

RIVERSIDE

TECH

CORRECTIONS SCHOOL SYSTEM

BOARD REPORT

April 2020

NATIONAL CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (NCCER)

A master trainer is an individual who has been certified in accordance with the NCCER Instructor Certification Training Program (ICTP) for master trainers and is authorized to train craft instructors. Master instructors are trained and certified directly by NCCER, which is headquartered in Alachua, Florida, and affiliated with the University of Florida's M.E. Rinker, Sr. School of Construction Management.



Riverside's Ouachita River Correctional Unit Manager Don Rigney (top) and Varner Unit Instructor John Chapman were certified as master trainers the week of April 6-9, 2020.



Their four-day training was originally scheduled to

be held at the NCCER home office. However, due to the travel restrictions in response to COVID-19, the training was conducted online for the first time.

In the past, instructor training had to be conducted by an outside source. Rigney and Chapman's master training certification allows them to train present and future Riverside instructors who have not yet been NCCER certificated.

SERVSAFE PROGRAM

The Riverside Vo-Tech Culinary Arts program at the Varner Unit participates in the ServSafe program. ServSafe was developed by the National Restaurant Association with the help of foodservice industry experts. These experts help define food safety best practices by involving specialists from regulatory agencies, academia, and the food service industry to create them. ServSafe training reflects the latest in food science research and updated FDA Food Codes.

ServSafe is nationally recognized and accepted in all 50 states. Earning a ServSafe certification tells the industry and the world that you know food safety and the critical importance of its role.

ServSafe program participants master sanitation, the flow of food through an operation, sanitary facilities, and pest management. ServSafe training is training that is learned, remembered, shared, and used.



SERVSAFE PROGRAM continued:

Since the introduction of the ServSafe program to Riverside Vo-Tech in 2014, 89 individuals have passed and have been certified as ServSafe Food Protection Managers.

Testing is currently suspended because the National Restaurant Association is closed due to the spread of COVID-19 in Chicago.

A ServSafe certification is a tool that can be used by a person to stand out over other individuals competing for the same job.

The Arkansas Department of Health has amended the rules pertaining to food establishments to adopt the 2013 FDA Model food code. These changes went into effect September 7, 2019. One of these changes is that at least one supervisory employee must have received Food Manager’s training from an accredited provider. ServSafe fills this role and is a tool for an individual to progress to management, which in turn leads to better wages. All vendors have one year from September 7, 2019 to comply.

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT
March 2020**

EAST ARKANSAS REGIONAL UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Building Maintenance	13	0	0	1	0
Computerized Applications Technology	12	0	0	0	0
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning	10	0	0	0	0
Welding	11	0	0	4	0
TOTAL	46	0	0	5	0

ESTER UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Computerized Applications Technology	13	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	13	1	0	0	0

NEWPORT COMPLEX	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Computerized Applications Technology	14	0	0	0	0
Computerized Accounting	13	0	1	0	0
Cosmetology	15	2	1	1	0
Cosmetology Instructor	1	1	0	0	0
Horticulture	16	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	59	4	3	1	0

NORTH CENTRAL UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Horticulture	16	0	0	3	0
TOTAL	16	0	0	3	0

OUACHITA RIVER CORRECTIONAL UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Building Trades Technology	15	1	2	1	2
Computerized Applications Technology	15	0	2	1	3
TOTAL	30	1	4	2	5

RANDALL L. WILLIAMS UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER
Landscape & Design	14	0	2	0	3
TOTAL	14	0	2	0	3

VARNER UNIT	Enrolled	Removed	Interns	Completed	NCCER/ ServSafe
Building Maintenance	16	0	0	0	0
Culinary Arts	15	0	1	1	5
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning	14	2	2	2	6
Residential Carpentry	15	0	0	0	3
Residential Electricity	17	1	1	1	3
Welding	18	0	1	0	6
TOTAL	95	3	5	4	23*

*NCCER=18; ServSafe=5

LETTER FROM A FORMER STUDENT:

Sometimes the most powerful reminder of the importance of Riverside Vo-Tech comes straight from a student who has successfully completed a course and can visualize a successful career by legitimate means rather than returning to a life of crime. Here's a letter we received from a grateful former welding student who is excited about his future:

3/18/2020

My name is Braden Newman. I am currently 22 years old and have been incarcerated for 39 months. At the age of 19 I was convicted of robbery and a numerous amount of other violent/drug charges, and my current sentence is ten years on a B felony – meaning I do my time on a 1/2. I was in the understanding that I would only have to do 30 months at the most. So, when I went up for parole in December of 2018 after two years of incarceration, I believed I would go home shortly after.

