May 5, 2017—Chad Oxford, 40, a recent Turbine Generator Maintenance, Inspection & Repair graduate, was named FMTC’s Student of the Year. According to his instructor, Mr. Eric Seuffert, “Chad is a role model, critical thinker, and true professional.” Mr. Oxford, Vice President of National Technical Honor Society, took the initiative to plan, design, and fabricate a balance beam for one of the program’s turbine engines.

“Chad is a life-long learner,” says Mr. Seuffert. “He consistently seeks and performs additional research as needed. Chad eagerly took on extra responsibilities, is dedicated to safety, has an outstanding rapport with his peers, is dedicated to safety in the workplace, and is a team leader.”

Mr. Oxford was hired by Granite Services, an affiliate of General Electric, before he completed the program and has already worked on jobs in several states. He says the skills he learned at FMTC are directly relatable to his job and realizes the safety skills he learned have already protected him on the jobsite.

FMTC Students Win at State Competitions

FMTC students won 4 medals at the Florida SkillsUSA competition held in Lakeland on April 23-26, 2017. Over 1,500 students enrolled in secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs at technical colleges and high schools located throughout the state participated in the annual event. SkillsUSA is a nationwide career and technical education student organization serving more than 300,000 high school, college and postsecondary students—and their instructors—in technical, skilled, and service occupation instructional programs.

The contests are planned by technical committees made up of national experts from labor and management, they are designed to test the skills needed for a successful entry-level performance in given occupational fields.

HOSA

FMTC students won 4 medals at the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) competition held in Orlando, April 6-9, 2017. FMTC students placed in every contest in which they participated! HOSA is a student organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in health care and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people.

The SILVER-placed winners are Carissa Edilla—Extemporaneous Health Poster; Amy Finn and Teresa Woods (team)—CPR/First Aid; and Taeler Ott—Medical Math.

Carl Abbots, Taina Valentjin, Jobelyn Nance, and Anthony Morrison

SILVER
Carl Abbots—Mechtronics
Anthony Morrison—Mechtronics

BRONZE
Jobelyn Nance—Customer Service
Taina Valentjin—Cosmetology

January 31, 2017—Aaron Alfaro, Mechanical Engineer, from the Sporlan Valve Division of Parker Hannifin Corporation, gave a presentation on the theory and operation of thermostatic expansion valves and filter-driers to the Air-Conditioning, Refrigeration & Heating Technology students.
The 2016-17 School Year has drawn to a close for many of our programs. However, we do have a couple of programs that run into summer and our Practical Nursing program is a year-round affair. The start of the 2017-2018 school year will mark a change in the start and end times of more of our programs. Some will start as early as July 12, 2017, and some will end as late as June 19, 2018. This change is being implemented in order to produce workforce-ready employees sooner and is more philosophically aligned with the spirit of the “Career in a Year” motto. The benefits to the industries that we aim to serve is that we can provide future employees in a timely manner that have fully completed their training program. Our students benefit as they get started in their careers faster and are able to improve the lives of themselves and their families. Fort Myers Technical College benefits as we will be able to offer more program slots to future students and fulfill our obligation that is best encapsulated in our mission statement.

As we look to the future and celebrate our fiftieth anniversary, we are fully involved in preparing for our reaccreditation visit from the Council on Occupational Education. The Council on Occupational Education (COE), originally founded in 1971 as a regional accrediting agency of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is the successor to the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI). In 1995, the Council became a national accrediting agency. In 2006, the Council celebrated its 35th year of assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education. The Council’s accreditation process is conducted on behalf of more than 360,000 students across the nation who pursue careers in a variety of technical fields. FMTC has been accredited since 1977; our goal is to present the visiting team with a complete, accurate and honest self-assessment of all aspects of our college. In doing so, we seek to reaffirm our accreditation status for another six years. The reaccreditation process is a serious endeavor and important to FMTC at the core level as it validates our existence as a post-secondary provider of career and technical education. For our faculty and staff, this will be the culmination of over a year’s worth of self-study; and for our current and future students, it will secure their confidence in choosing to attend FMTC.

On a personal note, I wanted to thank everyone who has made my first year as the Director of FMTC one of the best years I have had in my 24 years in The School District of Lee County. We have renovated multiple spaces on campus; seen our students win awards at regional, state and attend national competitions; have registered people to vote; recognized our veterans; and have awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships. While the final numbers are still being tallied, we have had numerous industry certifications earned as well as state licenses earned. Most importantly, students have completed their programs and have been placed into careers in their industries. If the past is a prologue, the future of FMTC is very bright.

