



Alabama Students Earn State's Highest Workplace Credentials

A well-educated and highly skilled workforce is exactly what America must have to remain strong and prosperous in the future. This is exactly what 16 Alabama Career and Technical Education (CTE) students from the Hoover City School System are focused on. Each has just earned one of the state's top workplace credentials – the *Alabama Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)*.

Alabama's CRC program, a Governor's Office of Workforce Development initiative, is a career-related credential that is based on the national ACT WorkKeys analysis. WorkKeys is a job-skills evaluation that measures the overall skills that jobseekers have. **The CRC program is for all jobseekers, both adults and students.** There is no difference in the information or test that each of these groups is given.

The CRC is nationally recognized and can be used anywhere in the country. To earn this credential, jobseekers take three different employability assessments – *applied math, reading for information, and locating information*. These three assessments test the skills that are required for over 85 percent of the careers available in America. Currently, there are four different levels of the CRC available – *platinum, gold, silver, and bronze*.

"When job applicants present their CRCs, employers know these individuals are skilled and ready for the workforce," says Hoover City Schools Cooperative Education Coordinator Carolyn King. "We want our students to be prepared for their futures and today's highly competitive workforce."

Earning the CRC indicates these 16 students from the Hoover City School System already have the core employability skills needed for many of the nation's top jobs. The level of CRC that a person obtains is determined by their performance on the WorkKeys assessment. Jobseekers can earn the following types of CRCs: **Bronze** - skills for approximately 30 percent of all jobs; **Silver** - skills for approximately 65 percent of all jobs; **Gold** - skills for approximately 90 percent of all jobs; or **Platinum** – skills for approximately 99 percent of all jobs.

As of August 17, 2010, **a total of 29,646 certificates had been issued.** The following information shows the total number of certificates awarded in each CRC category: **Bronze** – 7,293; **Silver** – 16,428; **Gold** – 5,863; or **Platinum** – 62.



Seated: Hoover City School's Cooperative Education Coordinator Carolyn King and Alabama CTE Director Sherry A. Key. Standing: (L to R) Anna Rowe, Kacy Clayton, Jasmyn Anthony, Margaret Doss, Hoover HS Principal Don Hullin, Morgann Smith, Amber Cobb, Jevana Pickens, Hoover HS Assistant Principal Holly Sutherland, and Deontane Kimber.

"This initiative continues to provide valuable insight into an applicant's overall knowledge, skills, and abilities. This program is also helping employers to reduce their training costs, turnover, and long-term rehiring expenses," says Hoover City Schools Cooperative Education Coordinator Carolyn King.

ALABAMA STUDENTS WHO EARNED THE CRC ARE:

BRONZE

Bishara Shunnarah
Spain Park High School
Margaret Doss
Hoover High School

SILVER

All from Hoover High School
Emily Baker
Kacy Clayton
Amber Cobb
Jonathan Heath
Deontane Kimber
Corrina McCray
Laura O'Brien
Daniel Peterson
Jevana Pickens
Katherine Saunders
Morgann Smith
Dortensia Woods

GOLD

All from Hoover High School
Jasmyn Anthony
Anna Rowe

KeyTrain is a web-based software program that educators nationwide are using to help students with WorkKeys job skills. It has more than 20,000 pages of interactive materials covering all career skill sets. Last year, the Alabama Department of Education's CTE section offered schools free KeyTrain software packages. To qualify, teachers had to participate in a special professional development workshop. More than 170 free software licenses were issued.

To learn more about Alabama's nationally recognized CRC initiative, contact Gerry Moses, Alabama Department of Education Specialist, at gmoses@alsde.edu or Sarah Horton, Regional Workforce Initiatives Coordinator at sarah.horton@dpe.edu.

DEBT IN AMERICA

THE REAL IMPACT ON STUDENTS

America's adults are not the only ones feeling the impact of the downswing in our economy.

Students too are experiencing new challenges and a host of real-life financial issues.

Every day more than 6,000 Americans file for bankruptcy and over 2 million people are expected to declare bankruptcy this year. In the first six months of this year, approximately 1,650,000 households went through foreclosure.

