

CONNECTIONS

A publication for friends and alumni of Southeast Technical

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE
SOUTHEAST
TECHNICAL
Winter 2016

A man wearing a yellow hard hat, safety glasses, and a high-visibility yellow vest with reflective stripes stands on a construction site. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The vest has a logo that says "Stantec". The background shows wooden scaffolding and a body of water.

The view from the top

Southeast Technical grad
Mark Grzybowski inspects
the Winona bridge

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Southeast Technical grad Mark Grzybowski inspects the Winona bridge

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As the Winona Bridge project's chief inspector, Southeast Technical alum Mark Grzybowski looks at the bridge from a unique perspective.

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Minnesota State College Southeast Technical

Red Wing Campus
308 Pioneer Road
Red Wing, Minnesota 55066
651.385.6300

Winona Campus
1250 Homer Road
Winona, Minnesota 55987
507.453.2700

Winona Campus - Tandiski Center
1200 Storrs Pond Road
Winona, Minnesota 55987
507.453.2740

www.southeastmn.edu



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AND UNIVERSITIES SYSTEM

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with disabilities by calling 877.853.8324.
TTY - 507-453-2758 (Winona)
TTY - 651-385-6430 (Red Wing)

from the president

Greetings and Happy New Year!

It is amazing how quickly 2015 passed and what a great year it was! I had the opportunity to divide my time between the Red Wing and Winona campuses and get acquainted with the students, faculty, and staff. It was a great year to build relationships at the college and in the communities. I continue to be grateful to work with such a compassionate group of people who are committed to serving students and our communities' workforce needs.



In November, our application to become a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Company was approved by Governor Dayton and we received a signed proclamation recognizing our new status. What this means is that besides being an official Military Friendly College, we have partnered with agencies within our communities to ensure our veterans have the support and resources to be successful students. I consider it a "village" concept where we come together to extend our appreciation and do all we can to support our veterans. We are very proud of this new status.

The end of 2015 also brought with it the conclusion of the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. As a result, there were a series of open forums with community members, faculty, staff, and students to reflect on who we are as a college and the work we do serving our community. The new 2016-2019 Strategic Plan has been referred to as a "call to action" by faculty members and is focused on how we will meet our students' needs and serve our community. It is organized around student success outcomes that will be measured continually as we strive to improve over the next four years.



The new 2016-2019 Strategic Plan will be posted in an artistic format near the entrance of each campus building, featuring the image of an eagle soaring over the Mississippi River bluffs. I invite you to stop to read it whenever you come to campus.

We celebrate our students' achievements every day and do our best to keep

them engaged in the learning environment. Ensuring students attain their educational goals is our number one priority. To that end, we hired two Check & Connect advisors to work with students and provide academic and social support. In partnership with faculty, these advisors quickly reach out to students and help them respond to any obstacles that might prevent them from continuing their education. We hope to build on this concept and continue to do our best to help students succeed.

We wish everyone the best year ever!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Dorothy J. Duran".

Dr. Dorothy Duran
President, Southeast Technical College

Check & Connect: A safety net for students

Need flu shots? Help figuring out transportation when your car breaks down? How about someone to talk to when life just isn't turning out like you expected?

Southeast Technical is investing in Check & Connect, a new program based on proven strategies to help students earn higher grades, finish college on time, and find quality employment after graduation.

Check & Connect coaches Shannon Sullivan-Hanson (Red Wing) and Jackie Haas (Winona) are available to work with students on the issues that can keep them from succeeding in college.

Check & Connect participants don't fit into any particular stereotype. Take Max Wassinger, for example. He is a highly-accomplished professional musician who moved to Red Wing from Chicago to attend the Band Instrument Repair (BIR) program.

Despite playing saxophone in top Chicago jazz and Latin bands, Max wanted to develop another stream of income related to his love of music. "With this program and this career, I can work

during the day and pick and choose the gigs I want to do in the evenings," he says.

