

### MTA Provides Valuable Skills to Three Brothers

Three brothers, Caleb, Tyler, and Jacob Soenen, have followed the same path and spent two years in the [Manufacturing Technology Academy \(MTA\)](#). Tyler was the first of the three to attend MTA from 2001–2003. Attending Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) for two years for general studies, he then transferred to Michigan Tech University to earn a degree in Chemical Engineering in spring 2008. A Quality Engineer for Specialty Silicone Fabricators in Elk Rapids, Tyler validates equipment for production use, applying statistical analysis methods to verify quality. When Tyler reflects back upon his experience in MTA, he is quick to point out that MTA truly held its students to an accountability standard that was never matched in his later classes or studies. "MTA does an awesome job of teaching students to publicly present and communicate information clearly to an audience. This is a critical life and job skill and MTA has provided excellent training in this area so that I can succeed today." Caleb attended MTA from 2003-2005, in large part because of Tyler's successes, but also because his parents felt it was a good stepping stone from home schooling to entering the college arena. Although the Soenens lived in the Kalkaska Public Schools district, they were, for the most part, home-schooled. At MTA, Caleb was challenged not only by individual work, but by team projects as well. Because of all of the team projects, a tight knit group of students, engaged in learning, was formed. As Caleb recounted, "The great thing about MTA is the variety of experiences that you have in just two years of school. One day you could be on a tour to a local manufacturing plant, watching giant robotic arms in manufacturing lines, and the next day you could be working on a team project, building a catapult or robot." He completed his associate's degree from NMC, obtained his private and commercial pilot's license, and is currently hoping to receive a degree in International Relations with an emphasis on Middle East conflict resolution from Grand Valley University in 2011. Although he isn't planning on entering the manufacturing field, he knows that the skills he learned and developed at MTA are invaluable and transcend all career disciplines. Entering MTA in the fall of 2008, Jacob felt that there wasn't any question in his mind or his parents' that he would attend MTA. Jacob, too, cited the team training, applied learning, and developed communication skills as lasting benefits for attending the program. He praised his mentor, Ken Berg of Tool North, for "taking him under his wing" and providing valuable advice and skills. As a result of his experience at MTA, Jacob has developed habits of mind and finely-tuned his "learning to learn" skills. As with his brothers, he will attend NMC for his core classes and then, hopefully, transfer to University of Michigan to earn a degree in aerospace engineering. All three Soenen brothers agree that MTA was the best possible thing that could have happened to them in their educational life!



Tyler, Jacob, and Caleb spend their Saturday at Robotic Competition

### What Happens if You Give a Pig a Pancake?

In February, students in the [Early Childhood Education \(ECE\)](#) program attended the play, "If You Give a Pig a Pancake & Other Story Books, as part of the Young People's Theater Series at Traverse City Central Grade School's Lars Hockstad Auditorium. This play was based upon a children's book in which children explore the concept of cause-and-effect in stories. Prior to the ECE students' attendance at the play, they had worked with Janie Lesinski, their English Language Arts teacher, on the role that cause-and-effect plays in adolescent and adult literature. The students also explored the concept of using theater experiences with young children. After the play, each student then read another children's book, and created a diamante poem, using seven lines and shaped like a diamond, based on the cause-and-effect theme found in the book.



### "The Bike Man" and Skilled Trades Team Together

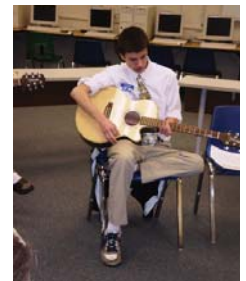
Don Cunkle, a teacher's assistant at TBAISD Adult Work Center, has become known around the Traverse City area as the "Bike Man." For the past three years, he has repaired more than 300 old bikes inside his garage and donated them to homeless people, the Goodwill Inn, Women's Resource Center, and Child and Family Services to help individuals go to work, run errands, get groceries, and perform other tasks requiring transportation. He frequents garage sales and accepts bike donations from people who no longer have room to store them. He accepts bikes in all conditions and, if the bike is beyond repair, he will strip it of the handle bars, pedals, seat, seat post, chain, shifters, etc. This is where the Skilled Trades (ST) students team up with the "Bike Man." Students in this program will be stripping the "beyond repair" bikes and salvaging any parts that can be reused to rebuild a serviceable bike that can handle rain and snow. In addition to having the help from the ST students, Don has also received cash donations from the Cherry Capital Cycling Club (to which Don belongs) and has received a grant from the Campbell Endowment Fund that offset thousands of dollars of repairs. Riding his own bike to work every day, Don feels good about seeing "his bikes" being ridden around town and, no doubt, the ST students will experience some of these feelings, too, as they help out in this endeavor!



