left a lasting impression.

"Everything in the world is 3-D," he said. "At first, I didn't understand it completely. But my instructor, Christina Knight, was able to explain it to me. Now I use 3-D modeling every day. Any time I draw



something, I remember some of the valuable lessons she was able to transfer to me."

Another instructor took his students on multiple field trips to local area manufacturing facilities, including Eaton and Prysman. "What was memorable to me was to see how engineering could be applied in the field," Carrillo said.

Meanwhile, Carrillo is making an impression at MEC, a company that has provided him opportunity and valuable, constructive experience.

"It's fun working here," he said. "I have a great team. Every day when I go to work, I feel like I really want to be there. Everyone is willing to help you. You work as a team, and you know that you are not by yourself."

One occasion that truly conveyed the company's customer commitment and inclusive work culture came as Carrillo's team was preparing for an important customer launch. One of the company's top corporate officials traveled from Wisconsin to South Carolina every week for more than six months, going home only on weekends.

"He was actually doing some of the work, right alongside us," Carrillo said. "He was working with us every day. He showed us that we are all the same. This is who we really are."

When he thinks about the future, Carrillo says he would like to try some different roles in the years ahead. He plans to work toward an MBA from the University of South Carolina Upstate. "I want to do something perhaps in project management," he said. "I will look at possibilities within the company and continue my education." ■

**"Based on my personal experience, I often recommend Piedmont Tech to others. I have friends who attend there now because I talked to them about the college."**

**Orlando Carrillo**

# Where Do You Want to Go?

For many people, deciding on a career can feel like taking a journey without either a map or a destination. Eventually, with some advice and direction, a little exploration and maybe a dead end or two, you begin to get a sense of where you'd like to go and how to get there. Whether you're just starting out or picking up a new career mid-life, Piedmont Tech offers courses and services to help you find your path and get to your goal.

Good advice and good resources are the best road maps. PTC's Counseling, Career Planning and Employment Services can help you explore your options and get started on a plan of action. Academic advisors, too, can help you choose the right classes for your goal.

PTC's 80+ certificate, diploma and degree programs are some of the best vehicles around for taking you to your career destinations. In a year or less a certificate can get you into a job, in two years an associate degree can move you a little farther along your career path, and transferring to a four-year college will take you even farther.

Map out your options by taking a look at the PTC A-Z listing below. And when you're ready to start planning your career, visit [www.ptc.edu](http://www.ptc.edu) to find out how to enroll in classes. Call the Admissions Office at (855) 446-3864 for answers to your questions. ■



## UNIVERSITY TRANSFER PROGRAMS

If you're headed toward a bachelor's degree, we can help you get there. Piedmont Tech offers more than 80 courses that transfer to any public university or college in South Carolina, and hundreds of PTC students transfer credits earned at Piedmont Tech to universities throughout the state each year.

### Associate in Arts

The Associate in Arts program prepares students for four-year baccalaureate majors in fields such as business, accounting, management, English, journalism, social work, education, music, psychology, history, pre-law, humanities, fine arts and social sciences.

### Associate in Science

The Associate in Science degree stresses mathematics, as well as natural and physical sciences, and prepares students for four-year baccalaureate majors in those fields, plus engineering, pre-med, veterinary medicine, chiropractic and education.

### Transfer Partnerships & Career Path Transfers

PTC has established specific transfer agreements with more than 19 colleges and universities, as well as specific career path transfers in areas such as business, criminal justice, engineering technology, education and many more. Talk to your advisor to decide which path is right for you.

For more information, visit [www.ptc.edu/transfer](http://www.ptc.edu/transfer)



## AGRICULTURE

We all know that agriculture is an important part of South Carolina's heritage. But did you know that agriculture-based businesses play a critical and expanding role in the growth of the state's economy? In fact, agribusiness is one of the largest economic clusters in the state and a critically important part of the knowledge based economy.

**South Carolina Mean Salaries**  
 Farmer - \$69,620  
 Agricultural Technician - \$34,360  
 Nursery Operator - \$27,290



### Diversified Agriculture

Provides students with advanced technical knowledge in sustainable agriculture, field crop production, pest management, soil and water management, hydraulics and pneumatics, agriculture economics and marketing related to the agricultural industry.

**A.A.S., Major in Diversified Agriculture**  
 Basic Diversified Agriculture Certificate

### Horticulture Technology

Students are prepared for supervisory, middle management and technical positions in horticulture, including landscape design, implementation and maintenance.