It had been years since he had taken any math classes, so Max knew that meeting the BIR program's mathematics requirement would be especially challenging. He self-referred into Check & Connect and now meets regularly with coach Shannon Sullivan-Hanson.

"Shannon and I can talk through any issues I'm having and try to come up with ideas to solve them. It's given me the safety net I need to succeed," he explains.

Shannon helped Max work with his math instructor and set up regular tutoring. Moreover, her encouragement helps him keep up the positive attitude he brought to college in the first place.

Max is passing his math classes with flying colors – quite a turnaround! "I am having a great time here! Coming to Southeast Technical is one of the best decisions I've made in a long time. It's the first time I've liked going to school."



Shannon Sullivan-Hanson meets with Max Wassinger in her office before winter break.

Med Lab Tech expands, gains NAACLS accreditation

2015 was a great year for the Medical Laboratory Technician program, as dedicated classrooms and labs were constructed in time for Fall semester. The program was also awarded accreditation in April 2015 by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences through 2020.



Veterans honored, college recognized in Veteran's Day ceremonies

In November 2015, the college issued a Presidential Citation to alum Gene Barum, a Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient. Southeast Technical was named an official **Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Company** by the State of Minnesota and the new Red Wing Veterans Lounge was dedicated with a ribbon cutting ceremony. In addition, President Dr. Dorothy Duran and Dean of Academics Jo Poncelet were personally recognized as "Patriotic Employers" by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.



Gene Barum (center), pictured with instructor Greg Cady and Vice President of Student Affairs Nate Emerson.

A win-win relationship with Red Wing High School

For talented, motivated high school students, taking college credit classes for free is an incredible bargain. But for their high schools, it can take a serious financial toll.

Through Minnesota's Post Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program, students can attend Southeast Technical tuition-free. The state of Minnesota pays the college for PSEO students' tuition. Some high schoolers have even earned a two-year college degree by the time they get their high school diploma!

But when such students opt out of high school classes, their high school can lose essential state funding — as much as \$8500 per student.

An innovative new partnership between the Red Wing School District and Southeast Technical has been reached to address this issue. Through contracted PSEO, Red Wing High School will pay the college directly for PSEO college credits.

The agreement allows the school district to keep PSEO students enrolled full time and receive full state funding. Southeast Technical benefits by increased enrollment. And most of all, Red Wing PSEO students benefit by earning rigorous college-level credits while still in high school.

Amy De Jesus is one such student. Born in Venezuela and raised in Puerto Rico in a Spanish-language household, she moved to Red Wing when she was 15.

At first high school was a struggle for her, but she quickly learned English and took two PSEO classes as a high school senior. But it wasn't just about saving money — it was about building up her confidence.

"I got a head start on experiencing what college was going to be like before I started going full time, and I could go for free," she explains. "I was really scared about going to college, but once I started I learned it's not that bad — it's just hard work and determination."

Today Amy speaks English fluently and is thriving as she works toward an associate degree in individualized studies and, ultimately, a bachelor's degree in international business.

"We are excited to pilot contracted PSEO with Red Wing High School and we hope to roll out the program with other high schools in the near future," says Jo Poncelet, Southeast Technical Dean of Academics. "It's definitely a win-win for students, parents, the high school, and the college."

Current student Amy De Jesus first started taking classes at the college while enrolled at Red Wing High School.





BUILDING BRIDGES

A career spanning decades began with a single year of college at Southeast Technical

From a concrete deck high above the Mississippi River, Mark Grzybowski surveys a work in progress: the new Winona bridge. In one direction, the distant bluffs on the Wisconsin side rise up. In the other direction, the city of Winona basks in the afternoon sun.

As the project's chief inspector, he looks at the bridge from a unique perspective. Site inspectors enforce construction standards and code regulations while verifying structural integrity in new construction and renovation projects.

