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Interactive College of Technology



2024 NEWSLETTER

ICTOFFICER'S LIST

CEO: Elmer R. Smith

EVP of Enrollment: Gregory A. Koch

EVP of Product Development: Thomas A. Blair

VP, Chamblee Campus: JoAnn Koch

CAMPUSDIRECTORS

Gainesville: Margaret P. Smith

Chamblee: JoAnn Koch – Vice President

Morrow: Josue Rodriguez

Newport: Leon Gladney

N. Houston: Demi Banks

Pasadena: Robert A. Pope

SW. Houston: Diane K. Nguyen

Filling The Skills Gap

You may have heard in the news the term “skills gap.” A skills gap refers to the difference between what employers need in the workforce and the current skills that they can find in their staff. When organizations can't find people with the appropriate training it affects their hiring, their productivity, and their bottom line. Eventually the whole economy is affected.

Interactive College of Technology is a part of the skills gap solution.

1. We equip students with the skills to succeed at their next position. Our curriculum is often modified and updated by those in the industries where our students want to work. Our finals also are industry certifications that coincide with the skills needed in the marketplace.
2. ICT produces more industry-focused students. Many industries are facing a skilled worker shortage. However, the graduates from most 4-year colleges still aren't work-ready. They aren't taught by working professionals and don't have our externship for real-world experience.
3. An Associate of Science Degree produces students faster with less debt. At ICT, we are proud that most of our students graduate with less debt than the average college. That means, students become employees with less financial burdens and can concentrate more on learning their job and moving up in their career.
4. ICT teaches both the hard and soft skills needed in the skills gap. Hard skills are technical skills like computing or accounting. Soft skills are often trickier to learn because they are less step-by-step and more experiential, such empathetic customer service or creative problem solving. Our courses work on both hard and soft skills.

ICT CAMPUS NEWS

OUR STUDENTS

GEORGIA CAMPUSES:

CHAMBLEE

Dr. Jason Altmire the President and Chief Executive Officer of Career Education Colleges and Universities (CECU), the national trade association representing private postsecondary career schools, recently visited ICT's Chamblee campus. During his visit he was able to see a good deal of the campus and meet with senior leadership to discuss his plans for CECU, the current regulatory environment, CECU's lobbying efforts, and how the education field is evolving.

There is also a lot going on in the different programs in Chamblee. The IT labs are getting new computers and the old computers will be used to populate the networking labs where they'll be used to build servers from scratch. This will help create a whole new networking curriculum with a bunch of new hands-on lab-time. To help teach these new labs, two new very credentialed instructors are joining the program, Mr. Rafael Pino and Mr. Anthony Mayes.



GAINESVILLE

The Gainesville campus is often active with students learning English, computer-based courses, and other classes. However, that's just the start of all the activities that the students at the campus can take part in. There are ten clubs and activities that students can join. Each club has a student founder or leader/president as well as an instructor that acts as a sponsor for the club.

These include:

- Fitness Club
- Volleyball Team
- Conversation/Pronunciation Club
- Music Club
- Gameboards Club
- Book Club
- Computer/Technology Club
- Craft Activities Clubs
- Drama Clubs
- Citizenship Test Prep Club

The Gainesville campus also had another reason to bring it's student's together. They celebrated one of their VESL instructors 20 years of service. Mr. Otoniel Toledo was hired on March 22, 2004, and was celebrated by students and staff alike.



ARE OUR MISSION

MORROW

The Morrow campus has quite a bit to celebrate this season. They have hired a new Occupational Admissions Representative, Ms. Raquel Luttrell. In addition to new employees, their VESL instructor, Martin Eboma, hit his 10-year anniversary with the college. On the student side, Qunitina North, Morrow's Employment Assistance Coordinator did an amazing job of placing many of ICT's graduates. We'd like to celebrate one of our English program students in particular, Gabriel Granados, who joined the U.S. National Guard after completing his program.

