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PERRY  
TECHNICAL  
INSTITUTE

# Perry News

Fall 2009

## New Level of Instruction

### Eugene Shields Technical Training Center Dedicated

**Y**akima served up a healthy dose of sunshine for the ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremonies for Perry's renovated hangar building.

The Eugene Shields Technical Training Center officially opened the weekend of the All-School Reunion, July 17 and 18. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members gathered outside the entrance to the renovated building to watch Perry trustee **Senator Curtis King** and **Gene Shields** cut the ribbon, officially opening the new facility.

"We are excited to see the building's



**Felicia Holtzinger, left, and Delmar Pearson, right, join Gene Shields for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.**

completion not for just having the project completed, but for what having this remodeled building does for the students of Perry Tech," said King in his opening remarks. "Its completion takes us to a new level of instruction."

The renovation began in early 2007 when the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Technology Program relocated to temporary quarters. Two HVAC/R classes moved into the first floor of the north end of the renovated building in September 2008. The Visual Communication & Graphic Technology Program followed, moving into the second floor of the north end in April 2009.

The second two HVAC/R classes moved into the first floor of the south end in late August and the Office Administration Programs moved into the second floor of the south end this fall.

"We are proud to offer our students instruction in this state-of-the-art facility," said PTI President **Christine Coté**.

The renovated building was named after Gene Shields, in honor of his longtime service to Perry and the community. A bronze plaque designating the building as the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center was unveiled at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The building was dedicated the following



**Senator Curtis King and PTI President Christine Coté pause before the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center.**

day. Alumni and guests on hand for the reunion gathered at the entrance to the building and listened to opening remarks from Tom Reid, President of the Perry Technical Institute Alumni Association followed by a dedication address by Coté.

"We dedicate this building to our students – those here today and those to come in the future. May they gain the knowledge, skills and work habits they need to find success in their chosen careers," Coté said.

The new facility includes enlarged shops, labs and classrooms. The Graphics Department features a large computer lab, a sign shop/studio, a photo studio and a state-of-the-art media room. ●

### In Brief...

#### New Name for Graphics Program

To reflect changes in industry and more accurately describe the curriculum, Perry Technical Institute recently changed the name of the 18-month Graphic Technology Program to the Visual Communication & Graphic Technology Program.

"The name 'Visual Communication' better encompasses our curriculum," said **Michael Malaska**,

Department Head. "Over the years, we've evolved way beyond graphic art."

Graduates of the program are trained to use the latest technology and software to communicate through visual images. They select colors, artwork, type and photography for use in digital imaging, desktop publishing, website development, illustration, sign design and pre-press/imposition.

#### Two Programs Combined

Two office administration programs were recently combined to better prepare students for careers in the medical office and medical coding industries.

The 12-month Computer Applications & Medical Office Administration Program and the six-month Medical Coding & Reimbursement Specialist Program were combined into the 18-month Medical Office

Administration & Coding Program. This six-quarter program incorporates in-depth computer training, the basics of working in a medical office, billing, medical coding and accounts receivable management.

#### Grant Funds Aid Machine Technology Students

The Gene Haas Foundation donated \$5,000 to provide scholarships for two students in the

*continued on page 2*

## In Brief... *continued from page 1*

Machine Technology Program. Machine students **Jon Jurmu** and **Ryan Melville** received the awards.

The Gene Haas Foundation was formed in 1999 to fund the needs of deserving charities, at the discretion of its founder, Gene Haas. Of special importance to the Gene Haas Foundation are children's charities and organizations that feed the poor.

In addition, the Gene Haas Foundation provides scholarship funds to community colleges and vocational schools for students entering technical training programs, especially machinist-based certificate and degree programs.

### Junior League Grant Supports Women in Technology Day

The Junior League of Yakima provided a \$1,000 grant to help underwrite the costs associated with the Women in Technology Day scheduled for January 28, 2010.