At no other time, in recent history, has it been so important for students to participate in financial literacy classes. Understanding financial concepts like *money management*, *investment strategies*, and *how to balance a checkbook* are helping many students to fully understand the realities their families are facing. Alabama is one of the few states, already offering financial literacy courses to high school students. These courses are offered through Alabama's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

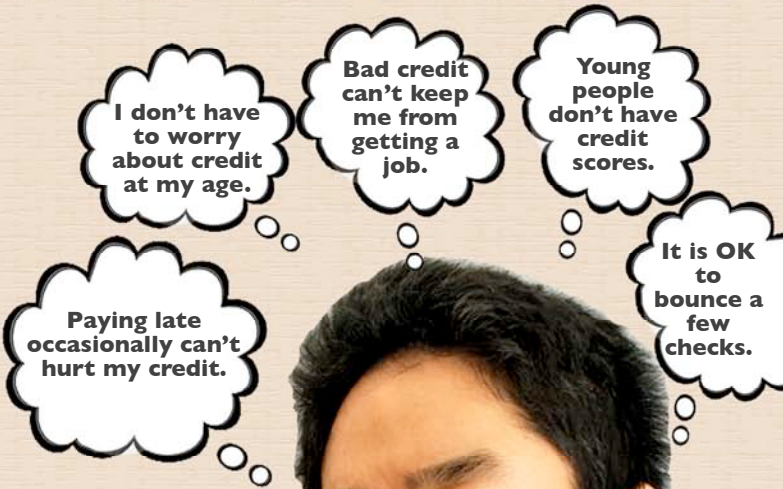
One extremely positive statistic that experts are now noticing because of the downturn in the economy, is an improvement in the national savings rate. Over the past year, this figure has *increased* to nearly 4 percent. This means more Americans are starting to save!

"There are many simple things that each of us can do to control our finances if we have the knowledge and desire to be smart consumers," says Maxine Sweet, Vice President of Education at Experian – one of the country's leading credit reporting agencies. "Education includes checking your credit history and understanding what an important financial asset a credit report can be in ensuring a successful future. By co-signing on a credit card or car loan, parents have a wonderful opportunity to teach their children financial responsibility and to help ensure that their son or daughter will not graduate with unnecessary debt."

National organizations and programs like the Jump\$tart Coalition, Society for Financial Education and Professional Development, Operation Hope, the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), FDIC Minority College Initiative, and the Peer to Peer Student Training Program are working with different companies and governmental agencies nationwide to promote financial literacy to students in Grades K-12 and college. For example, the Jump\$tart Coalition has already created a clearinghouse of instructional resources for students and parents to use - *more than 700 materials are available*.

With the right tools and commitment, Alabama students will continue to make a real difference in their financial futures. To learn more about Alabama's efforts to promote financial literacy, contact Tina DeBruyne, Alabama CTE Specialist, at 334-242-9109; or visit the national Jump\$tart Coalition's website at www.jumpstart.org.

Article submitted by financial experts William Cheeks and Tina DeBruyne. Written through a partnership between the National Jump\$tart Coalition and the Alabama Department of Education



THESE ARE SOME OF THE FINANCIAL MYTHS THAT ALL STUDENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF.

Tips for Graduating High School Seniors:

- **Set short-, medium-, and long-term financial goals.**
- **Stocks are still one of the best investments for long-term growth. Real estate is also good.**
- **Diversification of your investments is important.**



STATE'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT SHORTAGE OF SKILLED WORKERS

“Dirty Jobs” Host and Executive Producer Mike Rowe Appears in Campaign

Approximately one-third of all skilled trade professionals in the construction industry are over the age of 50. With their retirement on the horizon, training programs are not producing enough young workers to replace those exiting the industry.

To combat this trend, Alabama's construction industry has launched an education and recruitment campaign to bring new people to this industry. This campaign issues a real “rally cry to young people,” challenging them to: “Go Build.” Mike Rowe, executive producer and host of the popular Discovery Channel series “Dirty Jobs” and one of the nation's most visible supporters of skilled labor, has partnered with Go Build Alabama. He appears in advertisements for this campaign. Rowe has dedicated his life to bringing attention to the growing skills gap in America's trades sector.

Rowe believes the national skills gap is the unintended consequence of society's exclusive focus on the college degree and its devaluation of skilled trade jobs such as electricians, carpenters, and plumbers.

“There are opportunities in Alabama right now that most people don't even know about in construction,” Rowe said. “These opportunities aren't alternatives to viable careers; they are viable careers. ... I've had a front-row seat to all different kinds of work, and I'll tell you something — there's nothing more important to our country than skilled labor.”

The Go Build campaign is a product of the Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute (ACRI).

“This initiative is the result of an unprecedented partnership of industry leaders and forward-thinking corporate entities,” said ACRI Executive Director Tim Alford. “The state's economic development along with the creation of infrastructure such as roads and power plants is dependent upon a capable workforce.”

