

# My Turn

By Dennis Franks

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At Pickaway Ross, a big part of the education process is preparing students for the work world. And part of that is instilling in students the importance of working together.

There's no better way to teach that concept than by modeling it and Tommy Collier and Tim Conley do a great job.

Tommy has been teaching the Precision Welding program to our high school students for six years and Tim has been the Adult Education welding instructor for the past two years.



Tim Conley, left, and Tommy Collier

They share a lab, but their lives and careers overlap much more than that. Tim started work at Kenworth on the same day as Tommy's dad, Randel, and Tim remembers the day Tommy was born.

Tommy, meanwhile, remembers a day many years ago when he was a student in the Adult Education welding program. Tim was visiting the lab to conduct testing for Kenworth.

"I had messed up a weld," Tommy said, explaining that it was a difficult vertical-up position and he was getting aggravated. "I felt like a real idiot because he was watching me and I didn't know," Tommy recalled.

Today, that same attention to detail and safety by Tim and Tommy is what makes our students succeed in the classroom and the workforce.

"He cares about welding," Tommy said of Tim. "He wants everyone in his class to be successful."

After completing Tommy's secondary program, they are prepared to take Tim's advanced welding course.

"We have a common goal," Tim said, preparing the next generation of welders for the workforce.

To that end, each man serves on the other's advisory committee and they communicate often at school and by phone. They acknowledge that the camaraderie may be unusual but it makes the work more enjoyable.

"We have great communication," Tim said, which goes a long way to sharing a lab and machines.

"If I have a problem with something, I let him know and vice versa," Tommy said. "It's nice to have somebody you can work with like that."

