

BREAKING TRADITIONS 2018 AWARD WINNERS



SECONDARY FEMALE STATE WINNER

Abbigail Elliott

Welding Technology

Nevada Regional Technical Center

*Nominated by Kent Pruitt, Welding Technology
Instructor*

Kent Pruitt, Welding Technology instructor, indicates that he has been involved in training welding students since 2001. During that time he has trained numerous “non-traditional” students. Abbie is among the top 1% he has had the opportunity to train. She sets a plan and stays with it. The dedication that she has shown over the last two years is beyond exceptional. In terms of her welding ability, last year Abbie was the first female student to ever win the Midwest Technical Institute’s Welding Competition against 50 other students. Abbie has a great work ethic. When given a task she is always willing to start early or come in after school for additional practice. As a non-traditional student, Abbie is the person that other non-traditional students see as a role model.

Abbie’s future career plans involve attending Missouri Welding Institute and working in the welding field to gain experience while waiting for her start date. She would like to travel for five to ten years in the welding field and then become a certified welding inspector. After serving in that capacity for a few years she hopes to become an instructor to pass on her knowledge and experience to future students.



SECONDARY MALE STATE WINNER

Keith Butler

Culinary Arts

Scott Regional Technology Center

*Nominated by Betsy Anderson, Culinary Arts
Instructor*

Betsy Anderson, Culinary Arts instructor indicates that Keith is very self-motivated student. He demonstrates this skill in his own personal work ethic, but more so when working with other students. He does a great job motivating them to see the task to the end point. He communicates well with me as the instructor and his classmates. Keith puts other students at ease with his communication style. He is a hard worker who goes above and beyond to help first year students in the culinary lab. As one the few males in class, he has never been intimidated by the overwhelming number of females. He has his sights set on becoming a chef, and does not see that gender is ever an issue in achieving his goals.

After completing his education at SRTC, Keith plans to continue on to college for a degree in culinary science. After completing his degree, he plans to work in a small restaurant or chain restaurant as a sous chef, then work his way up to be head chef. His ultimate dream is to become a well-known pastry chef. He loves the creativity of working with pastry and creating new dishes. He would love to someday be as famous as Chef Gordon Ramsey.



**POST-SECONDARY/ADULT FEMALE STATE
WINNER**

Sara Taylor Gates

Automotive Technology

Ozarks Technical Community College

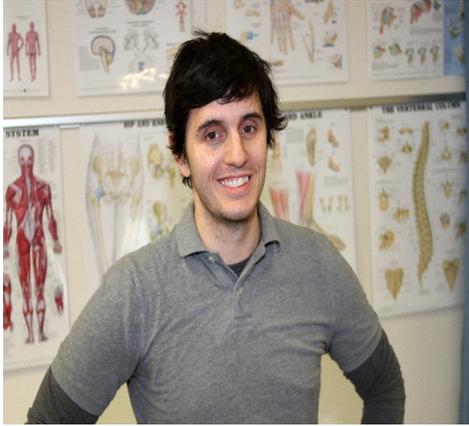
*Nominated by Eric Hammond, Automotive
Technology Instructor*

Sara Taylor Gates, an Automotive Technology student at Ozarks Technical Community College, was nominated by her instructor Eric Hammond. Mr. Hammond indicates that Sara is the only female in his class and her performance exceeds all other students. Sara handles herself in a professional manner and her classmates respect and listen to her ideas and contributions. Sara has been overcoming challenges and obstacles her entire life. Before Sara came to OTC she had been (and still is) in service to our country as a Marine. Her military experience really shined in helping her overcome obstacles like gender inequality. The way she handles herself is that of a professional and that confidence rubs off on the other students.

Sara will pursue an associate's degree in automotive technology. She then plans to work in the automotive field to save enough money to go back to school for diesel mechanics and welding. She will then make a lateral move to another job in the Marine Corps in one of those fields. She eventually

hopes to open her own shop that works on both diesel engines and standard gasoline engines. She hopes to employ skilled veterans, particularly women and is also interested in starting a program which gets younger students involved in automotive.