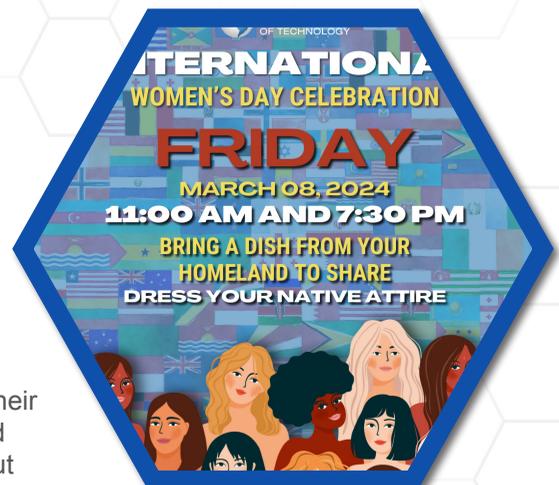
In addition, the campus' new location will be hosting an open house soon to show off it's new campus, class rooms, computer center, media center, and more. The campus will also soon feature new interior graphics with new student photos, ICT facts, and student quotes.



TEXAS CAMPUSES:

SOUTHWEST HOUSTON

Our Southwest Houston Campus recently celebrated International Womens' Day on March 8th. The holiday, first celebrated in America in 1909 and made a global holiday by the United Nations in 1977, focuses on issues such as gender equality, the fight against violence, and women's rights. This year, the campus celebrated by sharing foods from different cultures. Many students also dressed in their traditional cultural garments. Then different student and faculty speakers spoke on the importance of women's strength, how the holiday is celebrated around the world, and several speakers read poems from their country. There was both a morning celebration and an evening event and at both, the students enjoyed the holiday and felt they learned more about themselves and the world cultures represented at ICT.



CAMPUS NEWS CONTINUED

NORTH HOUSTON

Vianey Pacheco is a student in every sense of the word. When she found herself looking for a way to further her education after high school, she found the Medical Office Administration program at ICT's North Houston campus was right around the corner. She liked the classes, especially the medical classes. Then in August, when she was asked if she wanted to be a work/study she didn't know what that was, but said, "yes." Turns out she'd like that too. She liked working with the staff, uploading documents and organizing files. She also thinks it helped her with soft skills. "I didn't like answering the phones at first," she says of being at the front desk and having to take incoming calls. "I'd pick up the phone and I wouldn't say anything. But then I got used to it." Her work/study gave her work experience before her externship. Vianey wants to continue her education. After graduation, she wants to use her ICT diploma to work in a medical office, while getting her nursing degree at night.

PASADENA

Recently, ICT's Pasadena campus welcomed a new Campus Director. Mr. Robert Pope has touched almost every area of the education business and served over 20 years in leadership positions in the for-profit education field. He has been a Director of Career Services, Director of Education, and Campus President for 10 different career colleges. One of his most recent positions was taking charge of one of the largest campuses in the Stratatech Education Group with more than 80+ employees and 1000+ students. He has a deep understanding of training, education, and the operations it takes to provide the valuable knowledge and skills necessary for students to be competitive in today's ever-evolving job market.

KENTUCKY CAMPUS



As a career college, ICT services mostly non-traditional students. Mr. Curtis A. Hill Sr. definitely is not your average college student. Born in Cincinnati, he graduated High School in 1997 and became a father for the first time at the age of 21. He had a number of careers and six children, but after having his last child, and he wanted a career where he could leave a legacy for his kids and grandkids.

He became a barber, and even a barber instructor, but still wanted more. After researching all the trades, and he felt that learning the HVAC field would suit him the best. As a first-year student Curtis says, "I love what I am learning, the way I am learning and find ultimate peace in knowing that this is the first step to financial freedom, generational wealth, and a legacy that will be passed on for generations to come."

CEO'S MESSAGE

ICT'S FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF OPERATION

2024 is underway – ICT's Forty-Second Year of Operation. As we continue to evolve out of the COVID era, our faculty and staff have concluded very comprehensive and detailed assessments of the campuses and their institutional operations. This work culminated in our 2024 Annual Meeting held on January 10-14, 2024. The meeting kicked off with a keynote presentation by Dr. Kirk Nooks, President / CEO of our accrediting agency, Council on Occupational Education. Dr. Nooks addressed over fifty team members regarding how to more effectively utilize the COE Standards on improving services to our students and raising institutional outcomes. His presentation was excellent and very well received.



On Thursday, January 11, 2024, all of our faculty were engaged in a presentation by Dr. Randi Reppen entitled "How to Improve the Connection/Performance with the Virtual Student". Dr. Reppen was sponsored by Cambridge University Press. We sincerely appreciate their sponsorship.

On Friday and Saturday, January 12-13, 2024, each campus presented their assessment of 2023 and their goals and plans for 2024. Also, on January 13, 2024, ICT's Institutional Advisory Committee met for its annual meeting.