Junior League of Yakima is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

### Commemorative Bricks Are Still Available

It's not too late to support Perry Technical Institute by purchasing a commemorative brick.

Your personalized brick can feature up to three lines of text, 13 characters long. The bricks may be purchased for \$100. All proceeds benefit Perry Technical Foundation's efforts to raise money for student scholarships, equipment and capital improvements on the Perry campus.

Bricks purchased before the All-School Reunion are now in place outside the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center.

The commemorative bricks will be sold through the end of the year. To purchase a brick, contact **Erin Fishburn**, Foundation Director, at (509) 453-0374, Extension 206.

# From the President

## Hangar Opening Marks New Chapter in Perry Technical Institute's History



Christine Coté

**S**ummer 2009 was a time of celebration on the Perry campus. We saw the realization of a long-held dream when the renovated hangar building was dedicated as the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center. We celebrated this momentous occasion on July 17 and 18 with 250 alumni on campus for the All-School Reunion.

The opening of this renovated facility was a milestone event in the history of Perry Technical Institute. The building was one of the school's original structures, designed and built as an airplane hangar and used to train aircraft mechanics during World War II. Since that time, students and instructors have endured hot summers and cold winters in a building which was ill-suited for use as a learning facility.

For many years, the renovation project was a dream. Making this dream a reality required a great deal of dedication. I applaud our trustees – **Cuyler Lighthall**, **Terry Schmalz** and Senator **Curtis King** – for their vision. It was through their leadership, as well as the leadership of former PTI President **Dr. J. Tuman**,

that we were able to undertake this massive project.

Many craftsmen used their talents to build this beautiful facility. Special thanks to architect Tom Culpepper and to Rick Arnold, Dave Barr and the crew from SAR Construction. Thank you to our faculty and students who for over two years have tirelessly worked on this project.

It was fitting to name this beautiful new facility after Eugene Shields, a man who truly represents the qualities for which Perry stands. The Shields family's support of Perry Technical Institute dates back to the school's early years. Shields Bag and Printing made the school's first cash donation after machine students made cylinders for one of the company's printing presses.

Over the years, Gene has continued this support by serving on the Perry Technical Foundation Board of Directors, by acting as an ambassador for the school and by hiring our graduates. Without his support, this building might not have become reality.

By the time this issue of the Perry News reaches you, the last group of students will have moved into the renovated building. As alumni and friends of Perry, you can take pride in this state-of-the-art facility. The opening of the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center marks the beginning of a new era of discovery, a new chapter in the history of Perry Technical Institute. ●

## Perry Calendar

- **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2009**  
**Graduation (quarter programs)**  
*Auditorium, 1:30 pm*
- **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2010**  
**Graduation (trimester programs)**  
*Auditorium, 1:30 pm*
- **DECEMBER 21 - JANUARY 1, 2010**  
**Winter Break**
- **THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2010**  
**Graduation (quarter programs)**  
*Auditorium, 1:30 pm*
- **THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2010**  
**Women in Technology**  
*PTI campus. 1 pm*
- **MARCH 29-APRIL 2, 2010**  
**Spring Break**

### Perry News

*A tri-annual newsletter for alumni and friends of Perry Technical Institute*

*Please send address changes to*

**Perry Technical Institute**

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**'As a graduate of Perry Tech, you are part of a special family and are always welcome on your campus.'**



**Warren Hall, a 1941 graduate of the Aircraft Engine Mechanics Program, and his son, Charlie Hall, enjoy themselves at the All-School Reunion.**

## Alums Share Memories at All-School Reunion

**W**hen **John Greiner**, Automotive, attended J.M. Perry Institute in 1949 he had a shiny new Plymouth and stayed in the west dorm which was known as the “chicken coup.” Students who wanted to walk in the graduation ceremony were required to wear white shirts, ties and nice trousers.

**Gene Trelstad**, Instrumentation '64, came to Perry after a stint in the U.S. Coast Guard. When he attended, tuition was \$37.50 a month.