This year’s scholarship recipients are Brandon James, US Army veteran, Turbine Generator Maintenance, Inspection & Repair student and Jacob Clark, US Army veteran, Electricity student. Mr. James completed three tours of duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Germany. Mr. Clark served in Iraq, Germany, and Japan and completed his service to the country as an Army Recruiter. Thank you to all the veterans for their service to our country!

The mission of Fort Myers Technical College is to provide high quality career and technical training, in order to prepare students for current and emerging industries, delivered by a professional and caring staff in a positive learning environment.

Director’s Message
Brian Mangan

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Robert West, an FMTC graduate, is the lead power plant operator of Aria Energy, a power generation station. It is located in the area’s largest landfill in Sarasota. Mr. West graduated from FMTC’s Turbine Generator Maintenance, Inspection & Repair program in 2014. He has since traveled as a turbine repair technician for companies such as Alstom, Turbine Generator Maintenance, Inc., and Granite Services. The skills and experience gained through FMTC as well as working as a traveling mechanic has made him a perfect fit for his current position as a lead power plant operator at the Aria facility.

It is often said, one man’s trash is another man’s treasure, or in this case its power. It’s the trash at the landfill that turns methane gas into fuel to power the generators.

The Sarasota County landfill is a relatively quiet place, unless you’re standing in the building that houses three enormous generators that produce sustainable energy. As lead power plant operator Mr. West is tasked with keeping the plant producing electricity in a safe and efficient manner. He performs scheduled and as-needed maintenance on the facility’s three 2200 horsepower Caterpillar engines. The engines burn 500 standard cubic feet per minute (SCFM) of methane that is harvested from the natural decomposition of organic waste that is placed in the landfill. Before Aria built this power plant in 2010, the gas produced by the landfill would be burned off, which environmentalists claim is contributing to climate change. Now it’s being converted into power to run the generators. This once under-utilized methane now produces enough electricity to power 2,800 homes daily.

When asked how his time at FMTC helped prepare him for his career, Mr. West said that the hands-on experience he gained in class from being able to disassemble an actual turbine and using specialized tools like a plasma cutter, helped prepare him for working out in the industry. Perhaps the most important benefit he received from the program was exposure and introduction to the industry though the program’s industry advisors. Mr. West said that he tried to get into the power industry without attending the Turbine Generator Maintenance, Inspection & Repair program but each time it was recommended that he attend first then reapply. Mr. West said, “Where else can you go and spend only $6,000 on tuition and have the opportunity to earn up to $100,000 within a year?”

Mr. West stated his most memorable experience while working as a traveling turbine mechanic was driving to California for an assignment to work on a power plant in Bakerfield. He enjoyed the scenery, the food, the people, and just the adventure of it all. He said the best advice he could give to perspective students was to show up and be on time. He said that power outages cost millions of dollars and every minute is costly. Be on time and be safe!
The district may assess each student’s ability to benefit from specific programs through placement tests and counseling, and, if necessary, will provide services or referrals to better prepare students for successful participation.

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For registration information call (239) 334-4544

The School District of Lee County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, or genetic information in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices. The district also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts of America and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boys Scout of America Equal Access Act. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to: Sandy Shimp, Equity Coordinator, Fort Myers Technical College, 3800 Michigan Ave., Fort Myers, FL 33916, (Voice/TDD): (239) 334-4544, SandraLSH@leeschools.net.

The future of the industry is technology. People can now control their home climate-control systems. Residential HVACR systems generally need replacement after 10 to 15 years; the large number of homes built in recent years will enter this replacement timeframe by 2018.

Operations Director at Gulf Coast Medical Center, there are over 100 employees in their division with many nearing retirement. Lee Health offers opportunities for advanced training to its employees and opportunities for advancement.

Qualities that Lee Health’s recruiters are looking for in future employees include attitude, appearance, customer care, communication skills, and peer relationships. Ms. Lindsay Tesniarz, Human Resources Business Partner Project Specialist, encourages FMTC graduates to check out the employment opportunities and benefits offered at Lee Health on their website: www.leehealth.org. They have positions for almost every career area offered at FMTC.