Mark Grzybowski didn't start out in life expecting this kind of responsibility. After graduating from high school in 1977, he took a year off before beginning college. He joined the U.S. Army Reserve and got some experience with large scale construction equipment. That experience piqued his interest in civil engineering as a career option.

Mark enrolled at Southeast Technical (then Winona Technical College) to study civil engineering technology. He graduated in 1979 at the age of 19 and has worked continuously in the construction field as an inspector ever since. He holds current certifications from the Minnesota and Wisconsin

Departments of Transportation in bridge construction, landscape specialist, concrete technician, aggregate production, and several more areas as well as a certificate in erosion and sediment control site management from the University of Minnesota.

Chief inspector of Winona's bridge project Mark Grzybowski didn't start out in life expecting to work on multi-million dollar job sites. But hard work and a foot in the door has led him to some of the state's biggest projects.

On the job, Mark has gained experience in all facets of bridge, street, and utility projects. He worked several years in Wisconsin, then served as chief inspector from 1988-1998 on a massive project separating St. Paul's storm and sanitary sewer systems.

"That may be the largest project I've ever worked on — in today's dollars it would be a \$200 million project," he says.

The entire Winona bridge project is projected to take five years and cost \$162 million. When completed, two bridges will span the Mississippi side-by-side. The new bridge will carry traffic from Wisconsin to Minnesota. A new pedestrian/bicycle lane will be protected from the traffic by a concrete barrier. The old bridge will be renovated in place and will carry two lanes of traffic from Minnesota to Wisconsin.

Today Mark is the point person who is making sure that the Winona bridge project is being built in compliance with exacting specifications, codes, and regulations.

His responsibilities include monitoring construction progress, inspection of pile driving, checking form work and reinforcement steel, testing concrete and aggregate samples, inspecting the lighting and traffic signal systems, and assuring environmental controls.

Mark works for Stantec, a multi-national corporation with offices in Rochester, St. Paul, and St. Cloud, MN. Stantec provides professional consulting in planning, engineering, surveying, environmental sciences, and project management.

“Although I’m not a state employee, it’s my responsibility is to see that taxpayer dollars are invested well,” says Mark.

“Getting an education at Southeast Technical got my foot in the door.”

—Mark Grzybowski

He’s also a photographer and digital archivist. Every aspect of the inspection process

is backed up by photographs. To date, he estimates that he has taken 13,000 photographs on the Winona bridge site. Every day he downloads and logs his photos to accompany the day’s report.

Mark says, “I’m even an accountant! I keep accurate records of the quantities and process contractor pay requests.”

When the new Winona bridge opens in the fall of 2016, think of Mark Grzybowski and how far an education in the trades has taken him.

“Getting an education at Southeast Technical got my foot in the door. From there it was a matter of working hard, continuing my education by earning specific certifications, and getting a variety of experience,” Mark says.



Winona Bridge named one of 2015’s top 10 bridges

Based on project challenges, impact to the region, and scope of the work, **Roads & Bridges** magazine named the Winona bridge to its 2015 Top 10 list. The Winona bridge features a 450-ft main span over the Mississippi. A deck-level sidewalk, lit by LED accents, will provide pedestrian access across the river and serve as a riverview overlook for residents and tourists alike.

Inset photos courtesy Mark Grzybowski



OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

Honoring our alumni who have excelled in their field and the community

Every year, Southeast Technical's Alumni Association recognizes alumni from each campus who have accomplished noteworthy achievements in their careers or have made significant contributions to their communities and Southeast Technical. Congratulations to the 2015 Outstanding Alumni Award recipients, Gary Bartig and Joe Garteski.

Gary Bartig - Class of 1992



A graduate of the Violin Repair program, Gary has gone on to found his own business designing, manufacturing and distributing musical instruments, including the Eminence — a unique portable, upright, acoustic string bass — and the London5 and Dahlia5 violins, specially designed 5-string instruments that cover both the range of a viola and a violin. His instruments are played by professional musicians on stages all across the United States and Europe.