**A.A.S., Major in Horticulture Technology**  
 Horticulture Landscape Management Certificate



## BUSINESS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

If you're a good communicator who enjoys solving problems, a career in business might be right for you. Computers have also become an indispensable part of everyday life. Majoring in Computer Technology at Piedmont Tech will give you the knowledge and skills you'll need to get started in Information Technology and computer science.

**South Carolina Mean Salaries**  
 Tax Preparer - \$34,260  
 Medical Transcriptionist - \$34,580



### Administrative Office Technology

Actual work experience and instruction in keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet applications, transcription, office procedures, communication, accounting and more give graduates the ability to work independently and handle the details of office administration.

**A.A.S., Major in Administrative Office Technology**  
 Office Technician Certificate

### Business Administration

Probably no other occupational area encompasses a more diverse range of activities than the business field.

**A.A.S., Major in Business Administration**  
 Accounting Certificate  
 Entrepreneurship Certificate





## BUSINESS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

### Commercial Art

If you have an artistic streak and you enjoy solving problems by thinking creatively and interacting with computers, you should consider a major in Commercial Art.

#### A.A.S., Major in General Technology – Commercial Art

- Concentrations in advertising design, digital rendering and photography

#### Advertising Design Certificate

#### Digital Rendering and Gaming Development Certificate

#### Photography Certificate

### Computer Technology

Students study computer maintenance, local-and wide-area networks and popular programming languages. Graduates are truly prepared to take their place in the Information Age.

#### A.A.S., Major in Computer Technology

#### PC Technician Certificate

#### Cybersecurity Certificate

#### Certified IT Professional Certificate



## QUICKSKILLS ADVANCED TRAINING OPTION

In today's Advanced Manufacturing operations, qualified employees are essential to a successful production operation. The Quickskills training programs listed below allow people to learn in a relatively short time frame the necessary entry level skills to help them start work with more than a basic understanding.

### Machine Tool CNC Precision Operator

Students will learn and perfect introductory skills in the programming and daily maintenance of CNC machines. Various types of automated equipment, such as Coordinate Measuring Machines are utilized so that students gain practical experience that will help them obtain gainful employment in industry.

### Manufacturing Production Technician

The curriculum includes mathematical and statistical techniques and applications, industrial safety and operational principles, production process cycle including resource availability, product specifications and state-of-the-art manufacturing practices, including Lean Manufacturing tools and techniques.

### Precision Metrology Certificate

The Precision Metrology certificate is designed to upgrade or refresh skills for people familiar with measuring systems required in Advanced Manufacturing industries. Working with tolerances on the order of millionths of an inch, Quality Control Inspectors require the knowledge to operate highly sophisticated inspection equipment such as optical comparators, profilometers and CMM (Coordinate Measuring Machine) systems.



## ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

If you're fascinated by technology and enjoy a hands-on approach to problem solving, Engineering Technology may be the right career path for you.

### Electronic Engineering Technology

The graduate is skilled in the operation, troubleshooting, calibration and repair of electronic instruments and systems found in process control, communications, computers, manufacturing, programmable logic controllers and microprocessors.

#### A.A.S., Major in Electronic Engineering Technology

### Engineering Design Technology

All phases of manufacturing or construction require the conversion of new ideas and design concepts into the basic line language of graphics.

#### A.A.S., Major in Engineering Design Technology

### Mechanical Engineering Technology

The Mechanical Engineering Technology curriculum equips the graduate for: performing a key role in the mechanical design process; installing, troubleshooting and repairing mechanical and electro-mechanical equipment; programming CNC machine tools, computers, programmable controllers and robots; and performing general maintenance functions.

#### A.A.S., Major in Mechanical Engineering Technology

#### South Carolina Mean Salaries

Electrical and Electronics

Drafter - \$63,070

Electronic Engineering

Technician - \$59,480

Mechanical Engineering

Technician - \$53,740



## ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

### Engineering Bachelor's Degree Options

Agreements have been developed to provide options for transfer into three bachelor's degree programs: The USC Electrical Engineering or Mechanical Engineering programs; SCSU's bachelor of science in Electrical Engineering Technology (BSEET) degree or the bachelor of science in Mechanical Engineering Technology (BSMET) degree programs; and USC Upstate's Engineering Technology Management B.S. program.



## INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Students enrolled in any of the Industrial Technology curricula will gain practical experience and technical knowledge. Well-equipped labs, broad-based programs and hands-on opportunities make the difference in their futures.

### Automotive Technology

Students are trained to perform quality maintenance, diagnosis and repair of complex modern vehicles.

