



APPRENTICESHIP

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INSIDER



M-DCPS CAREER EXPO

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2025 M-DCPS Technical College Career Expo: Empowering Miami-Dade's Future Workforce

The 2025 M-DCPS Technical College Career Expo showcased innovation and opportunity, serving as a gateway to high-demand, high-paying careers for students and the community.

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M-DCPS Expands Health Science Opportunities with Two New Registered Apprenticeship Programs

M-DCPS is proud to announce the launch of two new registered apprenticeship programs in February 2025, designed to address the growing demand for skilled professionals in healthcare: the Medical Assistant and Pharmacy Technician Registered Apprenticeship Programs. These innovative programs provide students with hands-on training, classroom instruction, and the opportunity to earn while they learn.

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M-DCPS
Your Best Choice!



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M-DCPS Technical College Career Expo: Empowering Miami-Dade's Future Workforce

Organized by the Office of Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (OPCTE), the two-day event, held on February 12th and 13th, 2025, welcomed students from all M-DCPS high schools as well as private and charter schools across the county. Over 3,500 students and the community at large attended, making it one of the most successful events of its kind.

Designed as a community-wide expo, the event provided an engaging platform for students and members of the general public to discover the vast opportunities available through M-DCPS's robust technical education and apprenticeship programs. Attendees were able to participate in live demonstrations, interact with experienced and qualified instructors, and gain firsthand insight into the skills and training offered at M-DCPS technical colleges.

A standout feature of the expo was the focus on apprenticeship opportunities, which have become a cornerstone of M-DCPS's efforts to align education with workforce needs. Participants had the chance to explore registered apprenticeship programs in high-demand fields like automotive technology, diesel systems, medical assisting, pharmacy technology, and more. These programs provide students with the opportunity to earn while they learn, building valuable skills while securing future career opportunities.



In addition to showcasing career pathways for students, the event also welcomed members of the general public, offering adults the chance to explore options for career advancement, skill-building, and lifelong learning. By connecting attendees with industry-aligned programs, the expo underscored M-DCPS's commitment to fostering economic growth and workforce development throughout the community.

The 2025 Technical College Career Expo demonstrated the critical role that technical education and apprenticeships play in preparing students and residents for the evolving demands of today's job market. It was a true celebration of innovation, opportunity, and the potential for transformative career success.



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M-DCPS Expands Health Science Opportunities with Two New Registered Apprenticeship Programs

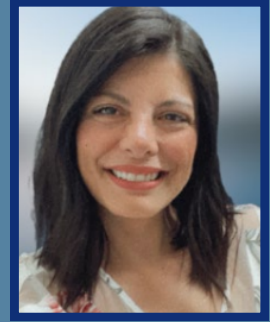


Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program

The Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program offers a comprehensive pathway to a rewarding career in healthcare. With 4,000–5,000 hours of On-the-Job Training (OJT) and 1,350 hours of Related Training Instruction (RTI), this program is designed to prepare apprentices with the skills needed to excel in clinical and administrative medical settings.

Spanning approximately 24–36 months, the program combines free classroom instruction at multiple locations across Miami-Dade County with full-time employment at one of M-DCPS's employer partners. Apprentices will gain valuable experience working alongside healthcare professionals while receiving a high-quality education.

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Lorena Vasquez

Championing Apprenticeship Growth & Innovation in South Florida

Since 2019, Lorena Vasquez has served as the Apprenticeship Training Representative for Region 9, supporting Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. With over 12 years in education, including six years in the Apprenticeship System as the Apprenticeship Training Office Manager of a Registered Apprenticeship Program in Florida, Lorena's expertise has been vital in helping Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) expand apprenticeship opportunities in high-demand fields. Her commitment to collaboration and excellence has made her an indispensable resource in the development of innovative workforce solutions.

Lorena's hands-on experience with apprentices, employers, and administrators gives her unique insight into the challenges and opportunities of apprenticeship programs. Her guidance has helped M-DCPS develop programs that align with state standards while addressing local workforce needs, creating a robust pipeline of skilled workers and strengthening industry partnerships.

M-DCPS deeply values Lorena's contributions and leadership as we continue to work together to empower students and build a skilled workforce for Florida.

M-DCPS

Automotive Service Technician Pre- Apprenticeship Program

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) offers a 6 to 12-month Automotive Service Technician Pre-Apprenticeship Program for students aged 16 and older. This program provides foundational training and a direct pathway to a career in the automotive industry.

Key Program Features:

- Related Training Instruction (RTI) in:
 - Automotive Services Assistor
 - Automotive Brake System Technician
 - Essential soft skills for the industry
- Prepares students for participation in the Automotive Service Technology Registered Apprenticeship Program.
- Provides a competitive edge when interviewing with employer partners.
- Reduces the registered apprenticeship timeline by approximately 6 months.

