

## **Technical Education Leader's Response To Pandemic And New Blended Training Model Lead To Employment For Graduates**

**Despite record national unemployment, Universal Technical Institute graduates are landing jobs**

PHOENIX, Sept. 29, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- As the pandemic continues to deliver a colossal shock to the economy, with weekly unemployment claims increasing to 870,000 for the week ending September 19 and topping an unprecedented 700,000 each week for over six months, [Universal Technical Institute](#)'s (NYSE: UTI) pandemic response plan and blended training model are delivering results, with graduates finding employment across the nation.

"In a time of extraordinary challenges, our students are completing their education and going to work," said Jerome A. Grant, Chief Executive Officer. "The fact that there are good jobs waiting for our graduates speaks to industry's urgent demand for skilled technicians and the quality of our industry-aligned education model."

[The U.S. Department of Labor](#) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimated pre-pandemic there will be more than 110,000 job openings for automotive, diesel and collision repair technicians on average annually across the U.S. through 2028. In an economic downturn, people and businesses keep their vehicles longer and trained technicians remain in demand to maintain and service them.

To meet employer demand and support students in continuing their educations during the pandemic, UTI transitioned its on-campus, in-person training to a blended format, and has built and continues to enhance a model that blends online, instructor-delivered teaching and demonstrations with hands-on training in campus labs that meet health authority guidelines. The [blended model](#) prepares UTI students for high-tech careers, requiring hands-on and digital skills, and for upskilling on the job, as employers train on new technology online and virtually.

Corey Vanderploeg was four weeks from graduation when the pandemic hit, and completed his training in UTI's blended model, using a HEERF CARES Act emergency grant to help support himself and stay in school. He graduated from [UTI-Avondale's diesel program](#) in June and immediately went to work as a technician with [Pape Machinery](#) in Portland, Oregon.

"I'd spent the last five years working in dead-end jobs and, without UTI and the support I received, I'd probably be out of work altogether due to the pandemic," Vanderploeg said. "There will always be a need for people who work on diesel trucks and equipment."

UTI's [manufacturer-specific advanced courses](#) have also continued during the pandemic, with strong student outcomes. These programs train students who have completed their core program to work with a specific manufacturer's vehicles and technology. Employers extend offers of employment to many of these students even before they graduate and, for some of these programs, manufacturer partners cover students' tuition.

After initially putting his love of German vehicles aside and working in construction, [Davidson Ansick](#) enrolled at UTI, completed core automotive training and was selected for the [Porsche Technology Apprenticeship Program \(PTAP\)](#). He graduated from the program in the midst of the pandemic, crediting the instructors who supported him, and immediately went to work for [Porsche of the Main Line](#) in the Philadelphia area.

"When I found out about the Porsche program and learned it was manufacturer paid and would almost guarantee a job after school, it was an easy choice," Ansick said. "Now I work for the best of the best."

Seth Werner, a graduate of the automotive program at [UTI's NASCAR Tech](#) and this summer's [Volvo Service Automotive Factory Education \(SAFE\)](#) program, now works as a technician for [Parkway Volvo](#) in Wilmington, North Carolina.

"I was under the assumption that as a new tech, I'd mostly be doing brake jobs and oil changes, but by day two, I was already working on more complex issues, including computer problems," Werner said. "Studying online and in person was different, but it was definitely worth it."

[Zachary Gaulin](#), who graduated from UTI's [Motorcycle Mechanics Institute \(MMI\) in Orlando](#) and the [Harley-Davidson program](#) and is employed as a service technician at [Big Moose Harley-Davidson](#) in Maine said, "With the increases of people riding their bikes, we're understaffed, but I am constantly energized by doing something I love, and I'm making good money as a young person right out of school."

For more information about UTI, visit [www.uti.edu](http://www.uti.edu).

**About Universal Technical Institute, Inc.**

With more than 220,000 graduates in its 55-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 12 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 Phoenix, Arizona.

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