

## Queens Vocational Students Spark Rebuilding Effort in Breezy Point High School Electricians Repair Homes Ravaged by Hurricane Sandy

by Nicholas C. Martinez

On October 29, 2012, Superstorm Sandy hit landfall on the east coast and, in two days, utterly devastated residential beachfront properties in New Jersey, New York and Long Island. While the storm impacted millions in the New York area, no community was hit harder than the Breezy Point neighborhood of Queens. More than four months after Sandy, many families still cannot return to their flooded homes because of high levels of mold, lack of power and damaged structural foundations.

As the rebuilding effort continues, a few area homeowners recently received much needed assistance from a local high school's talented roster of apprentice electricians.

This past December, thirty-two juniors and seniors from the electrical program at Queens Vocational and Technical High School in Long Island City spent consecutive weekends completing repairs to three residences in the impact zone. The homes received electrical system overhauls by the high school technicians – and even after finishing their initial assignments, many continue to help with the rebuilding effort in other houses on their off-time.

"I am so proud of our students," said Principal Melissa Burg. "They are beyond amazing. It's great at their age that they can learn to give back." She added, "It's something they will carry with them and hopefully will make them kinder people."

The students got involved through MR Electrical Services, a Brooklyn-based company that partners with the program, after they requested assistance with the gigantic reconstruction of the neighborhood. Accompanied by their instructor Calvert Bowen and clad in personal protective suits, the apprentice electricians installed power outlets, replaced in-wall wiring, and restored relay switches – equipment either washed away or destroyed by the massive storm.

"Words cannot explain the damage until you get there and see it personally," said senior Leander Barrios, 18. "When I got there, I was just in shock to see what really happened. It really felt good to help."

Queens Vocational High School, a career and technical education secondary school established in 1920, houses various programs for budding career-

minded students. Along with the electrical department, the institution trains students for careers in robotic engineering, graphic arts and cosmetology.

In order to complete the program, the aspiring electricians must accumulate sixty hours of field experience during the tenth through twelfth grades. The apprenticeships, internships and real world work experiences overseen by school sponsors and industry partners provide students opportunities to refine their skills, build networks and determine whether or not to pursue additional training in the field.

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The electricians take a break from work. (Queens Vocational High School)

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When the students arrived for their first day of work, they received a sobering reality check to the extent of the storm's destruction.

"It was heartbreaking to see," said senior Tiffany Scanlan, 17. "You can actually see where the water went up to in the houses. It was crazy."

Sebastian Bonilla, a 17-year-old senior volunteer, could only use one word to describe the disaster zone. "Shocking. I'm from Jackson Heights and it really didn't hit us hard. But when I went over there, I've never seen anything like that before in my life."

While the students said the work was difficult, their motivation for helping was

rather simple. "Imagine not having a home," Bonilla said. "How would I feel if I had nowhere to sleep at night? It touched me."

The rehab project is not Queens Vocational's first charitable venture. Students participated in a recent City Harvest Food Drive and the Susan G. Komen Cancer Walk. In February, the girls' basketball team played in a Coaches vs. Cancer charity fundraiser basketball game versus Wagner Secondary School – proceeds from the game and promotional t-shirts went to the non-profit organization for future cancer research.

Of all the school's philanthropic work, Burg said, "I think it makes you a better human being. And I think it will shape [the students] for the future."



One of the student electricians at work. (Queens Vocational High School)

# Looking Back to Move Forward

## Industrial Arts' Role Within Career and Technical Education

by Frank Mazza, WBL Coordinator, Staten Island Tech High School

In 1906, several professors at Columbia University's Teachers College developed an alternative educational program based on the manufacturing trades of the time: mechanical drawing (often referred to as the language of industry), woodworking and metal working. For the next 80 years, every New York City high school, junior high school and elementary school featured "Industrial Arts," an educational curriculum where students gained the knowledge necessary to become the tradesmen that constructed our city and our nation.