This program equips students with the skills and experience needed to excel in the automotive field. For enrollment details, contact the M-DCPS Apprenticeship Team. Contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter

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M-DCPS Expands Health Science Opportunities with Two New Registered Apprenticeship Programs



Pharmacy Technician Registered Apprenticeship Program

The Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Program provides a shorter yet equally impactful pathway to a career in pharmacy. This program includes 2,000–3,000 hours of OJT and 1,050 hours of RTI, preparing apprentices to support licensed pharmacists in a variety of settings.

The program's duration is 12–18 months, with free classroom instruction available at multiple locations throughout Miami-Dade County. Apprentices will work full-time with employer partners, gaining real-world experience while completing their education.

A Gateway to High-Demand Careers

Both programs exemplify M-DCPS's commitment to creating high-demand, high-paying career pathways for students and residents of Miami-Dade County. By combining hands-on training, industry-aligned coursework, and full-time employment, these apprenticeship programs ensure participants graduate with the skills, experience, and credentials needed to succeed in their chosen fields.

Through these programs, M-DCPS continues to meet the needs of the local healthcare industry while empowering individuals to achieve their career goals. The launch of the Medical Assistant and Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programs in 2025 marks another milestone in the district's mission to expand workforce development opportunities across the region.

For more information about these programs or to explore enrollment opportunities, please contact the M-DCPS Apprenticeship Team. Contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Introducing M-DCPS's

MENTORSHIP

Training Series

Mentors play a pivotal role in guiding apprentices toward success, but the journey is not without its challenges. From bridging skill gaps to navigating cultural differences, mentors face diverse scenarios that require tailored strategies and support. Recognizing this need, the Office of Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (OPCTE) has developed the M-DCPS Mentorship Training Series at the request of our valued employer partners.

This 12-part series is designed to address the most common challenges mentors encounter, offering practical tools and insights to enhance their professional development and ensure successful outcomes for apprentices and industry partners. Over the next 12 months, we will tackle key topics that align with four main objectives:

Over the next 10 months, we will tackle key topics that align with four main objectives:

- **Improve Mentorship Quality:** Provide mentors with structured training to enhance their communication, leadership, and guidance skills.
- **Address Challenges:** Equip mentors to handle diverse scenarios, including skill gaps, cultural sensitivity, and conflict resolution.
- **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Encourage mentor self-care and stress management to ensure long-term effectiveness.
- **Foster Workplace Excellence:** Align mentorship practices with industry standards, emphasizing safety, compliance, and inclusivity.

We will be sending out monthly emails with access links to each training session. The first training, *Effective Communication Skills for Mentors*, will take place in March 2025, setting the stage for the rest of the series. We have received nothing but positive feedback from mentors who viewed the first test session and expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming topics in the series. Can't make the live session? No problem—all sessions will be recorded and made available for on-demand access, ensuring flexibility for our mentor partners.

Thank you for your dedication to mentorship excellence and the success of our apprentices. Together, we are building a stronger, more skilled workforce for the future!

March

Effective Communication Skills for Mentors

April

Setting Expectations & Goals

May

Time Management & Balancing Responsibilities

June

Providing Constructive Feedback

July

Dealing with Different Learning Styles

August

Addressing Apprentice Skill Gaps

September

Motivating and Engaging Apprentices

October

Balancing Independence with Oversight

November

Managing Conflict & Challenging Behaviors

December

Teaching Workplace Safety & Compliance



RMTC Hosts



Regionals

Robert Morgan Technical College (RMTC) proudly hosted the SkillsUSA Regional Competition on February 20th, showcasing exceptional talent specifically in the Diesel Technology category. The event brought together students from Robert Morgan Technical College, Sheridan Technical College, and M-DCPS apprenticeship programs, including five apprentices and one Career and Technical Education (CTE) student, each demonstrating their technical expertise, innovation, and skill in diesel mechanics.

Participants competed across 12 challenging stations encompassing general shop skills, precision measurements, engine diagnostics, hydraulics, electrical systems, HVAC, and more. Each station was overseen by expert judges.

First place was awarded to Omar Crespo, a CTE student. Second and third-place winners, both apprenticeship students, will be announced as soon as they are officially confirmed by SkillsUSA. Additionally, RMTC and the M-DCPS Diesel Apprenticeship Program will send five students to participate in the SkillsUSA State Championship at the end of April 2025. These students were not winners from this regional event but were selected in accordance with SkillsUSA guidelines to represent their programs.