#### A.A.S., Major in Automotive Technology

#### Automotive Fundamentals Certificate

### Building Construction Technology

Students gain practical training in estimating building costs, carpentry, cabinet making, residential wiring, blueprint reading, brick masonry, construction, building codes and safety.

#### A.A.S., Major in Building Construction

#### Technology

#### Carpentry Certificate

### Gunsmithing

#### A.A.S., Major in General Technology -

#### Gunsmithing

#### Advanced Gunsmithing Certificate

#### Introduction to Gunsmithing Certificate

### Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technology

Students in this program are educated in the installation, maintenance and repair of air conditioning, refrigeration and heating systems.

#### A.A.S., Major in Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning Technology

#### Heating Fundamentals Certificate

#### Refrigeration Applications Certificate

#### HVACR Installers Certificate

### Machine Tool Technology

Students in this program get training and practical experience in machining operations used in the manufacturing industry. The graduate is skilled in the use of precision equipment and can make intricate parts.

#### A.A.S., Major in Machine Tool Technology

#### D.A.S., Major in Machine Tool

#### Computerized Numerical Control Certificate

#### Machine Tool Operator Certificate

### Mechatronics Technology

Combining electronic, mechanical, robotics and information system technologies, this program provides the graduate with the skill set needed for today's automated manufacturing facilities.

#### A.A.S., Major in Mechatronics Technology

#### Mechatronics Technology I Certificate

#### Electrical Maintenance Technician Certificate

### Welding

Students learn to join metal by use of gas-fueled torches and electric arc processes.

#### A.A.S., Major in General Technology - Welding

#### D.A.S., Major in Welding

#### Basic Welding Certificate

#### South Carolina Mean Salaries

Automotive Technician - \$38,810

Carpenter - \$40,970

HVAC Technician - \$42,620

Electronics Technician - \$59,480

CNC Machine Tool

Operator - \$39,780

Welder - \$43,310



With the complexity and diversity of today's health care system, varieties of health care professionals are needed. To function effectively by providing safe, knowledgeable patient care, the health care professional needs a thorough understanding of basic sciences and individual curriculum theory.

**Cardiovascular Technology**

The Cardiovascular Technologist performs diagnostic tests which are used in the diagnosis, treatment, and serial follow-up of patients with cardiovascular disease.

**A.A.S., Major in Cardiovascular Technology**

**Emergency Medical Technician**

The Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is a vital link in the health care chain. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) are employed in areas such as emergency ambulances, private non-emergent transport services, clinics, and other allied health care settings.

**Emergency Medical Technician Certificate**

**Medical Assisting**

The Medical Assisting program prepares a multi-skilled graduate to function in clinical and administrative areas of the physician's office and ambulatory care centers.

**A.A.S., Major in General Technology – Medical Assisting**

**D.A.S., Major in Medical Assisting**

**Nursing**

The Nursing program will assist students in developing the intellectual, technical and professional competencies necessary to practice. Upon successful completion of the NCLEX licensure exam by the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina, graduates can seek employment as licensed registered nurses or licensed practical nurses, depending on their program of study.

**A.A.S., Major in Nursing**

**D.A.S., Major in Practical Nursing**

**LPN to ADN Nursing Transition Option**

**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

As only one of three two-year programs of its kind in South Carolina, Piedmont Technical College's Occupational Therapy Assistant program is a great option for students seeking this in-demand training in the Upstate and Midlands.

**A.A.S., Major in Occupational Therapy Assistant**

**Patient Care Technician**

Because health care is changing at an unprecedented pace, new or varied approaches to patient care are emerging. One such approach is the use of multi-skilled individuals known as Patient Care Technicians who are a part of the health care team.

**A.A.S., Major in General Technology – Patient Care Technician**

**Patient Care Technician Certificate**

**Pharmacy Technology**

Graduates of the pharmacy technology diploma are health care professionals who assist the pharmacist in a hospital or clinical setting to provide quality health care related to medication administration in an institutional setting.

**A.A.S., Major in General Technology – Pharmacy Technology**

**D.A.S., Major in Pharmacy Technology**

**Phlebotomy Technician**

This certificate program provides students with the basic skills necessary for the collection of laboratory blood specimens.

**Phlebotomy Technician Certificate**

**Radiologic Technology**

The Radiologic Technology curriculum is designed to assist students in acquiring the general and technical competencies necessary to enter the radiography field.

**A.A.S., Major in Radiologic Technology**

**Respiratory Care**

The respiratory care practitioner is trained to assist the medical staff with the treatment, management and care of patients with cardiopulmonary abnormalities or deficiencies.

