

My Turn

By Dennis Franks

May 10, 2013

At Pickaway-Ross, we take pride in that we do more than educate our students; we prepare them for their future.

Besides providing them with a strong academic background and hands-on labs, instructors also make time through the school year to include field trips that enhance the educational process.



Students in the Electrical Technologies Program take part in a surveying class at the ETC.

One example is the Electrical Technologies Program, in which students go to the Electrical Trades Center (ETC) in the fall and spring. Students are divided into small groups and spend the morning learning a specific skill that is used on the job by a journeymen wireman.

The benefits of our partnership with the ETC can't be overstated: Through its Student Partner Program, many of our students have been selected to begin their careers while juniors in high school. In its 12th year, the program places juniors with employers to work for during the summer. In their senior year, the students then attend classes and continue working. If they meet job qualifications and complete the

Student Partner Program, students can then apply for the apprenticeship program.

That apprenticeship program allows students to parlay their training into an associate's degree, all paid for by the ETC.

ETC Director Steve Lipster said agreements with Franklin and Ohio universities also allow students to continue toward a bachelor's degree in applied technology with 2½ years already completed. And all of the education is funded through a provision in the electricians' union bargaining agreement.

"I don't know of any other organization outside of the military that invests so much in human capital," Lipster said.

Lipster was among the speakers at the bi-annual Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee dinner for all the schools who partner with the ETC. Lipster pointed out that 35 percent to 40 percent of apprentices in the local IBEW are graduates of career and technology centers.

And according to Andy Maciejewski, director of the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council, the average Ohio graduate with a four-year degree has \$26,000 in debt. An average apprentice has earned \$180,000 in the same four years.

These numbers reflect what we do at Pickaway-Ross: We're transforming our students into tomorrow's workforce.