**Jamie Logan**, Telecommunications '89, had an elementary school-aged daughter when she enrolled at Perry and remembers class volleyball games on the Perry lawn.

These are just a few of the memories shared at the All-School Reunion held July 17 and 18. Scheduled to coincide with Perry's 70th anniversary, the event gave alumni the opportunity to remember their time at Perry,

walk the halls of their alma mater, reconnect with classmates, speak to instructors and get a glimpse into the school's future.

Those in attendance were among the first to see the renovated hangar building, now called the Eugene Shields Technical Training Center. The original structure is where many graduates received their training in hot summers and cold winters. Alumni present for the dedication heard how the facility was constructed with pride in the past and with an eye to the future, designed to provide top-notch training for years to come.

The event brought together 250 graduates for a BBQ lunch on Perry's east lawn. “With graduates coming from as far away as the East Coast, it was a special occasion to have graduates from the past 70 years all together,” said **Erin Fishburn**, Foundation Director.

The event included two individuals from the

first graduating classes at Perry. **Warren Hall** '41 and **Ray Schuller** '42 both attended the Aircraft Engine Mechanic Program in Perry's infancy. They were among the students who overhauled planes from Yakima, Walla Walla and Portland helping establish Perry's positive reputation throughout the region.

“That reputation has continued through the years, with each of the graduates helping create the Perry Tech that exists today,” Fishburn said.

More than 7,000 students have graduated from Perry since Harriet I. Perry founded the school to honor her husband's memory.

“As a graduate of Perry Tech, you are part of a special family and are always welcome on your campus,” Fishburn said. “If you were unable to attend the Perry Tech reunion, we hope that you will take the time to come by for a tour and see how Perry has grown.” ●

# Students of the Month

Each month, we honor an exceptional student.

## Lyle Glidewell April 2009

Electrical Technology



Lyle Glidewell will be the first to admit that he traveled the bumpy road to Perry Technical Institute's Electrical Technology Program.

The bumpy road has led to success – Glidewell was named Perry's Student of the Month for April.

"What I realized was that I was still a young man, but I would not be a young man forever," he said. "It's hard to raise a family on minimum wage – I knew I had to do something else with my life."

Going back to school at the age 38 is a challenge, but it's one that Glidewell feels has been well worth the effort. "This has been an awesome experience. I had no idea the effect going back to school would have on my life."

## Dustin Jamieson May 2009

Visual Communication & Graphic Technology



May Student of the Month **Dustin Jamieson** had a job well before he was set to graduate from Perry's Visual Communication & Graphic Technology Program.

A native of Longview, Jamieson did an externship for Kiona Publishing in West Richland. The company publishes the Mid-Columbian Magazine and RC-Sport Flyer, a magazine for remote control plane enthusiasts. He does web design and maintenance and ad layout for the company.

When he graduated in June, Jamieson moved from the dormitory at Yakima Valley Community College where he has been living while attending Perry to the Tri-Cities. "It's exciting to go right from school into a career."

## April Evans June 2009

Computer Applications & Medical Office Administration



**April Evans** thinks of going to school as her job. Her down-to-business attitude has earned her Student of the Month honors for June at Perry.

Evans is a single mom who commutes to Yakima from Ellensburg and still manages to earn straight As in Perry's Computer Applications & Medical Office Administration Program.

The Medical Office Administration Program appealed to her because she could attend school for one year and then start her career. "I really like the fact that it feels like I am going to work everyday," she said.

## Christine Simens July 2009

Information Technology & Communications Systems



July Student of the Month **Christine Simens** was no novice when she enrolled in Perry's Information Technology & Communication Systems Program.

She was a self-taught technician who worked part time as a computer tech and part time in the accounting department at Dwinell's Visual Systems. She taught herself the basics and turned to books and the internet to research what needed to be done.