The meeting concluded with the 2023 Annual Performance and Service Awards being presented.
(On the next two pages.)

Policy Changes

As part of our 2023 assessment, the institutions have made two material policy changes. While the institutions remain non-attendance requirement for regulatory purposes, we have implemented a policy that when a student ceases to participate in academic activity and does not engage in effective communication with the institution and/or advisor, the student will be dropped from the institution and all applicable charges will apply.

Secondly, going forward, all new students who are first-time college students will be required to attend on campus. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis if residing more than twenty-five miles from a campus.

After the first semester, with a minimum 3.0 GPA, the student may petition the department chair to be considered eligible for the virtual class option

These institutional decisions are implemented to improve student performance and outcomes. Being present and engaged is a big part of SUCCESS.

We appreciate your being part of the ICT Family.

Sincerely,

Elmer R. Smith



ICT 2023 AWARDS

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Dewana (Dee) Hornback
Newport, Kentucky
Claudia Castillo Romero
Houston (Southwest), Texas
Mohammed Ouaouali
Chamblee, Georgia
Aisia R. Keith
Morrow, Georgia

PRESIDENT'S CLUB AWARD

Angelina I. Yusupov
Chamblee, Georgia
Hector I. Flores Garcia
Chamblee, Georgia
Nubia I. Lindeen
Chamblee, Georgia

ESL ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR

Angelina I. Yusupov
Chamblee, Georgia

OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR

Nicole A. Caruso
Chamblee, Georgia

PRESIDENT'S RECOGNITION AWARD

John E. Hartung
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Samona C. Roberts
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Richard H. Parker
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Barbara Groat
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS

Ameena A. Sulaiman
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Aisha T. Salahuddin
North Houston, Texas
William Vela
Houston (Southwest), Texas
Ray William Sweatman
Chamblee, Georgia
Kristen D. Washington
Chamblee, Georgia
Aisha T. Salahuddin
North Houston, Texas
William Vela
Houston (Southwest), Texas

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FACULTY AWARD

Thomas O. Milham
Chamblee, Georgia

OCCUPATIONAL FACULTY AWARD

Dr. Donna B. Rendon
North Houston, Texas

MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Angela Gavrielov
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Nubia I. Lindeen
Chamblee, Georgia
A. Liesa Peavy
Chamblee, Georgia
Joe E. Scott
North Houston, Texas
Rosana Berenda
Chamblee, Georgia



ICT 2023 AWARDS

Trang Thuy Nguyen
Chamblee, Georgia
Jessica A. Mason
Gainesville, Georgia

OUTSTANDING CSS TEAM MEMBER

Mouna Dafrallah
Chamblee, Georgia
Zirra L. Dixon
Chamblee, Georgia

LICENSING & ACCREDITATION RECOGNITION A

Liesa Peavy
Chamblee, Georgia - CSS
Nicole A. Caruso
Chamblee, Georgia

MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Martin Eboma
Morrow, Georgia
Gregoria M. Chehayeb
Houston (Southwest), Texas
Vera P. Yarmuratiy
Chamblee, Georgia
Kimberly L. Hamby
Chamblee, Georgia
Cherlyn K. Latham
Houston (Southwest), Texas

MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Trang Thuy Nguyen
Chamblee, Georgia
Ray William Sweatman
Chamblee, Georgia
Sharetta D. Bartley
Chamblee, Georgia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' AWARDS

The Dr. Ronald G. Eaglin 2023 Student Retention Award

The Faculty and Staff Occupational Division

North Houston, Texas

Joe E. Scott, Director of Education

The Faculty and Staff Occupational Division

North Houston, Texas

Robert (Bob) Faver, Director of Education

The Rollin E. Mallernee 2023 Educator of the Year Award

Thomas A. Blair

Chamblee, Georgia

The Michael K. Power 2023 Cash Projection Award

The Financial Planning Team

Houston (Southwest), Texas

The Duane W. Hawkins 2023 Leadership Award

Josue Rodriguez

Morrow, Georgia

CONSTANCE MCKENZIE-OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL PLANNER AWARD

Djurdja Bucan

Houston (Southwest), Texas

HIGHEST GRADUATION RATE AWARD

The Faculty and Staff Occupational Division

North Houston, Texas

Joe E. Scott – Director of Education

Chamblee, Georgia

Kenneth A. Thisdale – Department Chair

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

LIESA PEAVY

For more than 25 years, Liesa Peavy has put a lot of her time and effort into Interactive College of Technology. Though most might not realize it, she has helped ICT keep in compliance with the regulations, accreditations, and licensing needed in the education field.