RMTC extends heartfelt thanks to our industry partners and Robert Morgan alumni who generously served as judges and supported the event. Special recognition goes to Greg Echerri, who served as the event chair and brought three former Robert Morgan graduates currently employed by United Rentals to judge several stations. Ernie Guerra from Kelly Tractor, Liz Torres and René Pernas from Nextran Truck Centers (himself a Robert Morgan alumnus from 20 years ago), and Orlando Martinez, another proud Robert Morgan graduate and owner of South Dade Truck Parts, also served as judges. Orlando Martinez additionally provided ongoing support as a primary truck parts supplier and ran one of the



**next advisory
committee meeting
coming in**



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RMTC Hosts Skills USA Regionals

stations. Two Robert Morgan automotive instructors, Laz Moreira and Duke Boele, managed individual stations, while John Martinez, the Honda PACT instructor, served as the head judge and official timekeeper. Adrian Palomino from Jasper Engines and Transmissions generously donated custom caps for participating Robert Morgan students and provided support to the judges.

Events like these empower the future workforce, underscore the importance of technical education, and highlight RMTC's commitment to bridging education with industry needs. RMTC continues to strengthen partnerships with industry leaders, reinforcing its reputation as a premier institution for Career and Technical Education.

M-DCPS celebrates the accomplishments of all participants and looks forward to their continued success at the state-level competition.



M-DCPS Recruits for You!



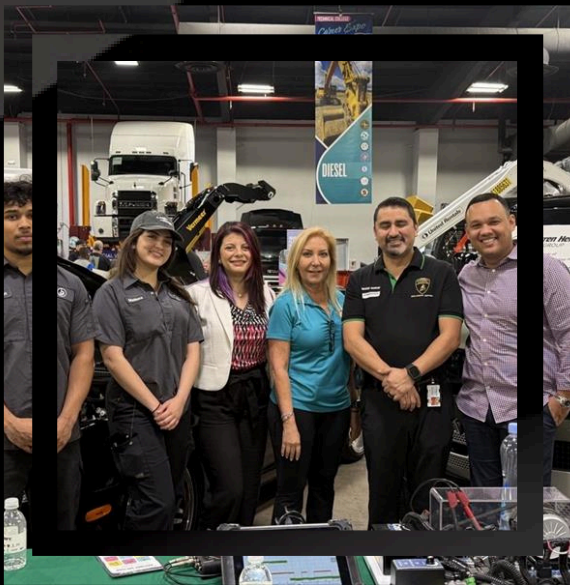
At M-DCPS, our commitment to our apprenticeship partners extends beyond providing exceptional training and educational opportunities. We understand the vital role apprenticeships play in building a skilled workforce, so we proactively support our industry partners by actively recruiting qualified candidates for open apprentice positions.

Leveraging our extensive network and outreach programs, M-DCPS identifies potential apprentices from a diverse pool of candidates. We also host and participate in job fairs, apprenticeship expos, career symposiums, Chamber of Commerce events, and numerous recruitment sessions throughout the year, ensuring our partners have continuous access to a talented workforce.

For more information on how M-DCPS can support your recruitment efforts, please contact our apprenticeship office.



2025 CAREER EXPO!





CAREER EXPO!

2025



The Future of Work

Incorporating AI & VR into Apprenticeship Programs

As industries evolve, M-DCPS is embracing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) to revolutionize apprenticeship programs, ensuring apprentices are prepared for the workforce of tomorrow.

AI for Smarter Learning

AI enhances training by:

- Identifying skills gaps for personalized learning.
- Simulating real-world scenarios for practice.
- Automating tasks to let mentors focus on hands-on guidance.

VR for Immersive Training

VR creates realistic, risk-free environments where apprentices can:

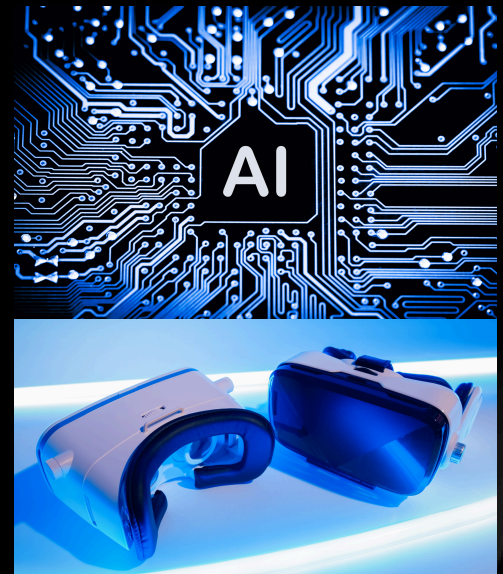
- Safely master tasks.
- Explore 3D models for deeper understanding.
- Build confidence through repetitive practice.

Benefits for Industry Partners

These technologies:

- Accelerate apprentice proficiency.
- Improve safety and reduce risks.
- Boost engagement and retention.

By integrating AI and VR, M-DCPS is shaping the future of work, preparing skilled apprentices, and strengthening partnerships with industry leaders.



Meet your Apprenticeship Team!



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Supervisor



RANDY HOLMES
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CHARLENE THOMAS
Curriculum
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LAZARO MOREIRA
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AMADO (FRANK) PORTUONDO
Recruitment
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PHILLIP WILLIAMS
Recruitment
& Support



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