(Pictures taken by Frank Mazza)

Over the course of the 20th century, portions of the Industrial Arts program slowly became obsolete. Thus in 1983, the New York State Board of Regents replaced the educational program, accelerating a shift towards what we now know as the current CTE model.

As we evolve as educators, our tactics and techniques also polymorph to suit the needs of our students and the norms of society. So, even though we are nearly 30 years removed from its dismantling, let us not overlook the value found in Industrial Arts' core principles as we strive to perfect Career and Technical Education.

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After all, there might be something worth salvaging amongst the rubble.

The New York State Department of Education defined Industrial Arts as a “broad study of the materials, organization, tools, processes, products, jobs and the human problems of industry.” At New Utrecht High School (where I taught Mechanical & Architectural Drawing for many years) and many other NYC industrial schools, educators faced three major problems as they shaped the technical minds of tomorrow: 1) how best to transmit our American way of life; 2) how to best improve upon the emerging culture; and 3) how to best meet the needs of our youth.

These three benchmarks should serve as a foundation for any CTE program, no matter the focal subject or trade. Well designed and effectively taught curricula empowers students to make wiser choices when deciding vocational and non-vocational pursuits. The guidance received while discovering their inherent abilities, interests, attitudes, likes and dislikes will bolster the decision making skills necessary to cement future economic security.

Also, the industrial growth of this country depends upon the ingenuity, planning, labor and imagination of the American people. And our national tradition is based on democratic principles deeply rooted in industrial and technological growth. Industrial arts education stressed democratic ideals – it taught about the importance of industry and its contributions to the American way of life. Teachers established an understanding about how products are made and in general, helped youths comprehend the vastness of the industrial world around them.

Lastly, when students make a product on their own, they gain an unparalleled degree of self-confidence and self-image, traits so essential to any human being as they traverse the ins and outs of today’s modern workplace. As a former industrial arts educator, I saw first hand just how powerful this notion

can be. The emotional success experienced provides an inner satisfaction that is difficult to express except by a smile on the student’s face. That is the greatest reward a teacher can receive.

The phrase “Industrial Arts” might call to mind a time in our educational history from which we are now many years removed. Yet, the legacy of Industrial Arts still holds lessons that can provide inspiration and guidance as we continue to evolve career-focused education in America.

All we need to do is take the time to look.



(Above : New Utrecht student Architectural design. )

(Below : Woodworking on display at a Kings Plaza IA Expo in the 1980’s.)



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# Mid-Winter Conference Puts “CTE at the Core”

by David Fischer, Senior Director for Career and Technical Education

On Monday, January 28, 2013 the Department of Education, United Federation of Teachers, CTE Advisory Council and CTE Technical Assistance Center of New York State partnered to sponsor “CTE at the Core,” a daylong professional development opportunity for CTE educators and partners, held at UFT headquarters in lower Manhattan. More than 500 attendees gathered together for an in-depth program of informative working sessions and heartfelt reflections from educational and industry leaders. The event served as a celebration of the community at large and an unofficial kick-off to February’s CTE Month awareness campaign.

The day’s itinerary began with a Leadership Roundtable, moderated by CTE Advisory Council chair Jack Powers and featuring DOE Deputy Chief Academic Officer Josh Thomases and UFT President Mike Mulgrew. Various topics were discussed, like the progress to date within the system, current and anticipated challenges and the possibilities of collaborating with professionals to meet those challenges.

Willard Daggett, founder and Chairman of the International Center for Excellence in Education, delivered a keynote address tracing the history of educational reform efforts and the challenges facing not only CTE, but American education at large. The morning concluded with a smorgasbord of workshop sessions on numerous topics, including best practices for serving students with disabilities, the CTE program approval process, work-based learning, improving

industry engagement, strategies to advance gender equity in CTE programs, and leadership secrets from high-performing CTE schools.

In the afternoon, Kathryn Wylde, President and CEO of the Partnership for New York City and a longtime champion of CTE, delivered lunchtime remarks outlining business expectations for the rising workforce and the value of CTE as a preparatory strategy. The day-long program concluded with a series of industry-focused, group-based breakout sessions moderated by DOE staff. Within this smaller setting, educators from different schools clustered together and shared their common challenges as CTE professionals and debated the best practices for success and potential pathways for collaboration.

