



APPRENTICESHIP

INSIDER

Feb. 2026, Vol. 8

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New Program Spotlight: Welding Registered Apprenticeship Program

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), through the Office of Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (OPCTE), has officially launched a new Welding Registered Apprenticeship, expanding employer-driven workforce solutions in one of the most critical skilled trades across South Florida. This program was developed to respond directly to industry demand for highly trained welding technicians who can perform safely, consistently, and to specification in real-world production environments.

The Welding Registered Apprenticeship is structured to provide approximately three years of on-the-job training (OJT), allowing apprentices to develop skills directly within real production environments under the guidance of experienced journeyworkers. This hands-on training is complemented by approximately one and a half years of Related Technical Instruction (RTI), delivered through multiple M-DCPS-approved apprenticeship training locations. This blended approach ensures that technical knowledge, safety standards, and industry best practices are reinforced in parallel with day-to-day job responsibilities, creating a well-rounded, work-ready welding workforce.

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New Program Spotlight: Welding Registered Apprenticeship Program

The launch of our Welding Registered Apprenticeship reflects M-DCPS's continued commitment to building industry-aligned apprenticeship pathways that strengthen employer partnerships and deliver skilled talent where it is needed most.

 *For more information ...*

Industry partners seeking to explore participation in the Welding Registered Apprenticeship or to discuss how this model can be tailored to meet specific workforce needs are encouraged to connect with the OPCTE Apprenticeship Team to begin the conversation. Our contact information can be found in the back of this newsletter. ■

Customized Trainings Built Around Industry Need

Workforce needs don't wait for academic calendars—and effective training shouldn't either.

Across OPCTE, customized short-term training is gaining momentum as employers seek fast, targeted solutions to very specific skill gaps. These trainings are not off-the-shelf offerings. They are purpose-built, employer-driven courses designed around real equipment, real job functions, and real operational challenges.

Current trainings in development include a two-day HVAC fundamentals course paired with EPA 609 CFR certification preparation, as well as hands-on instruction focused on digital multimeter diagnostics aligned with

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*Farewell &
Best Wishes*

RANDY HOLMES!

Approximately six years ago, Mr. Randall "Randy" Holmes was charged with elevating apprenticeship programs within the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education. What initially sounded like a straightforward assignment—overseeing the apprenticeship office—was anything but. At the time, the office consisted of one employee: Randy.

Thanks to his prior experience as an Apprenticeship Training Representative with the Florida Department of Education, Randy jumped right in. He launched M-DCPS's first Registered Apprenticeship for Automotive Service Technician, followed soon after by Diesel Systems Technician. Today, what started as a one-person operation has grown into nine Registered Apprenticeships and four pre-apprenticeships, with more on the way.

When I came on board in 2023, along with Ivania Lanuza, I knew very little about apprenticeships, and Randy made sure that changed. He patiently taught me the work,

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Medical Assistant Pre-Apprenticeships Gain Momentum

Medical Assistant (MA) pre-apprenticeships are gaining strong momentum across OPCTE as healthcare employers continue to seek job-ready, reliable entry-level talent. Designed as a bridge into Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeships, these pre-apprenticeships strengthen the pipeline by preparing candidates for the pace, expectations, and realities of today's healthcare environments.

With MA pre-apprenticeships now active at Sunset Adult Education Center, D.A. Dorsey Technical College, and South Dade Technical College, OPCTE is expanding access across the county while maintaining consistent, industry-aligned training standards. This multi-site approach allows for scale without sacrificing quality.

These pre-apprenticeships focus on foundational clinical skills, workplace professionalism, and an understanding of healthcare workflows, giving employers greater confidence as candidates move forward. Successful completion positions participants to smoothly transition into a paid Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship, having already demonstrated readiness, commitment, and alignment with employer expectations.

For industry partners, this means access to a stronger, more prepared talent pool. Instead of starting from square one, employers engage candidates who understand clinical settings, patient interaction, and workplace standards resulting in reduced onboarding time, improved retention, and stronger long-term outcomes.

As demand for Medical Assistants continues to rise, OPCTE remains focused on expanding MA pre-apprenticeships in close alignment with employer needs ensuring growth is strategic, sustainable, and responsive to the healthcare workforce.

Partner with OPCTE to develop a reliable, prepared talent stream from pre-apprenticeship to paid apprenticeship.



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Farewell & Best Wishes: Randy Holmes

the rules, and the process, while regularly reminding me that he was the one who taught me how to spell "apprenticeship." (I still double-check.)

Randy officially retired on January 31, 2026. While this apprenticeship team is confident we'll continue to grow the work he started, his impact is undeniable. He built the foundation, trained the team, and set the standard.

Those who know Randy know he's funny, sarcastic, and delightfully quirky, but also deeply kind and always willing to help. Randy, we'll miss your humor, your knowledge, and your guidance, but we're thrilled that you now get to enjoy fishing, diving, traveling, and everything you love.

Enjoy retirement! You've more than earned it!