Don Cunkle

### Teacher Academy Students "Strum" to Aid Learning

During their October 2009 Professional Development Day, [Teacher Academy \(TA\)](#) students participated in a workshop, led by Amy Martin who works for Guitars in the Classroom (GITC), a non-profit organization that helps educators see the potential and value of using music, via the guitar, to enhance learning. As a result of this short workshop, several TA students were interested in acquiring more information and practice so that they, too, could incorporate guitars into their host teachers' classrooms. As a result, a second half-day workshop in late February was organized for those students expressing a desire for more training. Eight students, coming from Buckley, Frankfort, and Grand Traverse Academy (GTA), attended this half-day workshop and, as a result, have been given, courtesy of GITC, guitars to be used for the remainder of the school year. Several of the TA students have already found a way to use the guitar to help their young students learn, using an instructional approach that engages the students' musical "intelligence." In fact, Dylan Courtade, GTA, is working in a lower elementary classroom at GTA and has incorporated music into math. As Dylan recounts, "I had the kids sit in circle around me and we would sing additions of 12 in tune with the guitar. I would sing three plus nine equals.....and the kids would sing, in unison, twelve. Sometimes, I would try to trip them up and say five plus five equals and they would 'catch' me. Overall, I think music has great potential in the classroom." By using music to reach kids, TA students are adding a valuable tool to their instructional tool belt.



Dylan Courtade

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Our mission is to prepare students with skills and learning experiences for employment and life-long learning.



## CURRENT RESIDENT OR

### T-Shirts and Hoodies are Designed, Printed, and Marketed!

During the national Career and Technical Education Month in February, **CTC Student Councils** (both AM and PM) sponsored a t-shirt and hooded sweatshirt sale. These t-shirts and hoodies featured the TBAISD CTC logo and were available in both senior/2010 and junior/2011 versions. **Visual Imaging Technology (ViT)** students submitted designs to the Student Councils for their consideration, the top two designs were selected, and then the final design was presented to the entire student body for a vote. Kate Hodges, Forest Area senior, produced the winning design and ViT students, Aidan Cobb, TC Central senior, and Collin Richard, Glen Lake junior, screen-printed the shirts. Thanks to the efforts of Student Council and the ViT students, CTC logo t-shirts and hoodies are seen daily around the CTC hallways!



Aidan Cobb, Katie Hodges,  
Collin Richard

## NEWS AND NOTES TBAISD Career-Tech Center, "A Great Place to Learn"

### Nice Is A Four Letter Word!

Legendary basketball coach John Wooden once said, "You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you." This edition of the CTC times highlights a few examples of students and staff going the extra mile for the sake of others. These stories are only the tip of the iceberg. This year, almost 1,100 students have taken classes at our Center and I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to compliment them for the outstanding way in which they conduct themselves. Did you know that being nice can help one be more successful in the workplace and in life? Research suggests that success is not the result of fear and intimidation, but of smiles and compliments. Consider the meaning of nice by examining what it is not:



Jason M. Jeffrey, Ed.D.  
Principal, TBAISD CTC

- Nice is not naive.
- Nice doesn't mean smiling passively while others take advantage of you.
- Nice doesn't mean being a doormat.

Nice means moving forward with confidence and knowing that placing others' needs at the same level as your own is its own reward. Recent studies at the University of Toronto, the University of Michigan and by Daniel Goldman found:

- Nice people have better relationships— congenial people have half the divorce rate of the general population.
- Nice people are healthier. Older Americans who volunteer have a 60% lower premature death rate than those who do not.
- Nice businesses have a better bottom line. For every 2% increase in cheerfulness/helpfulness there is a corresponding 1% increase in revenue.

As the old saying goes, little things like smiles, compliments and being supportive have the potential to make our days and improve our lives. Thanks for sharing your students with us. It's been nice working with them and contributing to their achievement. Have a great spring.

How To Succeed In Business By Being Nice. [online] [http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/14926838//](http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/14926838/)  
The Quote Garden [online] <http://www.quoteagarden.com/kindness.html>

### Allied Health 1 Students "Merge" with Older Generation

In an attempt to help Allied Health 1 (AH1) students better understand the feelings and thoughts of older patients, instructors Marlene Griffin and Michelle Recchia created a project that involved groups of two to three students being assigned to a **Grand Traverse Pavilions** resident. These students met with their residents in their rooms at the Pavilions for two weeks, getting acquainted with their residents and asking them a series of questions that gave the students insights into the residents' lives. Information gathered included: what their growing up years were like, what the names of their parents were, what they did for a living, and what was their fondest memory of their parents. They even wanted to know where their "assigned" resident was when President John F. Kennedy was shot. This information gathering fostered a friendship that allowed both sides to get to know one another. The project allowed the younger generation (the students) to "merge" with the older generation (the residents) emotionally, mentally, and physically. Many of the students had never been in a long-term facility before

or had had much contact with the elderly. When the students were done gathering their information, they created a "visual keepsake" for the residents and their families. More than 35 residents were involved in this project that proved as heartwarming for the students as it was for the residents.



### M & M Candies Help Algebra II Students Learn

Students in Laura Bogen's and Deb Menchaca's **Algebra II** classes recently participated in an activity as a simple demonstration of exponential decay. As an introduction to a unit on exponential and logarithmic functions, the teachers used M & M candies to represent a fictional element "m&mium." This activity was a simulation of half-life calculations for radioactive elements which follow a predictable decay function. The actual half-life was unknown, but each shake of a cup, holding the M & M candies, represented an additional half-life. The students graphed the function by hand and then used the graphing calculators to perform an exponential regression. The students then could see how accurately their data fit a perfect exponential decay function.

