



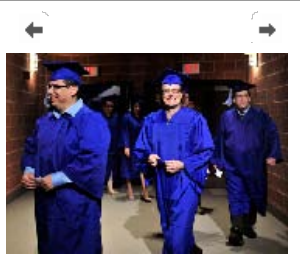
## YTI graduates largest class in its history

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A YTI Career Institute graduate has reason to smile at Tue...

By JIMMY PIANKA  
 Staff Writer

Tuesday night members of the largest graduating class to ever come through YTI Career Institute's Lancaster campus received their diplomas to the exuberant cheers of friends and family.

After 12 to 21 months in YTI's accelerated training programs, 170 students earned their associate in specialized technology and associate in specialized business degrees.

Fields of study included criminal justice and first response; culinary arts and restaurant management; dental assisting; medical assisting; medical billing and coding; and pastry arts.

Justin Silverthorn, principal of advanced foodservice solutions and

the evening's keynote speaker, extolled the values of passion, vision and integrity in any career. He advised graduates to "be in it to win it" and to seek "the passion that will lift you skyward."

The pastry arts program produced a record number of graduates and comprised almost a quarter of the total graduating class.

Pastry arts graduates Amanda Wilson and Amanda Shenk attributed their program's girth to culinary TV shows like "Cake Boss" and "Cupcake Wars."

When asked if class size affected their experience, Shenk said, "It was difficult at first, but we became such a family that it became second nature. It made class more exciting."

The average age of graduates was a mere 24, but the oldest was 57. Debra Long, who was laid off from her Mount Joy customer service job after six years, decided to reinvent her career by enrolling in the medical billing and coding program.

"The way things look in the work force, I knew I had to make myself more marketable," she said. "No matter what age, you have to improve yourself."

YTI's president Michael Marino said that despite the rocky economy his school's application numbers have remained relatively even.

"(YTI) is an option for the right people," he said, describing its students as either high school graduates pursuing a trade skill or nontraditional retrainees starting afresh. These demographics are for the most part stable and consistent.

Marino said he hasn't perceived any significant increase in even the average age of his students.

Applications rose at the beginning of the current recession, he said, but since then they have leveled off.

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