



CALHOUN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Calhoun County Career & Technical Center: "The Cornerstone for a new and stronger workforce"



With the start of the new school year, begins the second chapter in the history of the Calhoun County Career and Technical Center. The first chapter in the history of the Center brought about a hint of the many benefits that the Center has in store for the students of Calhoun County and the workforce of tomorrow. Additionally, the first year gave the students and the local community an overview of the five new career and technical programs as well as a glimpse of the new facility and its cutting edge of technology equipment. These programs and the new technology will be the cornerstone for equipping students with the skills they will need in order to be successful in the workforce of the 21st century and beyond.

At this point of the new school year, 175 students are most excited about the opportunities to have hands on learning experiences that will enable them to acquire skills in the career areas which they are pursuing. The use of some of the 'new tools and equipment' makes school and education more relatable to the students. The new career and technical programs present information to the students in their preferred mode of learning – learning by doing. Whether it's manufacturing technology or allied health, all five of the programs enhance the academics that are taught in the high school because each program integrates math, English, and science

throughout its curriculum. Students now are able to apply math, English, and science concepts in a contextual environment where they can actually understand the importance of geometry or physics. Walking through the five career and technical classes at the center, one can easily see the excitement of learning on the faces of our students as they perform skills such as blood pressure readings, analyzing diagnostics printouts of a car's electrical system, determining the slope of a roof of a house blueprint, editing video using the same software that is used by CNN for video production, or using a micrometer for precise measurement of an intricate metal product to be produced using a milling machine. The face of education has definitely changed in the Calhoun County School District.

Upon the conclusion of this school year, the center will have approximately 85 students who will have completed a two year career concentration in one of five career related programs - allied health, automotive service technology, construction technology, digital media, or manufacturing technology. These students will leave these programs with skills that will enable them to go into the workforce with entry level proficiency or pursue higher education programs with the required prerequisite skills necessary for acceptance into programs such as nursing or civil engineering. The bottom line is that the programs offered at the career and technical center equip our students with the skills and experiences that they need to make them more marketable in tomorrow's workforce. Building a skilled workforce in Calhoun County translates into a lower unemployment rate, an improved economy and a possible attraction of new industries that seeks employment of human resources with 21st century skills.



Anna Zemek, Bruce

It is hard to choose a favorite season of the year. Each one bears its own merits as to why we look forward to it each year. But none is as unique as the cusp of summer and autumn. The weather is pleasant, or at least a pleasant relief from the scorching summer heat we just experienced. The smell of a hot grill is still lofting in the air. And nothing is more hospitable than a neighbor driving up sharing in the bounty of their garden's harvest. I am not a Calhoun County native, but I have found such a sense of belonging and community here that I couldn't imagine calling anywhere else home.

To be such a small county, we are blessed with the amount of industry we have located here. I have always been intrigued by the art of producing something from nothing. My husband, Lou and I started our dairy farm last year, and instantly we became involved in something so much bigger than just our farm. The more involved we become in our industry, the more aware I am of our impact on such a major food source in our country. With the current economic "slump", I have also become more aware of the importance of working together unified under one voice as an industry to get more accomplished. By working together as an industry we are better able to market our product more efficiently and effectively. These efforts are evident as more dairy products show up on menus of major chains.

As a community, we too, need to continuously work together towards improving our county through our respective businesses. We share the common goal of wanting our county to prosper and grow, and with this kind of cooperation, no economy can slow us down.

From The Director's Desk : Terry Fales

In this time of deep economic downturn, our County is very fortunate to have existing, well run businesses that are expanding and creating new jobs. Both United Chair (Bruce) and Med-Lift (Calhoun City) via their new Kids World business, have added about 200 new jobs to our community. They are to be congratulated and appreciated, and I certainly do both!

On the CEDA front, I thank Lee Peden of Bruce, our outgoing President for his support and service to CEDA. Lee has provided sound leadership over the last two years. We are fortunate to have Paul Tyler of Bruce as our new President. Paul is a

successful business man who will continue to provide sound guidance for CEDA, along with his fellow Board members.

And lastly, I look forward to our County embracing the recycling of paper, plastic and aluminum cans. We are off to a good start, as mayors are supporting the recycling team's recommendation to locate bins in all our main towns—a "must" to making this work. If our residents get behind this and we are successful, I believe it will aid future economic development efforts, as it will be an excellent example of our desire to invest in and "clean-up" our environment.

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