

A new twist on career training

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(Photo: The York Dispatch)

A traditional, four-year college isn't for everyone, but Adrienne Scott, vice president of operations at YTI Career Institute in York, said that she often sees or hears most students pressured to take that path.

The issue, she said, is that most students don't realize there are other options for them that might cost less, take less time to complete and give them access to important jobs in their community. YTI Career Institute is an example of one of those options.

With the longest program lasting 21 months, many students are drawn to the career institute because of how quickly they can get into the workforce. In fact, Megan Godfrey, a 22-year-old from Dover Township who is studying in the institute's veterinary technician program, said she and other students have the opportunity to work in the field they are studying toward the end of the program.

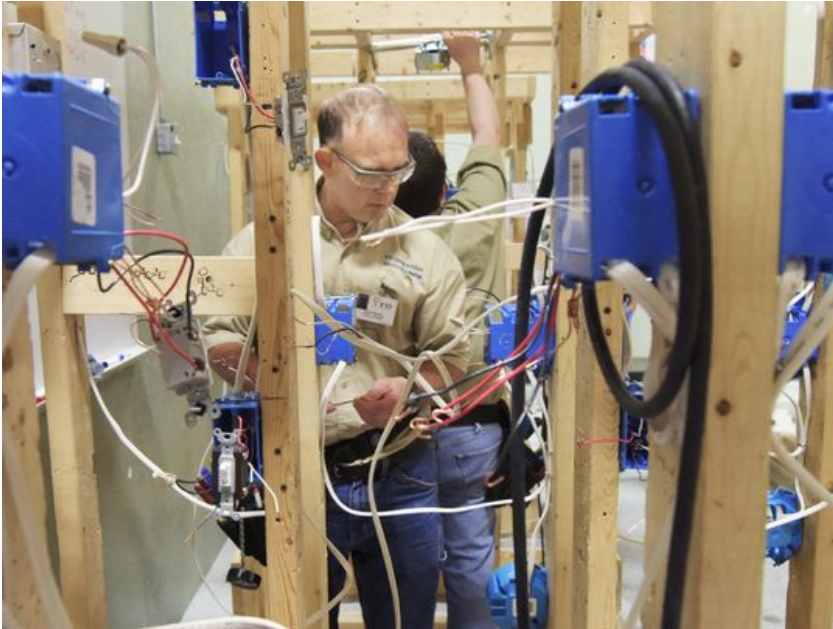
Many students do this by working through the externship program, which is similar to an internship but for the medical field and skills trades. Students complete an externship near the end of their studies at the institute to gain hands-on experience and hopefully line up contacts for a full-time job.

There are a number of students at YTI Career Institute who decided to return to school after the traditional four-year college didn't work out or appeal to them. Some also go back to school because they lost their job or qualified to go back under the [Trade Readjustment Allowances](http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/tra.asp) through the Department of Labor. The Trade Readjustment Allowances "provide income support payments to individuals who have exhausted unemployment compensation and whose jobs were affected by foreign imports," according to the Department of Labor's website.

One such student is Lia Condon, a 33-year-old Newberry Township resident who worked at her job for 10 years before qualifying through TRA. She decided to go back to school to become a veterinary technician to pursue her love of working with animals.

"I liked the tech school because you can get something done quick and go right into the field," Condon said.

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YTI Career Institute electrical technology student Kevin Kleinosky of West York wires a project at YTI Career Institute Friday, Oct 7, 2016. He enrolled at the school after his job was eliminated. Bill Kalina photo (Photo: The York Dispatch)

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Another student who decided to go to YTI through the TRA is 51-year-old West York resident Kevin Kleinosky. After he lost his job at Metso as a welder, he decided to go to YTI to study electronics engineering technology and build on his welding skills. The short nature of the program, which is only nine months long, was a major factor in Kleinosky's decision.

"It's very well-rounded," Kleinosky said. "When you go out into the workplace, you need other skills, too." For example, Kleinosky said, the institute helps students learn how to conduct themselves in interviews, how to give an effective elevator speech and how to polish resumes.

Scott said one of the challenges for YTI Career Institute is letting students know they have this option right in their backyard. She explained school guidance counselors may point to how many students are attending a four-year college after high school graduation, but most of those numbers don't break down how many students enjoy that four-year college — or stick with it.


"Folks are stuck on what they know," Scott said, and most folks know that after high school comes college. "The careers we train for are important to the community, like electricians or our HACR (heating, air conditioning and refrigeration technology) program."

Because of that, YTI Career Institute is working closely with high school guidance counselors and visiting local career and college fairs to get the word out about their alternative option. They're also working to talk to parents about the options available to students.

"The most important thing (is) to encourage people to be open and come check us out," Scott said. "Lots of people don't know what this is, but when they see it they're shocked."

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YTI Career Institute electrical technology student Ryan McMaster of Hanover prepares to wire a chandelier at YTI Career Institute Friday, Oct 7, 2016. Bill Kalina photo (Photo: The York Dispatch)

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