However, she recognized that in order to advance in the field, she needed to further her education. "Once I decided to come to Perry, everything just fell into place," she said. "I love learning. If you stop learning, you just die."

## Restored Pick-up Hits the Road for Perry

**A** 1957 Chevy 3100 stepside pick-up is getting a second life thanks to the tender loving care provided by Perry's Automotive Technology instructors and students.

**John Fromherz**, a 1975 Instrumentation grad, donated the truck to Perry in 2006.

"The truck was in good condition when we received it," said **Joe Garcia**, Head of the Automotive Department. "It had been stored in a garage for 10 years."

The students and instructors put

a new engine in the truck; reworked the braking and steering systems; did some body work; and prepped and painted it. The seat was reupholstered; Les Schwab donated a new set of tires and wheels; and Perry's Visual Communication & Graphic Technology students put the PTI logo on the door.

Garcia plans to take the truck "on the road" to car shows, parades and other events. "It will advertise Perry while it's driving down the road," he said, laughing. ●



Joe Garcia, left, and Glenn Maxwell show off the beautifully restored Chevy.

# Three Brothers Take Different Routes and End up Together in Perry's HVAC/R Program



The Marshall brothers are all enrolled in Perry's HVAC/R Program. Pictured are, left to right, Justin, Jared and Jacob Marshall.

**T**hree brothers – **Justin, Jared and Jacob Marshall** – are proving that a little sibling rivalry can be a good thing.

The three siblings are enrolled in Perry's Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Technology Program. Justin, the oldest, enrolled first and is now in R-4; middle brother Jared and youngest brother Jacob are in R-3.

The Marshall brothers followed the lead of their father, **Terry Marshall**, who was a member of the first graduating class from the Graphics Program in 1978, and their grandfather, **Everette Marshall**, a member of the second graduating class from the HVAC Program in 1948.

"We grew up with our Grandpa saying, 'You ought to go to Perry,'" said Justin.

After graduating from high school, Justin studied graphic design at the Portland Art Institute for a year and then spent four years in the Navy. When he was discharged, he worked as a graphic designer in Seattle, but decided that his artwork should be a hobby rather than a profession. "All the pressure of doing it for a living was making me not like being an artist," he said.

Jared's path to Perry was more difficult. He dropped out of high school, got in some trouble and became a father before enrolling in Job Corps where he learned to be a plasterer. He was working for Tube Art when he enrolled at Perry, but had to quit because the

hours conflicted with school. He was working the graveyard shift at Magic Metals when the company had a major layoff and he qualified for retraining funds. "I decided to take advantage of the funding to learn a trade at Perry," he said.

Jared is a single dad with full-time custody of his 4-year-old son, Kayden. "It's tough, but I get a lot of help from family members," he said.

Jacob came to Perry just days after graduating from Eisenhower High School. He considered playing college baseball, but opted for Perry instead. "I didn't think college was for me," he said. "Perry seemed to be a lot better fit."

It's helped the two younger brothers to have Justin ahead of them, letting them know what to expect on upcoming labs and assignments. Having his young brother in class has been a motivating force for Jared. "I'm getting the first 'A' in my life," he said. "I had to work hard... I couldn't let my younger brother beat me!"

The three brothers take a lot of teasing from their classmates. "They like to call us 'The Three Stooges,'" Justin said, laughing.

When they graduate, all three have different goals: Justin wants to relocate back to the Vancouver area; Jared is willing to relocate anywhere in the country, but would like to stay in his hometown; and Jacob is keeping his options open.

"We could start our own business. Three Stooges HVAC has a ring to it," Jared joked. ●



## Partnership Benefits Both Employer and Graduate

Over the past eight years, a partnership between Perry Technical Institute and the Tesoro Corporation has resulted in nearly 30 jobs for graduates of Perry's Electrical Technology and Instrumentation & Industrial Automation Technology Programs.

