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Interactive College of Technology

# 2023 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

## SUPPORTMANAGERS

CFO: Samona C. Roberts

Director of Recruitment: Diana "DiDi" Blaylock

Director of Marketing: David S. Cohen

Dean of Houston Campuses: Greg Weaver

## CAMPUSDIRECTORS

Gainesville: Sofia J Lukas – Sr. Campus Director

Chamblee: JoAnn Koch – Vice President

Morrow: Josue Rodriguez

Newport: Richard Ellison (Interim)

N. Houston: Laura Velasquez

Pasadena: Olga Hardeman

SW. Houston: Diane K. Nguyen

## HOW TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

There is a saying that the only constant is CHANGE. Yet, change does not come easily. Our students come to ICT to gain the knowledge they need to change their lives for the better. So, we thought we would do some research on what it takes to change someone's life. We came up with three simple pieces of advice that help initiate change.

### 1. Change your routine

Most of what we do, we do from habit. Most of our daily habits are good ones: brushing our teeth, eating a good breakfast, and calling our mom. However, studies have shown it takes 66 days to establish a new habit.

### 2. Write down your goals

You cannot know if you are going in the right direction if you do not know your destination.

### 3. Improve your relationships

Research by Harvard Psychologist Dr. David McClelland showed that the people you associate with will determine ninety five percent of your success or failure in life.

Just like at ICT, in life, there are instructors, advisors, and people that want to help you, but you have to do the work. Once you do the work, the reward is who you will become. Then you will have that proud smile that our students have at graduation, celebrating their accomplishments with their friends and family.

## GEORGIA CAMPUSES:

### CHAMBLEE

Chamblee has been the starting point for so many success stories. For instance, Luisa Duran recently opened a bar in the newly redeveloped Underground Atlanta. Georgio Marconi recently went on from ICT to receive his bachelor's degree. Yahul Jia (Sophia) went on to get her Doctor of Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture and will soon join a practice in New York. Kay-Ann Maduro is an American Virgin Island native who has an opportunity to open a grocery/convenience type store from scratch. We are proud of all our graduates. Many of our students are working, going to school full time, and have a family. So, we are so happy to see them move on and up.



### GAINESVILLE

The Gainesville campus recently hosted the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's panel discussion on Education in the Hispanic Community. Moderated by the head of Univision Georgia, Ivan Shammas, the panel included Sr. Campus Director Sofia Lukas, the head of the Chamber's education wing, and a representative from the Hall County Department of Education. The discussion included the challenges that Latinos face in America, especially outside of bigger cities. They also talked about opportunities for Hispanic Students and how more people can take advantage of those opportunities. Afterwards was a great opportunity for networking with the Hispanic Community's many business owners and ICT graduates.



# ARE OUR MISSION

## MORROW

The most important part of any campus are the people that study and work there. Recently, the staff in Morrow added to its already talented staff. The admissions department has added VESL Admissions Representatives The Nguyen and Arelis Barcelo and Occupational Admissions Representative Keshana Williams. On the academic side, the campus has hired two new Instructors, Carlos Rodriguez and Nicole Clay. But the biggest change is that Jonathan Bonds has taken up the responsibilities of Director of Education. Jonathan Bonds has been in the education field since 1986. He has held almost every academic position at ICT, including running the Morrow Campus, so he will be a great addition to the campus.



## TEXAS CAMPUSES:

### SOUTHWEST HOUSTON

People who come to the Southwest Houston campus are used to seeing the staff there. That is because we have some great long-term members of our team. For instance, Djurdja “DJ” Bucan has been there 19 years, William Vela and Claudia Romero 18 years. We also celebrate the loyalty of Lucy Lugo for 14 years, Greg Weaver, Carolina Arias, and Jose Medina for 12 years, Young Nguyen for 11 years, as well as Mohammad Bayan, Deloris Johnson, and Gregoria Chehaye for 10 years of service. Thank you to all our long-term employees and we cannot wait to say the same for our newer employees.



# CAMPUS NEWS CONTINUED

## NORTH HOUSTON

At ICT, we love people who are excited to learn. At North Houston, they have a new Financial Aid Planner who fits that description. Maria Lopez first came to the school as an ESL student from El Salvador in 2018. She finished the VESL program and instantly knew she wanted to learn more. She worked to get her High School Diploma and then called her Admissions Representative again. She came back to ICT to get an Associate of Science Degree in Accounting. It did not take long for her to get a job after graduating, because she became ICT's Director of First Impressions. Again though, her thirst for knowledge could not be quenched. She wanted to learn everything about the education business. She asked questions of everyone from Admissions to Employment Assistance. But her eye was always on the Financial Aid office, so she could use her degree. This past month she was promoted to be a Financial Aid Planner. Good job Maria.

## PASADENA

There are a lot of new faces in Pasadena. For instance, Melissa Montes is new to the Financial Aid world, but she is picking up her training nicely. She is a newlywed and has a friendly smile that we all get to enjoy daily. Caprisa Owens is the new Financial Aid Manager. Caprisa has a degree in finance and has been helping customers with their financial needs for several years. Zuinnie Bastidas is a new VESL Admissions Representative. Zuinnie has a passion for helping people, she recently graduated with an Associate Degree in Social Work. She will be able to use her education to help students better their lives by learning English. Our new Occupational Admissions Representative, Gladis Rivera, has worked in sales and property management for some years; she has an associate degree in General Studies. Academic Advisor Elizabeth Matamoros has worked in administrative roles as bookkeeper, billing, and payroll for several years. She has a bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation Services. She is a great addition to our education team and will play an integral role in keeping students engaged and on target to graduation.