Sara plans to use Ozarks Technical Community College's First Place State Winner scholarship Fall, 2018.



**POST-SECONDARY/ADULT MALE STATE
WINNER**

Aaron DeMent

Occupational Therapy Assistant
Jefferson College

*Nominated by Lisa Martin, Occupational Therapy
Program Director/Assistant Professor*

Aaron DeMent is in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Jefferson College. He has chosen a nontraditional career path because after his life experiences and much searching he discovered that he could use his skills and abilities to benefit his community. He loves helping people by bringing out their skills and pushing through hard spots much like the support he received. He believes Occupational Therapy is the avenue that helps people of all walks of life participate and gain skills in daily activities that make their lives rich and full of meaning. Aaron is a certified yoga instructor and teaches chair yoga at a skilled living facility.

According to his instructor, Lisa Martin, Aaron is a driven and passionate person who is both admired and respected by his peers and those he collaborates with in his community. He has also gained a global perspective of humanity having traveled and lived in other countries. This experience has instilled tolerance for the differences and individuality of others, which in turn has positively shaped his interpersonal skills. Aaron's excellent academic performance is a direct result of his hard work, strong focus, and desire to become a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA). He has a rich work history, which speaks to outstanding work ethic. He has a natural gift for working with a variety of populations across the lifespan. He has consistently demonstrated an ability to rise to the challenges he faces. His passion for enhancing the welfare of other is and has been a driving force for Aaron. He is an outstanding student with a bright future.



SECONDARY SPIRIT WINNER

Loren King

Criminal Justice

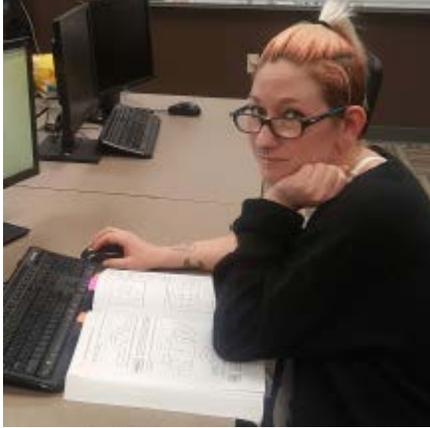
Current River Career Center

*Nominated by Sean Moore, Criminal
Justice Instructor*

Loren King is a student in the Current River Career Center Criminal Justice Program and is interested in pursuing a career in Probation and Parole. Loren would like to become a Probation and Parole Officer because she wants to help people transform their difficult life situations into more positive ones and help them to become productive citizens.

Loren has been confronted with many obstacles in her young life, but she has worked diligently to overcome her hardships and to achieve her goals. She said, “Without the structure and guidance the Criminal Justice program has provided me, I would not be the person I am today. Criminal Justice for me is not just a class, it is my family. My classmates and instructors all have invested a lot in me and want me to be successful.”

Loren gives much of her success to her mentors, Criminal Justice instructors, Lieutenant Moore and Officer Talburt. She said that they believe in her and have helped her become a better person. Loren’s instructor and nominator, Sean Moore, stated that Loren demonstrates a strong work ethic, has been open to suggestions and concentrates on having a positive attitude in her daily life.



POSTSECONDARY/ADULT SPIRIT WINNER

Tee Brown

Radiologic Technology

Rolla Technical Center/Institute

Nominated by Maggie Ogden, Program Director

Tee Brown's reason for entering the profession of diagnostic imaging is because he has always been fascinated with modern medicine and the amazing things that can be seen by combining technology and anatomy. Having the opportunity to help patients in their time of need by displaying compassion leaves him with a satisfying feeling of accomplishment. Each day he takes pride in the fact that even though there are more women than men in most clinical facilities, he will be a valuable team member by promoting unity with fellow colleagues. He believes that having both men and women in a medical environment is very beneficial for advancement of patient care.