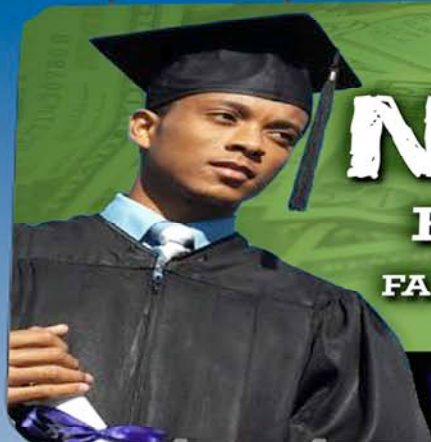
An anticipated shortage of skilled labor has been a hot topic among construction industry insiders since 2007, when the U.S. Department of Labor predicted that the construction industry would be short about 1.5 million



ACRI will also be doing outreach to Alabama's high schools this fall through a partnership with Alabama SkillsUSA (www.skillsusa.org). To learn more about this innovative initiative, contact Alabama CTE Specialist Myron Laurent at 334-353-4522 or Big Communications Media Specialist Robin Oliver at robin@bigcom.com.

workers by 2012. A 2005 report from the Construction Labor Research Council also emphasized earlier that many workers were 50 or older and would be leaving the industry in the next decade. The largest portion of the anticipated shortage was in skilled trade jobs for commercial and industrial construction such as boilermakers, carpenters, equipment operators, electricians, insulation workers, pipefitters, and welders.

Alabama CTE recently developed the “No Excuses” campaign to provide all Alabamians – especially students and parents – with more information about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), postsecondary learning opportunities, and college scholarships. These billboards can be seen in communities across the state and have been very effective in getting the message out about the many benefits of the FAFSA.



NO EXCUSES

FREE money for college

FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid

www.alcareerinfo.org



Alabama Students Show Interest in Health, Business, Engineering Degrees

This year's increased number of ACT test-takers and scores offers more evidence that becoming "college and career ready" is a central goal for students and educators in Alabama. Of all the ACT takers in Alabama, **87 percent report that their educational aspiration is a bachelor's degree or higher**, up three points from 2008.

Alabama's career and technical education (CTE) program offers students programs of study in most of these fields. The ACT examination, which is required by more colleges than any other entrance test, is given in all 50 states. For additional information, visit www.act.org.



The top ten planned college majors chosen by Alabama ACT takers are:

1. Health Sciences and Allied Health Fields
2. Business and Management
3. Engineering
4. Social Sciences
5. Sciences (Biological and Physical)
6. Visual and Performing Arts
7. Education
8. Teacher Education
9. Engineering-Related Technologies
10. Computer and Information Sciences

SMITHS STATION AGRISCIENCE TEACHER SELECTED ALABAMA'S TOP AACTE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The Alabama Association for Career and Technical Education (AACTE) selected Harold Barrow as the 2010-2011 Alabama AACTE Teacher of the Year during the state's annual professional development conference for career and technical educators in June.

This special award recognizes teachers who are providing outstanding service to students, parents, and their local communities through innovative career and technical education programs. Barrow leads the CTE program at Smiths Station High School, which has the largest Agriscience Education Department in Alabama.

Barrow's career spans more than 28 years. He has taught students in a wide range of areas including Building Construction, Forestry, Fish and Wildlife Management, and Floral Design. Many of his former students have gone on to have very successful careers, earn college degrees, and own their own businesses.

He also leads Smiths Station High School's FFA student organization to be one of the most recognized in the state. Students in Mr. Barrow's



Harold Barrow

construction classes have been very competitive in the FFA Building Construction Career Development Event (CDE) at the district and state levels. In the last ten years, his teams have finished in the top four in the district nine times and finished in the top four in the state seven times. The FFA Agricultural Mechanics CDE often covers several different areas of construction within this event. His students started competing in

this event four years ago, and they have finished in the top four in district competition all four years and in the top four in the state competition two years. Mr. Barrow's goal is to get as many students as possible involved in extracurricular activities to help prepare them for the world of work and college.

Barrow also is an active member of several civic and community service organizations. He and his wife Sherryl are the proud parents of three children.

For more information about the Alabama AACTE Awards Program, contact Ann Gilmore, Executive Director, at (334) 262-4694 or alacte@mindspring.com.

AVAILABLE RESOURCE FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, & TEACHERS

CTE WEB PORTAL REMOVING BARRIERS TO COLLEGE ACCESS



The Alabama Department of Education, in partnership with 19 other agencies, has created a powerful new Web-based resource – www.alcareerinfo.org. This Web site, which was created with support from the federal *College Access Challenge Grant (CACG)*, is focused on providing students and parents with more access to *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* resources.