When I got my parole results, I was granted parole with the stipulation of Vo-Tech and I was very disappointed it would be another 9-14 month at the very least before I was to get out. I was transferred from Grimes Unit to East Arkansas Regional Unit and assigned to Vo-Tech the following week. I had no interest in the class and was only focused on earning hours so I could go home. I was a drug dealer that had never held a real job and that had seldomly worked a hard day. I had full intention to get out and carry on selling drugs.

Six months into the program I had an epiphany. I knew that if I continued to sell drugs it would only be a matter of time before I was stripped from my loved ones and sent back to prison.

So, in this great moment of realization, I now understood that if I took this class seriously and became good at this trade, I wouldn't have to worry about coming back to prison.

I also understood that if I worked hard and really applied myself, I had the potential to make the money I need to make to support my family and live the lifestyle I want to live without jeopardizing my freedom!

After that six month mark I transitioned from a lazy student that was just collecting hours and barely getting by to an ambitious student hungry to learn a trade. Over the course of my remaining time in Vo-Tech I was the first one in the shop and the last one to leave. I became good at welding and proficient with various other machines and tools. With learning these skills I've gained a lot of confidence in my craft, am eager to join the workforce, and look forward to my bright, bright future!

I would like to thank the Parole Board for giving me this blessing in disguise, the instructors at Riverside Vo-Tech for being so helpful and encouraging, and the other students in the class that have really taken this program seriously.

UNIT PROGRAM UPDATES:

EAST ARKANSAS REGIONAL UNIT –

The following is a post from the Facebook page of the Arkansas Department of Corrections on March 16 that reached 5,977 people:

Look at what all they're doing in the welding class at the East Arkansas Regional Unit! The inmates are learning how to stick weld and mig weld. They're also getting trained to use a plasma cutter, a grinder, and a cutting wheel. The usual class size is 15 inmates...the class is popular with the inmates because skilled welders are in high demand in Arkansas. When the class is completed, each inmate who graduates will have a Welding 1 certificate, which can be their ticket to a good job when they go home!!!



NORTH CENTRAL UNIT –

Horticulture Program

Horticulture students at the North Central Unit (NCU) are given the opportunity to learn how to use 3D home landscape software.



HORTICULTURE PROGRAM (continued):

A view inside the NCU greenhouse:



NCU Horticulture Program instructor Aaron Browning points out bananas growing on the banana tree inside the greenhouse:



OUACHITA RIVER CORRECTIONAL UNIT – Welding Shop Update

While COVID-19 has greatly slowed progress on construction of the welding shop, the project has continued moving forward.

Painting inside the booths (block filler and black paint) has been completed while painting of the hoods and exterior walls remains unfinished. Additionally, Mr. Van Horn has been building some steel welding tables that will go inside the booths.



The white building pictured here is the welding tool room complete with storage loft. The inside of the

tool room has been walled and wired but is awaiting paint and the “A” cage installation.

Here is the new water-cooled band saw in action:



RANDALL L. WILLIAMS CORRECTIONAL UNIT – Landscape Construction and Design

The Landscape Construction and Design program at the Randall L. Williams Unit (RLW) provides instruction on the design of landscapes through the use of hands-on construction, drafting techniques and computer design programs. Students receive training in construction of retaining walls, patios, water features, irrigation, laying sod and landscape lighting, ornamentals, plant propagation and turf management.

The maintenance of safety equipment is emphasized as well as the appropriate use of power equipment such as weed eaters, blowers, hedge trimmers, pole saws, lawnmowers and sod cutters. Hand tools are also used such as shovels, rakes, and hand trimmers.

Students are instructed in the basics of commercial/residential building grounds, custodial maintenance, and landscaping. Other areas are job site safety, chemical safety, measurement, equipment usage, and tool identification.

After successful completion of the program, a student can pursue a career path such as groundskeeping, lawn care service, landscaping, and as a retail garden center or nursery worker, just to name a few.

During a recent class session, RLW Landscape and Design Instructor Don Kendrick explained to students how to start pepper and tomato plants from seeds as pictured here:



Program participants checking the growth status of their tomato and pepper seedlings:



VARNER UNIT – RVT Electricity Class

Students in the Varner Unit are shown testing a motor (right).

Varner program instructor John Chapman recently received this note from a former student that illustrates the importance of the program.



Hey Mr. Chapman. This is Matthew McKee and I would like to thank you in teaching me the right way to do this trade. And I would like to inform you that I have started my own business. I got my business license last month. I am the proud owner of McKee Construction. Wish you well.