Once a year, Jeff Felix, Maintenance Superintendent for Instruments, Electrical and Analyzers at Tesoro's Golden Eagle Refinery in Martinez, Calif., travels to Yakima to interview and test Instrumentation and Electrical students. Those who are hired receive a generous relocation fee and an extremely competitive salary and benefit package.

"Tesoro has allowed our graduates to immediately apply the knowledge and skills gained while attending PTI," said **Tony Nirk**, Head of the Instrumentation Department.

Headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, Tesoro is a Fortune 150 company which employs 5,600 men and women in five Pacific Northwest states. A leading independent refiner and marketer of petroleum products, Tesoro operates seven refineries with a combined crude oil capacity of 664,000 barrels per day.

Tesoro's retail marketing system includes more than 870 branded retail stations of which more than 380 are company operated under the Tesoro, Shell, Mirastar and USA Gasoline brands.

The Perry graduates have all been placed at the Golden Eagle Refinery. "We find Perry students to be extremely well prepared," said Felix. "They know how to follow directions, they are self-directed and task-oriented."

When selecting students, Felix looks closely at attendance records. "We want students who have a track record for being at school with great attendance records, with excellent GPAs and on-time history."

Felix brings Perry grads with him on recruiting trips. "It helps to have a graduate speak firsthand about their experience," he said. On his last trip, he brought **John Kruger**, a 2006 Electrical graduate, and **Eric Britz**, a 2003 Instrumentation graduate.

# Perry Staff/Faculty

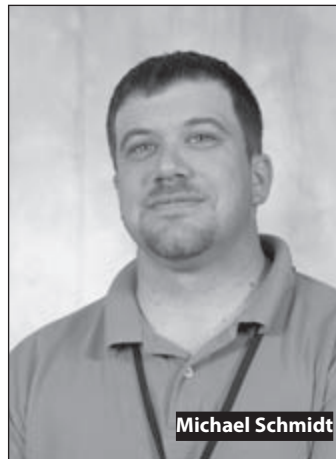
## Staff Changes Announced



Nathan Hull



Lashel Church



Michael Schmidt



Jennifer Arnett

### Perry Tech has a new Dean of Education, a new Head of the Office Administration Programs and a new instructor in the Electrical Technology Program.

**N**athan Hull has been named Perry's Dean of Education. Hull was hired in July 2007 to serve as the Head of Perry's new Office Administration Department. He came to Perry from Camas High School where he taught business education courses.

A Yakima native, Hull graduated from Davis High School in 1994. He earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting from Central Washington University and worked as an accounting controller before going back to school to earn his bachelor of arts degree in business education from Eastern Washington University.

He then accepted a job teaching at Camas where he also oversaw the operation of a campus branch of a local credit union which was staffed by students. In the spring of 2007, the student body selected Hull as Teacher of the Year.

"Words cannot express how honored I am to accept the Dean of Education position at Perry

Tech," said Hull. "Our instructional staff is second to none and I look forward to further enhancing our tradition of providing practical and relevant education for every student that walks through our doors."

Hull and his wife, Rachel, have a 5-year-old son, Riley, and a 1-year-old daughter, Kennedy. In his spare time, Hull enjoys running, basketball and golf.

**L**ashel Church replaces Hull as Head of the Office Administration Program. Church joined the Perry faculty in January 2008. She has taught Medical Office Administration and Medical Office Administration & Coding classes.

Church came to Perry from Medical Associates of Yakima, where she served as Billing Supervisor. She had previously worked in accounting at Planned Parenthood of Central Washington and in billing at Yakima Neighborhood Health.

A Selah native, Church and her husband, Don, have two sons, Nathan, 20, and Nick, 18. Church enjoys reading, gardening, sewing and cooking. She also teaches yoga and serves serving on the executive committee for the Yakima chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness.