Follow-up surveying by the CTE Advisory Council found that a large majority of participants had a positive experience at the conference, with virtually every session rated highly by attendees. Numerous pieces from the program, including the workshop on serving students with disabilities and the afternoon industry breakout sessions, will continually inform the CTE Team and CTE Advisory Council on where to best focus their efforts in the months to come.

The NYC Department of Education and its Career and Technical Education Department are both proud and honored to have sponsored this re-invigorating event and thank all of the exceptional professionals who both attended and participated.



The Roundtable Discussion. (l. to r.) DOE Deputy Chief Academic Officer Josh Thomases; UFT President Michael Mulgrew; Ernest Logan, President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators; and Jack Powers, Chairman of the Advisory Council for Career and Technical Education. (Photo: Miller Photography)

# New York City Public High School Students Turn Flour Into Gold



**C-CAP New York Class of 2013 Scholarship Awards Winners**

(Emily Hewitt)

On April 5, 2013, the Careers through Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP) granted over \$450,000 in scholarships to 24 high school seniors during an awards ceremony hosted by the New York hotel The Pierre.

The Waldorf Astoria Hotel Executive Chef David Garcelon was the guest speaker and, along with C-CAP founder Richard Grausman and C-CAP President Susan Robbins, presented select competitors with The Waldorf Astoria Experience -- an opportunity to work in the kitchens of the hotel, tour the luxury facilities and stay overnight in the legendary New York city landmark.

Scholarships ranged in value from \$3,000 to \$104,000 and were rewarded to the young culinary artists by some of the most prestigious universities in the country, including Culinary Institute of America (CIA), The International Culinary Center (ICC), SUNY Cobleskill, and Johnson & Wales University. Some students also received cash awards to help defray the costs of books, supplies, housing, and other expenses while at community college or another culinary arts institutes.

Careers through Culinary Arts Program works with public schools nationwide to prepare underserved high school students for college and career opportunities in the restaurant and hospitality industry. A national nonprofit organization founded in 1990, C-CAP manages the largest independent culinary scholarship program in the United States and has awarded high school students \$37 million in scholarships.

In New York for the 2012-2013 academic year, C-CAP impacted the lives of over 2,400 students in 13 public schools through training, career services and scholarships. The organization provides training and curriculum enrichment programs, including job training and internships, professional development for teachers, college and career advising, and culinary competitions that lead to culinary school scholarships.

## 2013 NEW YORK SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS LIST

### Brooklyn

*William E. Grady High School:*

Maurice Joiner - \$3,000

### Bronx

*Harry S. Truman High School:*

Brian Ortiz - \$3,000

Lannell Richardson-Lewis - \$4,000

### Queens

*Long Island City High School:*

Ashley Garcia - \$4,500

Linda Garcia - \$4,000

Victoria Kitsos - \$6,000

Emily Rojas - \$104,448

Natalie Steward - \$4,000

Evelyn Velazquez - \$54,500

Wendi Velazquez - \$22,700

### Manhattan

*Food and Finance High School:*

Carlesha Alston - \$3,000

Danielle Carrino - \$3,000

Cristina Cielo Perez - \$6,000

Michael Gutierrez - \$5,000

Alondra Nunez Espinal - \$4,000

Jasmine Polanco - \$48,192

*High School of Hospitality Management:*

Mukarram Ali Taalib-Din Muhammad - \$5,000

Chynna Gonzalez - \$54,500

### Staten Island

*Port Richmond High School:*

Abdallah Farraj - \$3,000

Paola Lara - \$3,000

Antonio Meyers - \$48,192

Kayla Gore - \$4,000

*School of Cooperative Technical Education:*

Abimael Collazo - \$49,750

Avadale Reid - \$4,000



**The Award Winning Culinary Artists and Their Creations**

(Emily Hewitt)