--Maria Gutierrez, Executive Director

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Customized Trainings Built Around Industry Need

industry standards. Additional short-term trainings are also being designed to support Diesel ASE certification preparation, helping technicians strengthen diagnostic accuracy and technical confidence in a high-demand diesel environment.

What makes these trainings different is the approach. Each course is built with the employer, not for the employer, shaped by the equipment being used, the skills that matter most on the shop floor, and the timelines employers are actually working under. The result is training that delivers immediate value, strengthens retention, and complements longer-term apprenticeship pathways.

Short-term, customized trainings are NOT “open enrollment classes.” They are intentionally designed for each employer’s workforce, equipment, and performance expectations.

For industry partners, customized short-term training offers a flexible way to upskill current employees, support apprentices, and respond quickly to changing technology and workforce demands. For M-DCPS, it’s another way to ensure training stays relevant, responsive, and tightly aligned to industry.

This model reflects a simple idea: when industry leads, training follows, and everyone wins. ■



Conner del Corral: Star Apprentice

Conner del Corral, an apprentice with United Rentals, is a standout example of what happens when talent, preparation, and opportunity align. He recently earned 3rd place at the SkillsUSA Regional Competition in Diesel Systems Technology, demonstrating strong technical skill and industry readiness.

Conner began his journey as an intern on June 16, 2025, quickly setting himself apart through work ethic, reliability, and a commitment to learning. While interns are typically promoted after six months to a year, Conner was promoted to Service Technician I on October 20, 2025—just four months after starting, a rare achievement.

Now working full time in the shop, Conner continues to apply and build on the skills he developed through hands-on training and competition. He will next compete at the SkillsUSA State Competition in Diesel Systems Technology, highlighting how career-connected education and apprenticeship pathways create strong workforce pipelines.

Congratulations, Conner, and best of luck at SkillsUSA State. ■

2026 Technical College Career Expo: Showcasing Pathways, Partnerships, & Hands-On Learning

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools, through the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education (OPCTE), successfully hosted the 2026 Technical College Career Fair & Expo on February 19–20, drawing nearly 3,000 attendees, an amazing show of participation. Students, families, and community members packed the fairgrounds to explore high-demand career pathways and connect directly with educators and industry partners.

Daytime sessions welcomed high school students for immersive, hands-on experiences, while evening hours opened the doors to the general public. Many students returned with their families to dive deeper into program offerings, an encouraging sign of the Expo's growing impact. Interactive demonstrations were a standout once again, enhanced by new training aids and equipment added over the past two years. Notably, the Diesel program at Robert Morgan Technical College showcased enrollment momentum not seen in decades, underscoring the strength of the technician pipeline.

A highlight of this year's Expo was the NC3 Snap-On Digital Multimeter Certification (Course 1) offered free of charge to industry partners. A total of 12 participants representing both industry partners and OPCTE instructors completed the training and earned the certification, reinforcing OPCTE's commitment to providing relevant, high-value professional learning. The



Snap-on

**& MULTIMETER
CERTIFICATION**

The Snap-on Multimeter Certification is awarded to students who have been trained in the use of Snap-on advanced electrical monitoring equipment. The knowledge and experience gained in this critical discipline are TOOLS FOR LIFE essential to a successful career in critical industries such as automotive repair, transportation, wind power, manufacturing, HVAC, and robotics.

training through NC3 in partnership with Snap-on, connected directly to real-world diagnostics and troubleshooting used across transportation, manufacturing, energy, and advanced technologies.

Throughout the Expo, industry partners showcased brands that have become familiar to students and families alike—strengthening recruitment, awareness, and trust. The energy on the floor reflected what happens when education and industry align around shared workforce goals.

OPCTE thanks our partners, instructors, and teams for another successful Career Fair & Expo—and for continuing to invest in pathways that prepare learners for real careers and meet the evolving needs of our local workforce. ■

Highlights from the 2026 Technical College Career Expo



Highlights from the 2026 Technical College Career Expo





Building a Stronger, Job-Ready Workforce for our Apprenticeship Employers

Every employer says some version of the same thing: *Technical skills can be taught, but reliability, professionalism, and problem-solving make the real difference.*

That's exactly why M-DCPS has embedded Florida Ready to Work certifications directly into our pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship pathways.

Florida Ready to Work is a nationally recognized credential that focuses on the skills employers expect from day one—regardless of industry. Rather than training for a single job, it validates the core competencies that drive performance across the workplace: showing up prepared, communicating effectively, thinking through problems, and using workplace technology with confidence.

By integrating Florida Ready to Work into our apprenticeship model, M-DCPS

ensures these expectations are reinforced early and consistently, alongside hands-on technical training. Apprentices don't just learn the trade; they learn how to function as dependable, professional members of the workforce in real job environments.

For industry partners, the impact is practical and immediate. Apprentices enter programs with a shared baseline of workplace readiness, helping reduce onboarding time, improve consistency, and strengthen overall team performance. Employers gain confidence knowing apprentices understand workplace expectations and are prepared to grow, adapt, and advance within the organization.

