ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY

Wired for hot prospects

BARBARA STREIT, 21, OF HARRISBURG RECALLS CHECKING THE OPTIONS AT HACC AND DECIDING ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY "LOOKED GOOD."

"I enjoy fixing things," says Streit, who lived with her missionary parents in Kenya, East Africa, for 18 years. She admits she made a lot of adjustments upon coming home to the USA to be near a sister, who is a nurse. Schooling, however, fell into place. With an associate in applied science degree now in sight, she plans to work on wiring motors this summer.

"I've really enjoyed HACC. The teachers are very understanding." Next on the agenda, Streit will seek an apprenticeship in residential wiring and hopefully take her journeyman's test in two years.

Heather Leas, 27, moved from Minnesota to Harrisburg to live with her mom because she didn't have a job.

Like Streit, she assessed the marketplace and thought about becoming an electrician "because it seemed interesting and would provide steady work."

ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY

Wired for hot prospects

HACC students receive more than $65 million in financial aid annually. Fill out a federal aid application at www.fafsa.ed.gov. For more information, contact Financial Aid Services at (717) 780-2330.

To learn more about the program, call Gerry Farmer at (717) 221-1300, ext. 1404, or e-mail gmfarmer@hacc.edu or Department Chair Dan Wagner at (717) 221-1300, ext. 1407 or e-mail dwwagner@hacc.edu

HACC

Founded in 1964

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HACC does not discriminate in employment, student admissions, and student services on the basis of race, color, religion, age, political affiliation or belief, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, place of birth, General Education Development Certification (GED), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other legally protected classification.

The U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook agrees the future does look good for electricians, especially those who develop broad skills in the trade. The Department of Labor handbook foresees a growing need for electricians as current workers retire. Opportunities range from wiring and maintaining homes and offices to dealing with anticipated growth in power plant construction and working on complicated robotic systems in factories.

Leas, who will receive her associate degree soon is taking more classes. "The nice thing about the HACC program is the electives for multiple trades," she says. "I took HVAC (heating, air conditioning and ventilation) as an elective and love it.

"The possibilities are endless in the trades," Leas says. You're not stuck in one particular area. You can branch out in just that one field" you have chosen.

Gerry Farmer, a HACC instructor for the technician program, says those who pursue this career should be "team players and have an aptitude for math."

Curiosity is another desirable characteristic, he adds. "You are always a student because the electrical trade is always changing."

Electricians earn a median wage of $20.97 an hour, the U.S. Employment Outlook Handbook says. Median hourly pay reported by industries employing the largest number of electricians runs from $17.15 an hour up to $31.90 an hour.

GETTING STARTED

HACC offers three levels of programs to learn the trade.

The **associate degree program** of 65 credit hours includes:

- 22 credit hours of English composition, report and technical writing, interpersonal communication, physical education and electives;
- 19 credit hours of fundamentals of electricity, electrical wiring, national electric code, safety and health in the workplace and blueprint reading, and
- 24 credit hours of technical math and program electives ranging from marketing and management to welding.

Graduates become technicians, team supervisors, estimators, electrical system designers and independent electricians.

The **certificate program** of 35 credit hours includes:

- 3 credit hours of technical and report writing;
- the same 19 credit of major courses listed in the associate degree program, and
- 13 hours of math for electronics and program electives.

A graduate at this level works as an apprentice, residential or electrical service electrician, and lineman or maintenance technician.

The **diploma program** requires 25 credit hours including:

- the same 19 credit hours of major courses listed in the certificate and degree program curriculum. and,
- 6 credit hours of electives such as math and English.

A student is prepared as an entry-level electrician helper/apprentice.

ENROLL WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL

Those seeking a head start while in high school can look into HACC's College in the High School program, notes Ross Berger, director of Tech Prep and Secondary Articulation. "Students can earn up to 12 college credits for only $50 per course at many high schools and vocational-technical schools in HACC's service area," he explains. Check with local secondary and tech centers for a list of available courses.

Starting fall 2008, students also can start the HVAC program at Franklin County Careers and Technology Center, 2463 Loop Road Chambersburg. For information about the FCCTC, call (717) 263-9033.

BENEFITS TO BECOMING A HACC STUDENT

HACC offers students:

- flexibility to study part- or full-time while meeting obligations in the workplace;
- individual attention and remedial work to fulfill admission requirements, and transferable credits for students seeking bachelor degrees.

HACC provides high-quality education at the lowest cost in the area. Find admissions information, tuition and a list of the 22 south-central Pennsylvania sponsoring districts that pick up part of the tuition for residents at www.hacc.edu.