How did you begin working for ICT?

I was working in the corporate office for a company that made aerated concrete, but they moved the headquarters to Haines City, Florida where the first plant in the US was being constructed. So, I responded to an opening at ICT and interviewed with Mr. Smith and then met with two Vice-Presidents that same day. I started work the following week.

How did your job change over 25 years?

It evolved over time. This was a brand-new industry for me with so much to learn, but I asked a lot of questions along the way. I worked with Mr. Smith, but I'd also helped out with the marketing team, payroll, and HR, and the VP's. Then I began helping update forms, marketing guides, manuals, student catalogs, handbooks, executive reports, institutional plans, creating certificates, and renewing our state licenses for all seven campuses in Georgia, Kentucky, and Texas, as well as working closely with all team members in the accreditation processes.

What is involved with keeping up our licenses and accreditations?

Each state has its own set of policies, rules, and regulations that have to be followed to complete and submit our license renewal applications each year. They look at any changes to our student catalog, course outline, tuition, and fee sheets, as well as faculty and staff updates. Transcripts must be made available for all management and faculty. We have to keep up the licenses for all our occupational admissions representatives in Texas and Kentucky as well. There is an online portal for all this information in Georgia and Kentucky and forms that need to be sent in for our licensing agency in Texas, who plans to convert to an online portal system in 2025.

What happens if ICT doesn't file everything correctly?

The consequences would be paying a late fee if the apps aren't submitted timely, or if they are late and inaccurate, the state would revoke our license, and we'd have to start over like a brand-new school with a new application rather than a renewal, and it would be a lot costlier. I'm proud to say this has never happened at ICT. I know all the due dates of these license renewal applications by heart, and I'm grateful we have always been granted ongoing licensing status.

What do you enjoy most about working at ICT?

I like the challenges and the variety of projects. I learned to multi-task pretty early on in my career with ICT. I also enjoy working with awesome team members who are helpful and support each other. You get to know them, and it makes ICT feel like my professional home.





QUOTES FROM OUR 2024 VESL GRAD SURVEYS

“Learning English has positively influenced my work life by improving my ability to communicate with the people around me.”

“My favorite part of the program was surpassing what I thought I could do as a person.”

“Ms. Aoua Tif, Mr. Hichem, and Ms. Kim were all helpful when I had questions or concerns. They helped me find my confidence.”

“Ms. Kim was patient and understanding. Ms. Shirin and Ms. Faniya were helpful when I had questions. But the best part of the program for me was the SLP class because it helped my English the most.”

“My favorite part about each class was getting to learn about the diverse cultures from classmates.”

QUOTES FROM OUR 2024 OCCUPATIONAL GRAD SURVEYS

“I want to say that Ms. Biggs is simply superb, and I feel she prepared me for the job market.”

“I completed my externship at a family doctor’s office where I learned more about working in the field. The career development class was very practical and gave me the confidence to look for a job.”

“I rate my advisory experience a ten and can say they provided excellent support and guidance making the experience a valuable part of my academic journey. My instructors were exceptionally helpful, leaving an impression, and the extra support is appreciated.”

“It was an invaluable experience, and the mentorship and support were exceptional.”

DONNA N. SMITH
Memorial Hall

FUNFACTS

Did YOU KNOW THAT

DID YOU KNOW*

- 90% of CEOs, CMOs and HR Directors felt they benefited from English-speaking or bilingual employees.
- The demand for employees that are bilingual has doubled in recent years as highlighted in several articles.
- Those with a second language fluency are likely to earn an extra 10-15% compared to their monolingual counterparts.
- Learning English increases confidence, makes it easier for employees to overcome mistakes and lessens their frustrations at work.

*"How does ability to speak English affect earnings," Jennifer Cheeseman Day and Hyon B Shin, US Census Bureau, 2020

A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

There's a reason you chose to go to college at ICT. Whether it is the flexible class schedule, location, programs offered, or you knew someone who went here, we are here to help you. We're also here for any of your friends or family that need to learn Vocational ESL or change their career.

If you know someone who wants to learn more so they can earn more, come by admissions or give the campus a call. We can help more people together.

ALSO FEEL FREE TO GIVE US A GOOD REVIEW

FIVE STAR STUDENTS



Georgia



Kentucky



Texas