Some of the innovative sections and information that can be found on this website are:

For **Educators and Counselors**: Guiding Students to Achievement – “Plans of Instruction, Student Career Builder, Resume Tips, and Four-Year Education Plans”

For **Students**: Planning for My Future – “Life After High School, Going to College, and Tools for Finding a Great Career”

For **Parents**: Helping Your Child Prepare for a Lifetime of Success – “Homework Tips, National Scholarships, Financial Aid, and Top Career Opportunities”

Other resources that can also be found at www.alcareerinfo.org:

- Information on completing the FAFSA form
- Student Career Interest Inventories
- Copies of the *Alabama Success Guides*
- Videos from *On The Job TV*
- Career Discovery activities
- FAFSA tutorials
- Financial literacy resources
- Links to eCampusTours.com, Scholarships.com, Studentaid.ed.gov, College.gov, and much more.

To learn more about this website or any of the other great opportunities offered by Alabama's CTE programs, visit www.alcareerinfo.org or contact Alabama CACG Program Manager Meg Smith at 334-353-0777 or msmith@alsde.edu.

FCCLA Students Travel to Chicago; Compete and Win National Honors and Awards

This summer, more than 120 of Alabama's top students and their teachers traveled to Chicago, Illinois, to participate in exciting national competitions and advanced leadership workshops at the *2010 Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) National Leadership Conference*. This year, **Alabama's FCCLA students won 14 gold, 26 silver, and 5 national bronze medals.**

"We had over 80 students representing our state in FCCLA's exciting **Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR)** competitions in July," says State FCCLA Adviser Jennifer Adams. "This event was such an exciting opportunity for our students. In total, there were 25 different national competition categories. To be eligible to compete, students *had to first win at the state level*. Nearly 2,500 students from across the country advanced to the national competition."

FCCLA is a national, non-profit organization devoted to preparing family and consumer sciences students for leadership and career success. This organization has approximately 220,000 members nationwide.

Alabama has more than 8,000 members.

Examples of some of the competitions held this year are Culinary Arts,

Entrepreneurship, Applied Technology, Chapter Service Project Display, Fashion Construction, Job Interview, and Life Event Planning.

Alabama also won the *Largest Membership Increase Award* for the nation's Southern FCCLA Region. The southern region is the largest in the country and includes Florida, Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Kentucky, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Alabama.

Alabama's career and technical education (CTE) programs offer students opportunities to participate in seven different student organizations including FCCLA. Currently, *two out of every three high school students* in Alabama participate in CTE programs.

Since its founding in 1945, the national FCCLA organization has had more than 10 million student members. To learn more about FCCLA or any of the other educational opportunities offered by Alabama's CTE programs, contact FCCLA State Adviser Jennifer Adams, at (334) 242-9113 or jadams@alsde.edu, or visit the national website at www.fccla.com.

Alabama's 2010 national medal winners are:

Addison High School – Amber Denson (Silver)
A.P. Brewer High School – Mary Margaret Moore (Silver), Autumn Brooks (Gold)
Austin High School – Sharon Crelly, (Bronze), Brittany McDaniel (Silver)
Bob Jones High School – Amber Hersh (Gold), Sarah Soukup (Silver), Jeremy Wilson (Silver), Daniel Moore (Silver), A.J. Mosley (Silver), Alicia McRae (Silver), Destiny Morton (Gold)
Brookwood High School – Taylor Clemmons (Silver)
Colbert County High School – Shalisha Burt

(Silver), Charquitta Horton (Silver), Terri Cunningham (Silver), Taylor McMath (Silver), LaMisha Coffey (Bronze), Shanice Locke (Bronze)
Horseshoe Bend High School – Allie Worthy (Gold), Nikki Harding (Gold), Samantha Railey (Gold), Kerra Hawkins (Gold), Kayla Woodruff (Gold), Marissa Bates (Silver), Ariel Brown (Silver), Stephanie Butler (Gold), Crayton Walton (Gold)
Leeds High School – Jesse Turner (Gold)
Muscle Shoals High School – Ella Jackson (Bronze), Jeslyn Parker (Bronze), Brianna Tanner (Silver)

Oak Mountain High School – Lauren Ledford (Silver), Amanda Honeywell (Silver), Stephanie Trawick (Silver), Suzanne Merlino (Gold)
Priceville High School – Ashley Fuqua (Silver)
Rogers High School – Meredith Hamner (Silver)
Spanish Fort High School – Dawn Nelson (Silver), Claire Lary (Silver)
Wenonah High School – Stephanie Moultry (Gold), Mercedi Sellers (Silver), Darilyn Harris (Silver), Shakira Jones (Gold), Brittany Lewis (Silver)

CTE TEACHERS PREPARE FOR UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR ATTENDING INNOVATIVE WORKSHOPS AND LEARNING NEW TECHNIQUES

In June, more than 1,300 Alabama career and technical education (CTE) teachers, administrators, and counselors from schools across the state, traveled to Birmingham to attend the *2010 Alabama Career and Technical Education Professional Development Conference*.