## KENTUCKY CAMPUS



The Newport Campus has a lot to celebrate. They recently participated in the Cincinnati Diversity Career Fair. Thousands of people attended and came by to find out what Interactive College of Technology was all about.

In addition, thirteen people in the HVAC department recently passed their NATE certifications. Congratulations to all.

Newport has also staffed up with some great talent. Melody "Mel" Adams has joined the team as the new Registrar. In addition, the campus also welcomed two new Instructors. Patrick Kelley will be teaching day classes and Robert Henry will use his multiple degrees to teach a number of different classes.

# CEO'S MESSAGE

## Greetings

It is an exciting time for our Colleges as we welcome our fall semester freshmen who are embarking on a new journey to acquire or enhance their career skills and/or gain much needed English skills.

There is great value in all education. However, in a recent Wall Street survey, more than half the adults surveyed, questioned whether or not a four-year degree was worth the cost, because often graduates do not possess specific job skills and have a large debt to repay. As all prices continue to rise, students want to see a reasonably quick return on their investment.

Interactive College of Technology has always taken pride in placing our students first and ensuring they are provided a good value proposition. Since 2007, all academic programs have relevant National Certifications embedded in the program of study, and each student completes a 135-hour, in-field externship to gain practical experience. Our Career Development course prepares the graduate for successful interviews. Our job is only completed with a Placed Graduate!

Regards,

*Elmer R. Smith*



# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## MR. JOHNATHAN BONDS

Jonathan Bonds has helped thousands of students learn and grow at Interactive College of Technology. He has held almost every academic position at ICT and is currently the Director of Education for the Morrow Campus. Referred to affectionately as JB, he took a few minutes out of his busy schedule to talk with us.



### Mr. Bonds, how did your career at ICT start?

I was watching television and a commercial came on for Akers Computerized Learning Center. I had purchased a computer in '81 and was self-taught. But I felt my skills were not complete.

So, I enrolled and went through the eleven-month program in six-months. One day, I was in the lab and the instructor told me that Mr. Smith would like to see me. I was like, "who is that?" And he said "Mr. Smith just bought the school." So, I thought I was in trouble. I went in and said, "Look my mom is in poor health. All my work is done. If I need to come in more I will."

He laughed and said, "No, every time I walk through the computer lab, I see students coming to you with questions instead of the instructor. I want to know if you ever thought of teaching."

### So, you began as an Instructor?

Well, it was less than a year after that I went from being a Lab Assistant to an Instructor, then he needed an Instructor to go to the Northlake Campus. Then, he needed me to go to another campus. I went down to part time and performed more with my band. I then left for awhile for another school, but they seemed to lose their moral compass. I called Mr. Smith and said, "I am ready to come home." Since then, I have been a Director of Education, Business Technology Department Chair, Information Technology Chair, trained staff in Texas, trained staff in Kentucky, Campus Director for Morrow, HVAC Department Chair, the Institution Improvement Specialist and now Director of Education at Morrow.

### Do you enjoy teaching as much today?

Even more so. I am convinced the pandemic taught us two things. We learned we needed an online model where students learn via Zoom. It also taught us that getting people back into the workforce is critical because some of our students did not work that whole time.



## FIVE STAR STUDENTS

We love our students! We really love when they show their love for ICT on the review sites. Please use these QR codes to let us know how you feel about your campus.

**INTERACTIVE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY**

  
 Georgia

  
 Kentucky

  
 Texas

## SCHOLARSHIP SAVINGS

This fall, we want to help our VESL students to continue their studies.

**INTERACTIVE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY**

**CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP**  
 USE YOUR ENGLISH TO EARN A DIPLOMA OR DEGREE

**\$750**  
 PER SEMESTER FOR 2 SEMESTERS

Any graduate from our Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program can use this institutional scholarship to continue with an Interactive College of Technology diploma or associate of science degree course of study.

LEGAL: Coupon cannot be used in lieu of regular monthly payments while enrolled. Must complete two full semesters to receive above credit. The amount will be prorated for part-time students.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last First M.I. Date

Admissions Associate \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name Date

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.ICT.EDU](http://WWW.ICT.EDU) (VALID: JULY 1<sup>st</sup> - SEPTEMBER 29<sup>th</sup>)

DONNA N. SMITH  
Memorial Hall

# FUNFACTS

## Did YOU KNOW THAT

- ICT gives tens of thousands of dollars every year to non-profits such as Refugee Women's Network, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Mexican Institute of Greater Houston.
- ICT also partners with several refugee non-profits to help people successfully settle in areas where we have campuses.
- ICT offers those with a "Refugee" status a special scholarship

## THERE IS NO GREATER COMPLIMENT THAN A REFERRAL

Our fast and flexible courses can help your friends and family earn a better life. All you have to do is go by your local admissions office and drop off the contact information for possible students. Even better, you can bring your friend or family member by the campus. One of our career advisors will help them find a program that is a good fit.

If you do bring someone by, we have thank-you gifts in the form of ICT pens, pencils, string bags, mugs, lunch boxes and more. Just ask!