Tee feels his positive attitude in the classroom motivates others to do their best. His most meaningful mentor was his grandfather who raised him and taught him not be afraid of failure; learning from failure is a step towards becoming that successful person. Everyone fails but, picking yourself up after you have fallen, eventually leads to success. Coming from a military background, his previous experience has enable him to enter the classroom and interact well with others. Each day at the clinical setting he is a blessing to each patient. One of his patients referred to him as an "ANGEL".

Tee's future plans are to pursue a career as a radiologic technologist, then advancing into computed tomography and magnetic resonance.



SECONDARY EDUCATOR STATE WINNER

Laura Estabrooks

Geospatial Technology/Analysis Instructor
Columbia Area Career Center
*Nominated by Emma Meyer, Geospatial
Technology/Analysis Student*

“Mrs Estabrooks always makes sure her students succeed,” says her student nominator, Emma Meyer. “She supplements her own expertise by inviting trained technical representatives to demonstrate procedures and to discuss these with her classes. With her professional connections, she finds summer jobs for her students in her Geospatial Internship class which helps students learn what happens at a 'real job' and how to put the skills they have learned in her classes into professional contexts.”

“Mrs Estabrooks creates a problem-solving environment in her classroom. She makes us think critically; and if we cannot figure out scenarios on our own, we readily collaborate with other students. The class room she creates is always comfortable. She is active in Skills USA and helps her students compete in this and other contests.”

“Mrs Estabrooks is a woman in a field that is male dominated, but she has persistence and is dedicated. She is a role model to me and other students.”



POSTSECONDARY EDUCATOR STATE WINNER

Linda VanDyke

Surgical Technology Program

Coordinator/Instructor

Hillyard Technical Center

*Nominated by Devon Morris, Surgical Technology
Program Student*

Devon Morris wrote in his nomination of Mrs. VanDyke - “She has a great rapport with each of my peers and makes everyone feel comfortable around her, while still maintaining a professional disposition.” “Every morning when we enter the classroom Mrs. VanDyke more often than not has a smile on her face and welcomes the class eager to teach.” “She will talk about her personal life, or tell funny stories of her time in the field of surgical technology. We’ve had many times where her stories couldn’t keep us from laughing and her very magnetic personality keeps us interested. Because of how personable she can be just talking to us as equals rather than just students, it allows a great teacher/student relationship for each of us and as a result makes learning all the more enjoyable.”

Linda VanDyke has been the Surgical Technology Program Coordinator and Instructor at Hillyard Technical Center in St. Joseph, Missouri for fifteen years.



EMPLOYER STATE WINNER

Brian Hollands

Missouri Welding Institute

Nevada Regional Technical Center

*Nominated by Kent Pruitt, Welding Technology
Instructor*

Kent Pruitt, Welding Technology Instructor indicates that Missouri Welding Institute has been providing quality training since 1994. They have continually given material, equipment and professional resources to NRTC whenever needed. They have graciously allowed students spend time at their training facility and receive training from their instructors, both in the classroom as well as in the lab setting. The MWI instructors also visit the NRTC classroom to work with students and offer help/advice with any questions. The director and instructors from MWI are always positive, fun, and encouraging to be around and students enjoy their stories, advice, and help.

MWI understands that a quality education is for all students but that females may have an “uphill” battle in getting into this field. They provide lifetime placement assistance as well as on-going career help and advice. They see the value of hard work and discipline during training. Providing employers with quality non-traditional applicants helps provide them with a wide range of opportunities to choose from. MWI has a great impact on the incoming non-traditional student that might not believe they can “make it”. Seeing that they can be successful in this field builds a great deal of empowerment for all students.

The partnership between Nevada Regional Technical Center and the Missouri Welding Institute is invaluable to students of the future.