

NEWS

Connecticut Technical High School System

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Tech Schools Plan Local Activities to Commemorate Century of Learning

CTHSS to Celebrate 100th Anniversary at October 29th Statewide Event

HARTFORD—The Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS), the state’s largest high school system, will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year with a series of activities and events throughout the state including a culminating event on October 29th. The schools have been an integral part of Connecticut’s economy for decades with tens of thousands of graduates taking leadership roles in the trades, and business and industry throughout the state.

The CTHSS – formally known as the Connecticut Vocational Technical High School System (VTHSS)— has organized a statewide event to celebrate the 100th anniversary on October 29, 2010 at the Aqua Turf in Southington. Guest of Honor is Senate Chair of the Connecticut General Assembly’s Education Committee, Senator Thomas Gaffey. The evening will feature historical presentations and *the first recipient of the CTHSS “Friend of Education” award*. Tickets are available through the schools or by calling 860.807.2200. Alumni and former faculty and staff are invited to attend.

In addition, the state’s 17 technical high schools are planning local activities and events to celebrate the anniversary including research projects, presentations, school assemblies and time capsules.

HISTORY

In 1910, the Connecticut State Board of Education established the state’s first “Trade Schools” in New Britain and Bridgeport. The schools had a 50-week, 300-day school year. Students were required to “punch in and out” for the eight-hour school day and attended school Monday through Saturday, year round. The success of the first two schools led to an expansion program resulting in the establishment of a school at Putnam in 1913, Torrington and Manchester in 1915, Danbury in 1917, Meriden in 1918, Stamford in 1919, Middletown in 1925, Willimantic in 1928, Hartford in 1929, Norwich in 1942, Waterbury in 1953 and Hamden in 1956. For more information, go to: http://www.cttech.org/central/main-news/100_Years/index.htm

The state’s Vocational Technical High Schools became a system unique in America. For the first 40 years, the focus of the “trade schools” was to provide training in “real world job skills” and to prepare students for the trades including the construction trades, manufacturing, and such professions as tool and die making; watch, clock and instrument making; tailoring; industrial sewing; and Licensed Practical Nursing. The Danbury Trade

School created a course in hat-making and hat-finishing to serve the local manufacturing center in that city. At that time, there were 27 trades for boys and 3 for girls. In the mid 1940's, the state board of education developed a new policy to assure that the curriculum would provide a 50-50 balance of shop work and academics that would entitle the graduating student to a high school diploma.

The VT system, in order to comply with Title IX, revised recruitment and admissions policies to extend all trade programs to both male and female students. During the early 1970's the female enrollment doubled from 1468 to 2989. Today, the CTHSS student enrollment is about 40 percent female.

In 2005, the system underwent a series of major changes including a new name (CTHSS), the introduction of a college prep curriculum, modernization of high school technology programs and a statewide rebuilding of school facilities.

Today, CTHSS is comprised of 17 regional public high schools that provide all students with both a college prep curriculum and the opportunity to acquire technical skills in the following technologies:

- **Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communication**, including media production, music production and technical theater,
- **Computer Technologies**, including Electronics Technology, Graphics Technology, Information Systems Technology, Pre-Electrical Engineering and Applied Electronics;
- **Construction**, including Architectural Technologies, Carpentry, Electrical, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Masonry, Plumbing and Heating, and Plumbing, Heating and Cooling;
- **Health Technology** including Bioscience and Environmental Technology, Early Care and Education, and Health Technology (pre-nursing);
- **Manufacturing**, including Automated Manufacturing Technology, Computer-Aided Drafting and Design (CADD), Electromechanical Technology, Manufacturing Technology, and Welding and Metal Fabrication;
- **Tourism, Hospitality and Guest Services Management**, including Baking, Culinary Arts, Fashion Merchandising and Entrepreneurship, Hairdressing/Barbering, and Retail Management and Entrepreneurship, and Tourism, Hospitality and Guest Services Management; and
- **Transportation** including Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing, Automotive Technology, and Diesel and Heavy Duty Equipment Repair.

Approximately 40% of CTHSS graduates go on to college and about 40% go directly into the workforce in their chosen field.

CTHSS also serves approximately 3,000 adult students in programs that range from Aeronautics, and Licensed Practical Nursing, to several apprenticeship programs in the construction trades.

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