Joe Garteski - Class of 1999



A Machine Tool and Die graduate, Joe has worked for Fastenal his entire career. He has advanced through a variety of operations and outside sales roles to his current position, manufacturing operations manager at Fastenal's Winona precision machining plant. He is responsible for a 100,000 square foot facility, 140-plus machinists and support employees, and approximately \$80 million in product revenue.

Nominate an Outstanding Alum!

Submit your application online: www.southeastmn.edu/alumni

Foundation Events for Alumni, Friends and Students

Annual golf tournaments, business partnerships, alumni reunions, and welcome back to school picnics are hosted every year by the Southeast Technical Foundation in partnership with the Alumni Association.

\$31,000 revenue

Over 200 golfers participated in our 2015 golf tournaments, resulting in all-time high counts in participants and revenue

\$1,665,934 scholarship dollars raised

As of 2000, there have been 1,801 scholarships awarded, and over \$1.5 million raised.

154 awards

In 2015, 154 students were awarded scholarships totaling \$122,425.

Upcoming Events

SCHOLARSHIP BANQUETS:

WINONA: Tuesday, March 29, 2016

RED WING: Tuesday, April 12, 2016

GOLF TOURNAMENTS:

RED WING: Thursday, May 26, 2016

WINONA: Monday, August 1, 2016



For Southeast Tech alum Adam Ewing, Phi Theta Kappa honors paved the way to 4-year college

Adam Ewing was given a small push, took a big chance, and had a stroke of luck. Before coming to Southeast Technical in 2014, he was working odd jobs while living in his home town of Buffalo City, WI. He had graduated from high school ten years previously, but put off continuing his education. Then his grandmother gave him the little push he needed to start doing more, and he made up his mind to go to college.

Southeast Technical was a good fit for Adam as it was local and affordable. What he didn't know when he turned in his application was that Southeast Technical would lead him to a four-year university in Shawnee, Oklahoma, some 900 miles away from home.

While attending Southeast Technical, Adam began taking general education classes with the intent to transfer. He soon excelled in his studies and was invited to become a member of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society. Membership in PTK requires a 3.5 or higher grade point average and completion of at least 12 credits.

Adam stood out to his instructors as an honest, kind, and hard-working classmate and student. History instructor Chris Stout nominated Adam for the All-USA Community College Academic Team. This is a PTK honor that recognizes high achieving two-year college students who demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual rigor combined with leadership and service.

"Adam was always a serious student, the kind of student that you want to have. He would participate in class, ask questions, stay late. Coming back to college as an adult, he took the opportunity to get an education seriously," remembers Chris Stout.

Encouraged by the honor, Adam took a big chance. He applied for admission to a highly-rated, private liberal arts school, Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU). "The award helped me receive a scholarship to attend OBU. It got people to notice that I was a good student. It opened up so many doors for me." Adam said. "I wasn't sure I wanted to go so far away from home, but I'm grateful that my instructor, Chris Stout, gave me the final push to take a chance at the opportunity."

Having just finished up his first year at OBU, Adam is succeeding in the News and Information (Journalism) program. Still maintaining a GPA above 3.0, Adam says the work has been challenging but rewarding.

After writing a blog for a class last semester on a topic of choice, Adam had a stroke of luck. His article was picked up by a boxing website based out of Brooklyn, NY, www.brooklynfights.com. He now writes on a regular basis for the website, gaining exposure as a sports writer on a national level. He is also the assistant sports writer for the OBU school newspaper.

"Thankfully I had my instructors at Southeast Technical to guide me, and with the help of my advisor at OBU my credits transferred," says Adam. "There are so many opportunities out there — don't settle for what you already know."



Adam Ewing

2016 All-USA Community College Academic Team Nominee

Isaiah Reidel, a Winona campus student, has been nominated to the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society's All-USA Community College 2016 Academic Team.

