

## **Role of Career and Technical Education Today**

The role of Career and Technical Education (Vocational Education) is to help prepare today's youth for tomorrow's workforce. In many ways this is a daunting task because in many areas we can't predict what the workforce of tomorrow will look like. One thing we know for sure is that high skill service employment will be a part of our youth's future. In 8 years, our nation is going to lose approximately 70% of our skilled workforce to retirement. Because of this, Career and Technical Education today is important to our economy.

The 14 Career and Technical Education programs offered at Page High School include, Education Professions, Drafting, Construction Technology, Automotive, Culinary Arts, Welding, Graphic Communications, Photography, Nursing, Marketing, Computer Maintenance, Computer Networking, Industrial Maintenance and Accounting. Each programs goal is to ensure a skilled workforce by helping to develop student's career and academic potential. The goal of our programs is to prepare students for life after high school whether it is college, the military, tech-schools or the workplace.

Career and Technical Education classes at PHS prepare students to take industry assessments, provide an opportunity to earn articulated college credit from Coconino Community College and provide opportunities to participate in work based learning experiences.

A continuous improvement process is followed at PHS for our Career and Technical Education programs. Annual program evaluations are completed to identify strengths and weaknesses in each program. With the help of business partners, equipment and software updates are identified to ensure that our students are being exposed to current industry standards. A plan is written for each program to help direct improvement and growth.

Career and Technical Education programs are based on the theory that skills should be practiced in a real world setting and that there is an important link between education and work. Career and Technical Education classes have the ability to enhance academics while directly providing students with an opportunity to practice application based learning. For our graduates to be competitive in the global and domestic workforce they will need to have a solid understanding of the relationship between what they are learning and school and how to apply it at work.

Career and Technical Education at Page Schools has been very fortunate to have the support of the local community. Six years ago the community voted to approve our participation in a Joint Technological Education District or JTED. Participation in this JTED which is called CAVIAT (Coconino Association for Vocations, Industry and Technology) provided Page Schools with the ability to improve and expand our Career and Technical Education programs. Another way the community has supported Career and Technical Education, is through the Bond the community passed approximately two years ago. The voters in Page approved funding for a new Career and Technical Education building at the high school. Our current facilities are in very poor condition and were in need of some major repair. Thanks to the combined support of the Page community and Page School District, our students will have the opportunity to learn in state of the art facilities with equipment that meets industry standards while they prepare for their future employment.