



## Six from Pickens Technical College to Enjoy Triple Success!

Where to from here? The motley group's responses reflect the choices of typical high school graduates: At least one of the students intends to continue gaining professional experience in his career trade—he is already an apprentice; several will pursue additional associate degrees in new fields; and at least two students are headed to Colorado universities to pursue their bachelor degrees. But that's where their similarity to "typical" high school graduates ends.

This year, Aurora Public Schools will graduate seven students who have earned college associate degrees while they attending high school. Six of those students will graduate after coordinating their education at not one, not two, but THREE different educational institutions. Such was the challenge of five Middle College students and one Aurora Central High School student soon to graduate this May—from high school, Pickens Technical College *and* Community College of Aurora.

The six APS students are Nicole Hinsley (from RHS, completing the Dental Assistant program), Sierra Morales (RHS/Cosmetology), Ana Olivas (GHS/Cosmetology), Dashon Straub-Crawford (WSHS/Precision Machining), Precious Van Buren (RHS/Cosmetology) and Alberto Gomez Arias (ACHS/Computer-Aided Drafting). All are completing Associate of *Applied* Science degrees in Applied Technology at CCA—a degree that allowed them to combine their passion for career training with their zeal to pursue college.

The AAS/Applied Technology degree is a Colorado Community College system-wide degree that allows students to utilize up to 45 credits earned from a Colorado technical college. Maximizing their Pickens Technical College credits, the APS students were able to complete the associate degree with as few as five general education college courses. The AAS degree recognizes the value of the students' career and technical training and gives students their first steps into the college setting as well.

Next steps? *These* APS high school/Pickens Technical College/CCA grads have the opportunity to immediately pursue a career, a new path, or a long-range educational goal. They will stride directly into meaningful careers, explore different career options, or continue their education . . . but with marketable skills that will help pave their way financially. Congratulations to them all. Their work during high school really *has* prepared them for the real world!



*"Since becoming Governor, I have made education policy one of the highest priorities of my administration, as I believe strongly that the development of a highly educated workforce is a fundamental element of the expansion and vigor of the state's economy. Critical to this relationship is Career and Technical Education (CTE)."*

**Bill Ritter, Jr.**  
Governor, State of Colorado

#### 2007-08 Data Snapshot:

Over 116,600 enrollments in over 1200 secondary programs in nearly 160 school districts.

Over 24,000 enrollments in nearly 700 postsecondary CTE programs at the 13 system community colleges, 2 local district colleges, one four year college, 4 technical colleges, and both adult and youth state correctional facilities.



COLORADO COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE SYSTEM

9101 East Lowry Blvd.  
Denver, CO 80230

Phone: 303-620-4000  
Fax: 720-858-2544  
[www.cccs.edu](http://www.cccs.edu)

## Real Change

Colorado's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Career & Technical Education (CTE) has evolved beyond your mother or father's vocational education. It is Colorado's best kept secret...

- For relevant & rigorous learning
- For raising achievement among all students
- For strengthening Colorado's workforce & economy

## Real Choices

Colorado CTE is designed to help students, young and experienced, choose a career path, pick the learning needed, build the right skills and knowledge, and get into a great job in a field they will love. Programs are organized around 17 Career Clusters and 81 Career Pathways opening opportunities for all students to pursue their passion!

Today's generation of CTE programs are totally integrated with the academic courses needed to prepare students for College and Career success. Programs allow students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. All students gain the academic knowledge and technical skills required for the best jobs in Colorado's hottest careers, along with the skills the entire working world demands—like problem solving, being a team player, and being organized.

CTE students get a head start in higher education and the job market, and an opportunity to earn more, sooner. **For real.**

## Real Careers

Colorado CTE offers plans of study for high wage, high demand and high skill careers in the following industries:

- Energy
- Aerospace
- Biotechnology
- Health Science

For a full list of pathways available go to:

<http://www.coloradostateplan.com/clusters/CareerClustersModel.pdf>

## Real Impact

- One out of every three Colorado high school students is gaining the valuable experience of Career & Technical Education.
- Many of the occupations for which CTE students train are listed among the 50 fastest-growing occupations in Colorado over the next eight years.
- "At a time when the average four-year college student graduates with \$17,520 in debt, and one in four students graduate owing more than \$22,000, 'learn and earn' career pathways that alternate education with lucrative work experiences are good options for many students" - *Colorado Succeeds*
- Nearly 80% of Colorado jobs will require some form of postsecondary education and 60% will require at least a 2-year, but not a 4-year, degree.
- The National Dropout Prevention Center lists CTE as one of 15 research based strategies for improving high school graduation rates.

## Real Direction

- CTE is a critical part of any strategy to keep the state economy strong as it endures the recession
- CTE increases student achievement by linking academics with their application.
- CTE is an effective education reform and improvement strategy.
- CTE prepares Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) workers
- CTE is the source of a highly skilled, well-educated workforce.