PTK advisor Christopher Stout nominated Isaiah for the honor. "Isaiah is definitely one of the best students we have on campus. He's a hard worker and demonstrates exceptional determination and commitment," he says. "We appreciate how he sees everything all the way through to completion."

This year Isaiah is working on a PTK Honors in Action research project. Honors in Action is a process that provides opportunities to apply learning and practice real-world problem-solving by developing an in-depth, action-oriented project.

PTK will announce the 20 finalists for the All-USA Academic Team in April 2016. Winners receive a \$5,000 scholarship and are featured in USA Today.



ALUMNI IN THE WORKPLACE



Southeast Technical instructor Jim Ziegler and Miller Ingenuity president Steve Blue (left) and Southeast Technical President Dr. Dorothy Duran (right) join alums at a Miller Ingenuity Alumni in the Workplace event.

Miller Ingenuity Futures Fund: an investment in the college and the community

By Chris Schabow, Southeast Technical Foundation Director

Recently Miller Ingenuity made its fifth and final pledge payment to establish the Miller Ingenuity Futures Fund of Southeast Technical Foundation. This board-restricted fund will generate student scholarships, program support, and special projects valued by the college and the foundation board of directors.

- Miller Ingenuity sees Southeast Technical as a partner with the manufacturing community that makes Winona so special. Winona's strong manufacturing presence depends on the college and the graduates of its highly technical programs.

- With more than a dozen alumni on their team, Miller Ingenuity attributes some of its success to the employees who got their start at Southeast Technical.
- Through the gift of scholarships, the Miller Ingenuity Futures Fund can lessen the financial burden of young adults entering the workforce.
- Miller Ingenuity values corporate citizenship. For Winona to be a desirable place to work and live, the business community must continue to reinvest in the people, services, and infrastructure of the town.

We deeply appreciate Miller Ingenuity's partnership with the college, the foundation, and the surrounding community!

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING

Ready to Weld: Accelerated Welding Academy graduates first class

In a partnership with Hiawatha Valley Adult Basic Education and Workforce Development Inc., Southeast Technical offered a 10-week non-credit welding course on the Red Wing campus. The program launched in September 2015 and was designed to teach the welding techniques that are most in demand by area employers.

The students took classes covering manufacturing math, welding safety, blueprint reading, and soft skills. In the hands-on lab, they qualified in various arc welding processes, including gas metal, flux cored, and gas tungsten.

"We developed the program content based on direct feedback from local employers," says Katie Hardyman, Southeast Technical Director of Business Relations. "Ten students graduated in December. All are applying for higher paying positions and are seeing this more as a career choice than a job. That's a big shift for some people and we are excited to be a part of it!"

The next Accelerated Welding Academy begins in February 2016 with another session beginning in June. For more information, or to enroll, contact Hiawatha Valley ABE at 651-385-4565.



Welding Academy partners: Hiawatha Valley Adult Basic Education, Workforce Development, and Southeast Technical



Southeast Technical Foundation Scholarships: A blessing for a student who hopes to “pay it forward”

“The scholarships have been a huge blessing for me, since most of my earnings go toward raising my son.”

That’s what Danielle Durnen says, expressing her gratitude for the support provided by Southeast Technical Foundation. A third-semester associate degree nursing student, Danielle has been honored with the Rose Tandeski Scholarship and John Fuhlbruegge Memorial Scholarship.

Scholarship money is critical to her education. “Being in the nursing program requires quite a bit of extra study time, which reduces my hours available to work. Scholarship funds help cover textbooks, gas for driving to clinicals, and the personal equipment that I have to buy, such as my own stethoscope and blood pressure cuff.”