Educators attending this conference at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex had an opportunity to participate in **more than 60 different workshops, awards programs, and work sessions**. CTE is a statewide program designed to prepare students for college and a variety of career opportunities in the fields of:

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications
- Business, Management, and Administration
- Education and Training
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sales, and Service
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics



Conference co-sponsor, the **Alabama Association for Career and Technical Education (AACTE)**, is affiliated with the National Association for Career and Technical Education. It serves as one of the state's key education resources in Washington, D.C., and the legislature. Some of the workshops that teachers had an opportunity to participate in during this year's conference were:

- "Good Debt vs. Bad Debt – Teaching Strategies for Financial Literacy in High Schools"
- "Setting Sail with Alabama's Web Portal: It's All There!"
- "Stop Relying on Tools that Prepare Students for Yesterday: Let's Get Ready for Tomorrow"
- "Keeping Schools Safe for All"
- "The Effects of Green Building on Home Building Trades"
- "Becoming an Illuminate Webcast User"
- "Managing Student Behaviors Outside of the Standard Classroom Setting"

Currently, *two out of every three high school students in Alabama* participate in a CTE program. These students explore career options in more than 300 courses, earn advanced diplomas and industry-recognized credentials, receive college credit, and have an opportunity to participate in seven different CTE student organizations.

To learn more about this annual event or any of the other professional development and educational opportunities offered by Alabama's CTE programs, contact AACTE Executive Director Ann Gilmore at (334) 262-4694 or Alabama Department of Education's CTE Specialist Dawn Morrison at (334) 353-8434, or visit www.alacte.org.

TIPS for ALABAMA EDUCATORS

CTE Advisors, Counselors, and Teachers

These suggestions will assist educators in conducting productive student organization meetings and developing even stronger advisory committees. This information is based on current parliamentary procedures. Many corporate organizations, local school boards, community groups, and non-profit organizations are using many of these principles to conduct their business and committee meetings.



BEFORE YOUR MEETING

1. Define the purpose of the meeting.
2. Develop an agenda in cooperation with key participants.
3. Distribute your agenda and circulate background material, lengthy documents, or articles prior to your meeting. Members will be better prepared and feel more involved in the process.
4. Set time limits and try to keep them (if possible). Remember, your committee members have other commitments. They will be more likely to attend meetings if you make them productive, predictable, and as short as possible.

DURING THE MEETING

- Greet members and make them feel welcome, even late members when appropriate.
- *Start on time.*
- *End on time.*
- Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members – *they will feel that attending meetings is worthwhile.*
- Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference.

AFTER THE MEETING

1. Write up and distribute minutes within three (3) or four (4) days. Quick action reinforces importance of meeting and reduces errors of memory.
2. Follow-up on delegation decisions. See that all members understand and carry out their responsibilities.
3. Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.
4. Conduct a periodic evaluation of the meetings. Note any areas that can be analyzed and improved for more productive meetings.

A GUIDE FOR TAKING GREAT MINUTES

- Type minutes immediately (while your memory is fresh). Have your minutes reviewed and approved by facilitators before distributing to other attendees.
- Concise and coherent minutes are important. The process of recording minutes provides your organization with better information and a clearer understanding of the issues it faces.

EXAMPLE MINUTES FORM

Name of Organization:			
Purpose of Meeting:			
Date/Time:			
Chair:			
Topic	Discussion	Action	Person Responsible
1.			
2.			
3.			

Special thanks to the following resources: www.ehow.com, www.meetingwizard.org, and www.parliamentarians.org

IN NEXT MONTH'S TALENTS ...

2010 Joint Leadership Development Conference

This year's Alabama Joint Leadership Development Conference (JLDC) was filled with great entertainment, workshops, prizes, and special presentations. The conference took place at Montgomery's Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center on September 27-28.



Nationally renowned motivational speaker, Dan Thurmon, inspired everyone with his stimulating presentations, physical stunts, and unique acrobatics. With such an exciting program to see, conference attendance reached its capacity fast. More than 3,200 student attended JLDC this year!



To see some of the exciting performances by Dan Thurmon, visit the following website: <http://www.danthurmon.com/resources/videos/>

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2010
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JOSEPH B. MORTON,
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

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