**M**ichael Schmidt has joined the faculty as an instructor in the Electrical Technology Program. A Selah native, Schmidt graduated from Perry's Electrical Program in 2005. He worked for Master Electric in Pasco for a short time before accepting a position as an electrician at Snokist where he worked for nearly four years.

Schmidt teaches the third section of the two-year Electrical Program.

In his spare time, Schmidt enjoys building off-road vehicles; doing machining and metal work; and camping, fishing and boating. ●

### New Services Available to PTI Grads

**P**erry Tech is enhancing its services to students and alumni by adding a Career Services Office.

Services available to current students include assistance with resume writing, interviewing techniques and information on job search strategies. Alumni may also contact the Career Services Office for assistance and job referrals.

"If you graduated from Perry, we are here to help you with your job search," said **Jennifer Arnett**, Career Services Manager.

Arnett is contacting employers and asking them to inform her of open positions. Alumni who are relocating may use the service to find positions in the area where they are moving.

Alumni interested in using the new service may contact Arnett at (509) 453-0374, Extension 226.

**VISIT PERRY'S NEW WEBSITE: [www.perrytech.edu](http://www.perrytech.edu)**

## Mike Smith: The Consummate Educator

**W**ith 23 years and hundreds of graduates to his credit, **Mike Smith** has molded many careers with his expertise and shaped hundreds of lives with his gentle brand of wisdom.

If you ask the longtime instructor about his graduates, he'll speak with parental pride about their accomplishments.

"It's rewarding to see our students graduate and get jobs and then see them go on to successful careers," he said.

Approximately 800 students have graduated from the program now known as Information Technology & Communication Systems (formerly Telecommunications). Of those 800 students, Smith has contact information for 725 of them. Staying in touch not only keeps graduates connected to the school, it also helps current students when they begin their job searches.

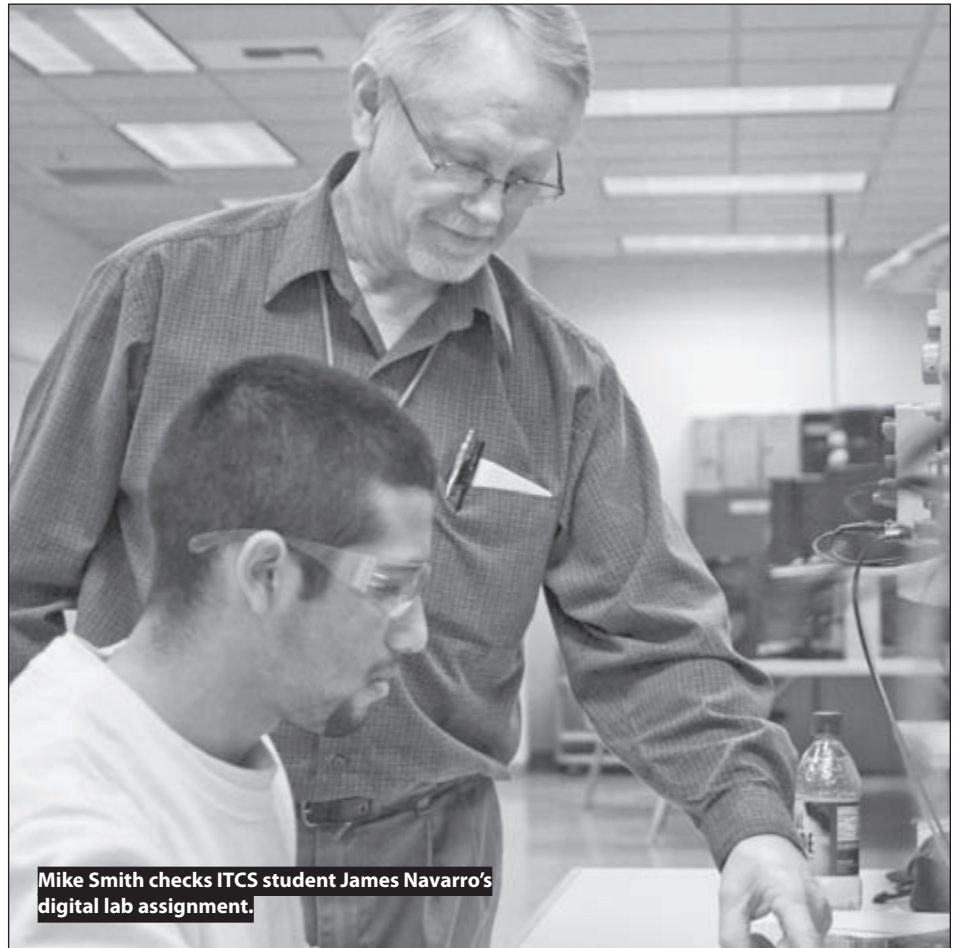
"Our graduates form a network in industry which puts students in touch with companies that are hiring," he said. "Graduates are extremely important resources, especially in this economy."

