

## **Universal Technical Institute and Arizona employer partners announce groundbreaking program to address skills gap and talent shortages**

### **Early Employment initiative is a hybrid of post-secondary technical education and on-the-job skills training**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., July 9, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Universal Technical Institute (UTI) has launched a first-of-its-kind initiative that engages transportation industry employers in developing their talent pipelines and gives students an inside track on rewarding long-term careers.

UTI's Early Employment initiative marries proven post-secondary skills education with on-the-job, apprenticeship-type training. Under the program, students learn about and can apply for local jobs with participating employers as soon as they enroll at UTI's Avondale campus. The program's employers have the opportunity to screen and hire incoming students before they start school, and give them on-the-job experience while they complete their education. The goal is for students to graduate and immediately hit the ground running in fulltime jobs at employers where they are already immersed in the culture and processes and are well-positioned for long-term careers. Graduates who meet their employers' criteria will receive reimbursement of school-related expenses and possible other incentives, along with fulltime employment.

"The Early Employment initiative breaks down the common barriers between students who could greatly benefit from a technical education and the employers who want to hire them," said Kim McWaters, UTI President and CEO. "At a time when many are skeptical about the value and return of post-secondary education, the program gives students a tangible experience of what's possible for them, with employers investing in them from the start. Students can earn a living and gain industry-specific experience while they're in school and, once they graduate, walk into a good job with an employer they know well, who will help them pay back their tuition."

UTI's Avondale, Ariz., campus is launching the program beginning this summer. Participating employers in the Early Employment program include: ADESA Auto Auctions; Knight Transportation; Larry H. Miller Dealerships; Loftin Equipment Co.; Penske Automotive Group; Republic Services; RWC Group; S&S Tire & Auto Service Center; Sunstate Equipment Co.; and United Rentals. There are over 30 early employment positions available to incoming students this fall. UTI plans to start the program in Arizona and then take it national to 12 campuses across the country.

"The Early Employment initiative is a win for both employers and students, in partnership with a respected educator who has a five-decade track record of delivering ready-to-work graduates," said Paul Neumann, Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Penske Automotive Group's Western Region. "The program will widen Penske's pipeline of potential employees and gives us the opportunity to help train future technicians at the front end of the educational funnel. Upon graduation, these new technicians are well-positioned for a successful career path at Penske Automotive Group."

Demand for skilled automotive and diesel technicians has never been greater. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that, by 2026, there will be more than 1.2 million job openings (100,000 per year on average) in the transportation sector. According to a 2016 survey, approximately [60 percent of dealerships cited recruitment as their most pressing challenge](#)

Glenn Hamer, President & CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry, noted the skills gap that continues to pose a significant challenge for transportation and other industry sectors, and the education innovation needed to address it.

"The Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry applauds UTI for creating this outside-the-box program and the innovative Arizona employers helping to launch it," Hamer said. "UTI and their industry partners have long led the way in addressing the changing needs of students and the nation's workforce and we believe this hybrid education/apprenticeship approach can serve as a model to address the critical workforce shortages throughout the skilled trades."

Student applications are now being accepted for the [Early Employment program at UTI-Avondale](#). Students must apply by July 26, 2019, in order to be eligible for consideration.

#### **About Universal Technical Institute, Inc.:**

With more than 200,000 graduates in its 53-year history, Universal Technical Institute, Inc. (NYSE: UTI) is the nation's leading provider of technical training for automotive, diesel, collision repair, motorcycle and marine technicians, and offers welding technology and computer numerical control (CNC) machining programs. The company has built partnerships with industry leaders, outfits its state-of-the-industry facilities with current technology, and delivers training that is aligned with employer needs. Through its network of 13 campuses nationwide, UTI offers post-secondary programs under the banner of several well-known brands, including Universal Technical Institute (UTI), Motorcycle Mechanics Institute and Marine Mechanics Institute (MMI) and NASCAR Technical Institute (NASCAR Tech). The company is headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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