**A.A.S., Major in Respiratory Care**

**Surgical Technology**

Surgical technologists are members of the operating team who work closely with surgeons, anesthesiologists, RNs and other personnel to deliver patient care before, during and after surgery.

**A.A.S., Major in General Technology – Surgical Technology**

**D.A.S., Major in Surgical Technology**

**South Carolina Mean Salaries**

- Cardiovascular Technologist - \$56,630
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) - \$40,390
- Pharmacy Technician - \$30,060
- Radiologic Technologist - \$52,170
- Respiratory Therapist - \$55,780
- Registered Nurse (RN) - \$63,630
- Veterinary Technologist - \$30,930

**Veterinary Technology**

The veterinary technician works under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. The specialized training received will allow the graduate to seek employment in such areas as clinical medicine, laboratory animal medicine, emergency medicine, pharmaceutical sales, food inspection and government agencies.

**A.A.S., Major in Veterinary Technology**

Students interested in a career in Public Service may choose majors in Criminal Justice or Early Care and Education.

**Criminal Justice**

This program is designed to prepare professionally-educated and competent criminal justice practitioners for careers within the criminal justice system.

**A.A.S., Major in Criminal Justice**

**Early Care and Education**

The Early Care and Education program offers a combination of classroom instruction and supervised, hands-on experience that prepares students for direct entry into the field of Early Care and Education.

**A.A.S., Major in Early Care and Education**

**A.A.S., Major in Early Care and Education, Infant/Toddler Care Concentration**

**Early Childhood Development Certificate**

**Infant/Toddler Certificate**

**Funeral Service**

This program provides the educational foundation needed to seek South Carolina licensure both as an embalmer and as a funeral director.

**A.A.S., Major in Funeral Service**

**Funeral Service Education Certificate**

**Human Services**

The program prepares students to work in diverse settings such as group homes; correctional, mental retardation and mental health settings; family, child and youth service agencies; and programs concerned with alcoholism, drug abuse, family violence and aging.

**A.A.S., Major in Human Services**

**South Carolina Mean Salaries**

- Police Officer - \$42,330
- Preschool or Daycare Director - \$44,480
- Preschool Teacher - \$27,840
- Funeral Director - \$42,830
- Human Services Assistant - \$30,860

The major in General Technology is designed to provide students with an opportunity to upgrade diploma or certificate programs into broader occupational degrees. The program is designed to be substantially individualized to meet the needs of employees who have or seek to have broad technical responsibilities. Total credit hours for this degree must equal 60 or more. Students in the following program areas, with general education courses, may earn an associate in applied science with a general major in general technology: Welding, Gunsmithing, Commercial Art, and Health Science.

A.A.S. = Associate in Applied Science, D.A.S. = Diploma in Applied Science

Source: [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_sc.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_sc.htm)

# IT'S YOUR MOVE MAKE IT COUNT

Deciding on the right career or the best path to a bachelor's degree is an important decision. And we know you have questions.

Maybe you're paying for college out of your own pocket, and you're not quite sure how to cover the tuition and fees. Maybe you're ready to step out of your comfort zone to pursue the career you've always wanted, but you're unsure of the direction you should take. Whatever questions you have, **Piedmont Technical College can help you find the path to a successful future.**

So, don't let anything hold you back from following your dreams.

Get started today at [makeitptc.com](http://makeitptc.com).

#### ABBEVILLE COUNTY CAMPUS

143 Hwy 72 W  
Abbeville, South Carolina  
(864) 446-8324

#### CENTER FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

109 Innovation Drive  
Laurens, South Carolina  
(864) 682-3702

#### EDGEFIELD COUNTY CAMPUS

506 Main Street  
Edgefield, South Carolina  
(803) 637-5388

#### LEX WALTERS CAMPUS-GREENWOOD

620 N. Emerald Road  
Greenwood, South Carolina  
(864) 941-8324

#### LAURENS COUNTY CAMPUS

663 Medical Ridge Road  
Clinton, South Carolina  
(864) 938-1508

#### MCCORMICK COUNTY CAMPUS

1008 Kelly Street  
McCormick, South Carolina  
(864) 852-3191

#### NEWBERRY COUNTY CAMPUS

1922 Wilson Road  
Newberry, South Carolina  
(803) 276-9000

#### SALUDA COUNTY CAMPUS

701 Batesburg Hwy.  
Saluda, South Carolina  
(864) 445-3144

**REGISTER NOW!**

**P**IEDMONT  
Technical College

For more information,  
visit [www.ptc.edu](http://www.ptc.edu)  
or call (855) 446-3864.