



(Pinewood Prep and Dorchester Academy) as well as virtual students and those who are homeschooled.

DCCTC offers morning and afternoon classes, so students usually spend half their day at the center and half the day at their high school. Students are provided transportation, or they can drive themselves.

Students can choose from 18 different programs – everything from Auto Collision Repair and Building Construction to Cosmetology and Law Enforcement.

“Students may complete all our programs in one school year except for Cosmetology which takes two years to complete,” Quattlebaum said.

Classes are two hours long, so students typically only take one class per year – however, they are allowed to take two if they can fit those into their schedules.

Each of DCCTC’s programs has an Advisory Council that is made up of members of the local business community. Advisory Council members “advise and assist instructors and students by sharing industry knowledge and providing up-to-date information on industry standards and needs.”

DCCTC students can choose from the following 18 programs:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 01. Architectural Design | 11. Firefighting |
| 02. Auto Collision Repair | 12. Health Science |
| 03. Auto Technology | 13. Heavy Equipment Operation |
| 04. Building Construction | 14. Law Enforcement |
| 05. Cosmetology | 15. Logistics + Distribution |
| 06. Culinary Arts | 16. Machine Technology |
| 07. Diesel Engine Tech | 17. Nail Technology |
| 08. Electricity | 18. Welding |
| 09. EMS Technology | |
| 10. Environmental + Natural Resources | |



Getting Ahead with DCCTC: How Local Students are Preparing for Life After High School

By Matt Beardmore

An opportunity to receive hands-on training, network with professionals in their respective fields, and earn a paycheck while still in high school: These are just some of the benefits for students who attend the Dorchester County Career and Technology Center (DCCTC).

Opened since 1974, the DCCTC is available to any high school student who resides in Dorchester County. According to Jen Quattlebaum, Communication Manager at the DCCTC, most of

the center’s students are seniors and juniors, but there are a handful of sophomores who also attend.

Approximately 750 students take classes at DCCTC – either at the 32-acre main campus in Dorchester, or the satellite campus in Summerville that re-opened in August 2016. And they come from the four public high schools in Dorchester County (Woodland High School, Summerville High School, Fort Dorchester High School, Ashley Ridge High School), two private high schools



“It would be tough for us to operate without our Advisory Council,” Quattlebaum said. “We have a luncheon for them twice a year and they meet with our teachers and offer industry updates. They let us know what we are doing well and what we could add to our curriculum to help with the latest industry standards. They also offer our students work-based learning programs, internships, and mentoring.”

DCCTC students can also leverage their teachers’ experience and industry knowledge. There are about 25 teachers at the center and they are working members of the fields in which they teach. They must take classes to become licensed teachers through DIRECT, a “work-based alternative teacher certification program coordinated by the South Carolina Department of Education.”

With a teacher recommendation and assistance from DCCTC’s job placement resources, sophomores and juniors who complete a program can return the following year and be placed with one of the center’s business partners so they will be working and earning a paycheck while also earning high school elective credit – all during school hours.

“We have more than 100 local business partners, so students have lots of opportunities,” Quattlebaum said.

The students are making the most of those opportunities as DCCTC data shows that within a year of high school graduation, 98% of students are either in college, in the military, or working in their field of study.

In terms of costs for students who attend, there are none, as the majority of DCCTC funding comes from taxpayers through the Dorchester County Council, Quattlebaum said.

“Since so many of our students go to work right in the county, we offer a great return on investment,” she explained.

For more information about the Dorchester County Career and Technology Center, please visit <https://www.dcctc.net>.

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