A native of Goldendale, Smith received electronics training during his four-year stint in the Air Force. When he returned to Central Washington, he worked at a television repair shop before enrolling in Perry Tech's Instrumentation & Industrial Electronics Program in 1973.

After graduating from Perry, Smith worked as an industrial instrument technician for Leeds & Northrup for 11 years. He grew tired of the traveling his job required and began thinking he would like to try teaching. "I had done some training as part of my job. I enjoyed it and thought teaching was a way that I could help people."

In 1986, Smith returned to his alma mater, becoming the third instructor in the Telecommunications Program which Perry started in 1984. He was named Department Head in 1993.

There have been a few surprises, but he said overall teaching has been a rewarding profession for the last 23 years. "I guess I was naïve. I thought teaching meant standing up and talking. There's a bit more to it than that," he laughed. "In fact, it's not an eight-hour-a-day job, but more like a 10- or 12-hour-a-day job."



**Mike Smith checks ITCS student James Navarro's digital lab assignment.**

The rewards, however, far outweigh the drawbacks. "There nothing like seeing the light bulb go on in a student's mind," he said. "They may be struggling along not understanding a subject. Then the light bulb goes on and they start talking the language of electronics."

Over the years, technology isn't the only thing that has changed – students have also changed. "Today's students have been raised on computers and cell phones. How they relate to one another and the world is entirely different."

These changes have forced Smith to adopt a more interactive teaching style. "You have to work a little harder to engage them in the learning process," he said.

Students have different learning styles, but Smith encourages them all to learn to figure things out for themselves. "When they leave here, no one will be there solving their problems. I want them to have the skills they need to come up with the answers by themselves."

Smith has many interests outside the classroom. He's an avid hiker, enjoys reading about history and for the past 12 years has been an active volunteer with the Yakima Folklife Association.

To his current students and the hundreds who have passed through his classroom, Smith is the consummate educator. "He was the best instructor. I learned so much from him," said **Jerry Cubberley**, a 1994 Telecom graduate, who is now a Network Engineer at Lockheed Martin in Richland.

Cubberley said Smith had a way of explaining things in a way that made concepts clear, but that he also knew how to have fun. He recalled a test when Smith marked him down for missing a decimal point. "It was there, but I just made it really small," he said. "To this day, every time I see him we laugh about that tiny decimal point." ●

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## In Memory...

Perry recently said goodbye to two former instructors. **Bob Hill**, 73, former Head of the Graphic Technology Program, died on May 8, and **Leon Edmondson**, 60, former Head of the Automotive Technology Program, died on August 5.

An accomplished airbrush artist, Hill taught in Perry's Graphics Program for nearly 20 years. Hill was born in Zillah and raised in Yakima, graduating from Yakima High School. He served in the Air Force for more than six years and was stationed at Strategic Air Command in Nebraska where he learned to combine his love for art with his love of aviation. His reputation as an aviation artist grew and he was awarded

permanent professorship at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

He worked as art director at an agency in Spokane for a number of years before moving back to Yakima to be near his family. He joined the PTI faculty in 1984 and retired in 2003.