Embedding Florida Ready to Work into our pathways is one more way M-DCPS aligns training with what employers actually need: delivering talent pipelines that combine technical skill with real-world readiness. ■

Florida Ready to Work Certifications Focus On:

- Applied Workplace Skills (problem-solving, decision-making)
- Applied Technology Skills (using workplace tools and systems)
- Workplace Professionalism (reliability, communication, teamwork)

These certifications are embedded within M-DCPS pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs to reinforce consistent workforce expectations.



Miami-Dade County School Board Recognizes Industry Leaders in Transportation Apprenticeships



At the January 14, 2026 School Board meeting, Miami-Dade County Public Schools proudly recognized a group of transportation-sector industry partners whose commitment to Registered Apprenticeships has made a real difference across our community. These partners have gone beyond participation, working alongside M-DCPS to connect education to meaningful careers for students and adult learners.

They play an active role in recruiting apprentices, providing hands-on, on-the-job training, mentoring emerging talent, and collaborating with M-DCPS to ensure programs stay aligned with evolving industry standards. Their engagement has directly contributed to increased apprenticeship participation, expanded program offerings, and strong employment outcomes—while helping employers build a skilled, reliable workforce.

M-DCPS is grateful for these transportation partners and their shared commitment to strengthening the local workforce and preparing the next generation of skilled professionals. ■

***The following organizations
were recognized for their
continued partnership and
support of M-DCPS
apprenticeship programs:***

BOMNIN AUTOMOTIVE





MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR Approved 16-Hour Continuing Education Course

M-DCPS Now Offers an Approved 16-Hr. Continuing Education Course for MVR License Renewal

Automotive and truck repair businesses that perform work for hire in Miami-Dade County know that maintaining a valid Motor Vehicle Repair (MVR) license is essential. To support industry compliance and workforce readiness, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) now offers an approved 16-hour continuing education course that satisfies the county's MVR license renewal requirement.

This course is designed specifically for technicians and shops that repair vehicles for the public (as opposed to internal fleet-only operations). Delivered through M-DCPS's postsecondary and apprenticeship training infrastructure, the program provides a convenient, compliant pathway for meeting the annual continuing education mandate while reinforcing best practices aligned to today's repair environments.

The 16-hour course focuses on topics relevant to modern automotive and diesel operations, including safety, regulatory awareness, diagnostic fundamentals, and professional standards that support quality service and consumer protection. By offering this training as an approved provider, M-DCPS helps local businesses keep their workforce current while minimizing disruption to daily operations.

For industry partners, this means easier access to required continuing education through a trusted, local training provider—while maintaining confidence that technicians remain compliant, prepared, and aligned with evolving industry expectations.



**Interested in
enrolling your
technicians or
learning more?**

If your business needs to meet the MVR continuing education requirement or would like to explore how M-DCPS can support compliance and workforce development, we invite you to connect with the Apprenticeship & Workforce Team to start the conversation.

CDL-B: A New Apprenticeship Program on the Horizon

New CDL-B Apprenticeship Strengthens M-DCPS Transportation Workforce

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is preparing to launch a new CDL-B Registered Apprenticeship in collaboration with the district's Transportation Department, creating a structured, earn-while-you-learn pathway into one of the most essential roles supporting students and families.

Designed to build a reliable, district-controlled pipeline of CDL-B drivers, the apprenticeship prioritizes safety, consistency, and long-term retention. Apprentices receive hands-on, on-the-job training paired with related technical instruction, gaining real-world driving experience while preparing to meet licensure and operational standards.

This program reflects a proactive shift from reactive hiring to intentional workforce development, training apprentices directly within M-DCPS transportation operations so they learn expectations, procedures, and safety protocols in the environment where they will work.

As development continues, OPCTE and the Transportation Department are closely aligning training and licensure requirements to ensure a strong launch and a program that can grow with district needs. ■



This year, National Apprenticeship Week will be celebrated April 26 to May 2.

Stay tuned for activities, special recognitions, & stories that highlight the impact of apprenticeship across our district as we get closer to these dates.



"This CDL-B apprenticeship allows us to be intentional about how we build and sustain our transportation workforce; training drivers the right way, in the environment where they'll work, with safety and consistency as the priority."

— René Mantilla, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education



FUTURE OF WORK

The Next Generation

Strong industries are built on strong pipelines. When we invest in people early & intentionally, everyone benefits —students, employers, and our community.

Contact your Apprenticeship Team Today! 305-558-8000



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Federal and State Laws

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) - prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2002 – no public school shall deny equal access to, or a fair opportunity for groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours, or discriminate against any group officially affiliated with Boy Scouts of America or any other youth or community group listed in Title 36 (as a patriotic society).

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

In Addition:

School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517 - Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, citizenship status, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

For additional information contact:

Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC)

District Director/Title IX Coordinator

155 N.E. 15th Street, Suite P104E

Miami, Florida 33132

Phone: (305) 995-1580 TDD: (305) 995-2400 Fax: (305) 995-2047

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