**CTE Digest** is a brief rundown of local and national stories and reports concerning career and technical education in New York City and beyond. If you see a feature that you'd like to share with the CTE community in New York City, please contact David Fischer at [dfischer@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:dfischer@schools.nyc.gov)

## [Gotham Schools: ACTvF Aims To Avoid Common Post-Founding Principal Struggle \(April 4, 2013\)](#)

Mariana Ionova writes, "On his first day as principal of the Academy for Careers in Television and Film in January, Edgar Rodriguez had his hands full. . . For more than four years, Rodriguez had been the assistant principal of ACTvF, a Long Island City high school with 419 students. The school opened in 2008 under the leadership of founding principal Mark Dunetz, Rodriguez, and a team of staff members whose vision was to create a non-selective high school that provided a high quality education."

## [New York Times: With Legacy on His Mind, Mayor Adds More Schools \(April 2, 2013\)](#)

Al Baker writes, "Seven of them are vocational schools, or 'career and technical education' schools that will be paired with corporations and universities, a Bloomberg initiative designed to give students a chance at landing jobs in the fields of energy, emergency management or health care."

## [Village Voice: System Failure - The Collapse of Public Education \(April 2, 2013\)](#)

Anya Kamenetz writes, "New York City officials openly admit that a high school diploma earned in our public schools today does not mean that a student is ready for college. In fact, 80 percent of New York public school graduates who enrolled in City University of New York community colleges last fall still needed high school level instruction—also known as remediation—in reading, writing, and especially math."

## [Metro: 20 Schools Selected For Software Engineering Pilot Program \(February 27, 2013\)](#)

Laura Shin writes, "Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott announced on Monday the names of the schools selected to receive a comprehensive computer science and software engineering curriculum. First introduced in the mayor's State of the City address earlier this month, the Software Engineering Pilot program is a part of the city's efforts to prepare more students for careers in the growing technology sector."

## [NSC Releases Perkins Act Issue Brief \(February 25, 2013\)](#)

The National Skills Coalition makes three key policy suggestions to Congress if they choose to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.

## [NY Daily News: The curse of 'college for all' \(February 21, 2013\)](#)

John McWhorter writes: "Class mobility is not what it used to be in our country, but there are few notions less constructive than that the only way to a middle class life is college. Vocational training should be thought of as the American Dream just as much as four years in a dorm."

## [NY Daily News: Forest Hills High School Raising Money For National Social Studies Competition \(February 04, 2013\)](#)

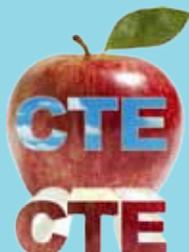
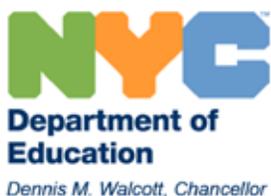
After winning the state level 'We the People' competition on January 12th, 2013, the Forest Hills High School team is now looking for donations to help fund their trip to the national contest in Washington D.C. Their deadline to get the remaining \$22,000 is March 15th. To make a donation, call the school at (718) 268-3137 or email [tkelly8@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:tkelly8@schools.nyc.gov).

## [NY Daily News: STEM Is The Future – Top programs Unlock Kids' Exponential Potential \(February 4, 2013\)](#)

Ben Chapman writes, "STEM — science, technology, engineering and math — is at the center of the Mayor Bloomberg's efforts to diversify the city's economy following the financial crash of 2008. It's also the basis of a nationwide push to transform education, from the primary grades to graduate school, away from the humanities and toward the sciences. New York City's public schools are leading the way — and elementary students are where the transformation begins..."

## [New York Times: Opinion – The Boys at the Back \(February 2, 2013\)](#)

Christina Hoff Sommers writes, "Consider Aviation High School in New York City . . . Students worked in teams — with a student foreman and crew chief — to take apart and then rebuild a small jet engine in just 20 days . . . Aviation students spend half of the day in hands-on classes on airframes, hydraulics and electrical systems. They put up with demanding English and history classes because unless they do well in them, they cannot spend their afternoons tinkering with the engine of a Cessna 411."



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