A single mom in her 30s, Danielle started in the nursing program at Southeast Technical fresh out of high school, but didn’t complete the program. Now that her son is in high school, she is

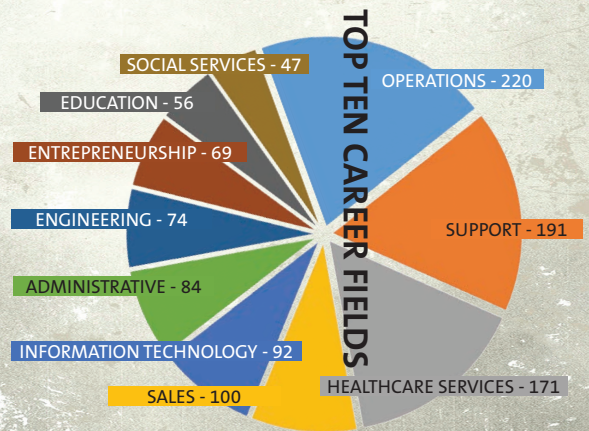
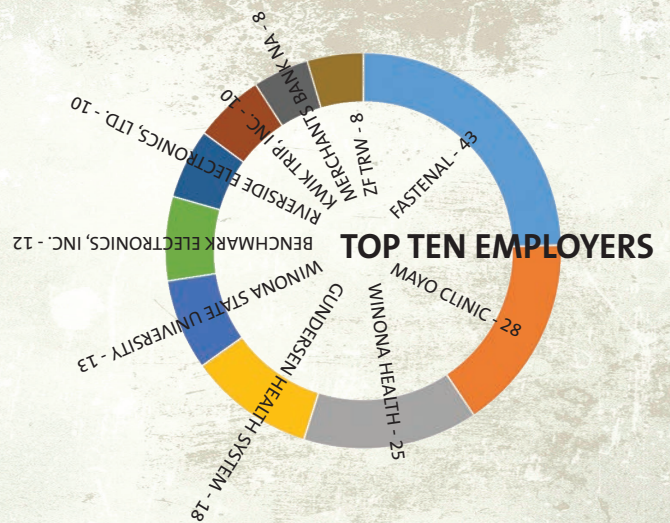
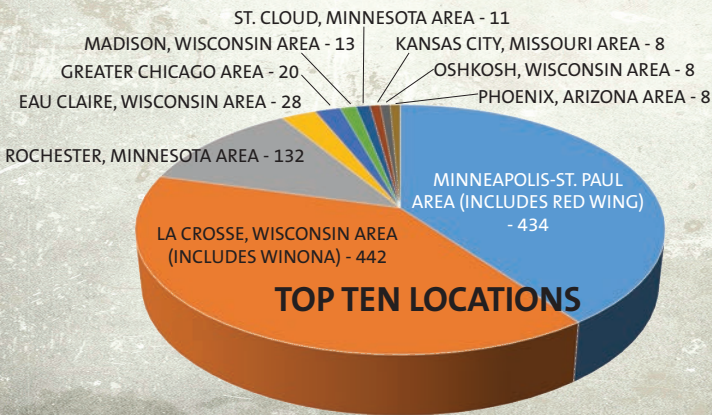
ready to commit. “It’s my turn to get an education too. I need to finish college so that I can pay for my son’s college when the time comes. Plus we can study together!”

Danielle chose to return to Southeast Technical for the small class sizes and low tuition cost. “You really build relationships with the instructors. They are willing to go above and beyond, and make sure you are comfortable and enjoying what you’re learning. Going to college can be stressful, but when you graduate it’s really worthwhile.”

As a work study for the Alumni Association, Danielle is currently at work on a fundraising campaign called “Pay it Forward,” asking previous scholarship recipients to consider donating to the Foundation to support the next generation. “I’m really excited about working on this project, and someday I look forward to being able to contribute to Southeast Technical Foundation myself!”

Are you **LinkedIn**?

Southeast Technical has 1550+ alumni with active profiles on the leading professional networking website, LinkedIn. Here's a look at the top 10 locations, employers and career fields as reported by 1334 of our LinkedIn members. It's exciting to see where our alumni are today!



Find us on
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