After retiring from teaching, he continued to work, doing automotive graphics at The Trick Shop in Yakima and producing artwork out of his home studio.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Jean Hill; a nephew, Jeff Hill; and two nieces, Loraye Gendron and Sherri Olson.

A memorial service honoring Hill was held May 30 in the PTI Auditorium.

Leon Edmondson was born in Brawley, Calif., and moved to Selah when he was 10 years old. He joined the Perry Tech faculty in 1987 and retired in 2004. He served as head of the Automotive Department for five years. After leaving Perry, he worked for G.E. Aviation.

He is survived by his wife, Paula; a daughter, Michele Powers; his mother, Pansy Atwood; his father, Ralph Edmondson, and stepmother, Joyce Edmondson; a brother, Steve Edmondson; and five grandchildren.

A memorial service honoring Edmondson was held August 29 at the Summitview Church of Christ in Yakima. ●

## Class Notes

**Amber Byers**, Visual Community & Graphic Technology, '07, was a Project Supervisor for the Summer Youth Program at the Opportunities Industrialization Center of Washington. The program is funded through the South Central Workforce Development Council with stimulus funds from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act. Byers helped 12 youths create a teen media website. The 15-week project gives teenagers hands-on experience in writing, editing, photography and public speaking. Byers is the owner of Byers Design Studio in Yakima.

Machine Technology graduate **Gene Hess**, '66, founded Hess Tool and Development in 1981. He has extensive experience in research and development and the machining of high precision prototypes and is a master tool and die maker. **Britt Robinson**, '93, serves as President of the company. Robinson has extensive experience machining parts for aerospace, prototyping and high precision, tight tolerance production. Robinson has been named a Certified Mechanical Inspector by the American Society for Quality. The company, based in Richland, supports its customers with high precision, tight tolerance prototyping, research

and development, tool and die making and small production runs. Hess specializes in machining high temperature alloy steels.

**Mike McCay**, a '97 Automotive Technology graduate, opened Absolute Auto in Yakima in March 2008. After graduating from Perry, McCay earned his senior master technician credentials from Ford and completed his certification from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence. Absolute Auto helps local dealerships repair cars for their sales lots and also takes work from the community.

Hats off to the Perry grads who recently completed a successful project for Lockheed Martin Corporation supporting a project for the Federal Aviation Administration's General Aviation Network. The AFSS Communications Team successfully implemented the PAC Loop capability out of Richland to the three major Flight Operation Centers located in Ashburn, Va.; Fort Worth, Texas; and Prescott, Ariz. The PAC loop allows them to pull any radio position, test and perform radio checks with FAA technicians anywhere in the country from Richland.

The capability goes beyond radio checks to include troubleshooting pilot weather briefings

and flight plans and other issues. Flight Specialists may experience when communicating with pilots who are in-flight or on the ground. The team started working on the project in 2007 and had a great deal of visibility from the FAA. The team members, all graduates of Perry's Information Technology & Communication Systems Program (formerly known as Telecommunications) include **Jesse Van Zoelen**, '97; **Matt Lighthall**, '98; **Gavin Creach**, '05; **Brent Weatherman**, '99; **Eric Benson**, '03; and **Andy Onica**, '02. Additional network support was provided by **Mike Yale**, '06, and former PTI instructor **Jim Smith**, '94, supervised the project.

The success story of Instrumentation graduate **Jose Angel Sepulveda**, '09, was featured in a United States Department of Labor brochure on Trade Act funding which was distributed to members of Congress. Sepulveda lost his job when Yakima Resources (formerly known as Boise-Cascade) closed its doors. He enrolled in Perry's Instrumentation & Industrial Automation Technology program and graduated in June with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5. He was hired by Tesoro and is working at the Golden Eagle Refinery in Martinez, Calif.