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Summer 2015

## Perry Tech Promotes Financial Literacy

With student loan debt and default rates rising nationwide, Perry Tech is reaching out to students to teach financial literacy.

"Save Smart, Spend Smart" promotes financial well-being and encourages students to practice responsible borrowing. Staff members in Perry's Financial Aid Department provide information to students in entrance, mid-point, and exit presentations. They also staff an information booth at new student orientation, email students tips, articles, and blogs, and promote financial literacy through social media and other marketing efforts.

Mayra Fernandez, Perry's director of Financial Aid, points out that developing strong financial literacy has never been more important than it is today. "We are on a mission to bring financial literacy awareness to our students by providing knowledge from day one and throughout their program in hopes it helps them in their careers," says Mayra.

Shortly after students start school, Financial Aid staff members visit classrooms to present information on responsible borrowing. They explain the benefits of federal loans and help students break

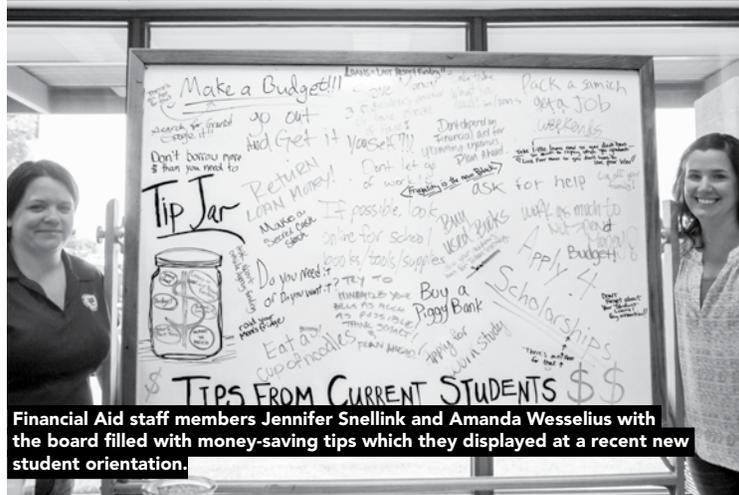
down the costs of borrowing.

Financial Aid staff plan to lead group sessions midway through students' programs to guide them through the process of logging on the National Student Loan Data System to check loan balances and navigate to a repayment calculator. The staff plans to add other group activities such as a financial quiz on terms, credit scores, and real-life scenarios.

In addition to encouraging responsible borrowing, they also provide information on budgeting and other sound financial practices. "At Perry Tech, we teach our students the skills they need for their careers. We also need to teach them how to manage the paycheck they will earn," stresses Amanda Wesselius, Financial Aid specialist.

The staff has also been encouraging students to borrow only the minimum amount needed to pay for school and living expenses rather than accepting the full loan being offered to them. "Students may forget that excess check funds may actually be loans. We are trying to shift the focus from them seeing it as a payday to understanding the source of these funds and

*Continued on page 7*



Financial Aid staff members Jennifer Snellink and Amanda Wesselius with the board filled with money-saving tips which they displayed at a recent new student orientation.

## IN BRIEF

### Machine Program Renamed

Perry Tech's Machine Technology Program has a new name. The program is now officially known as the Precision Machining & Manufacturing Program.

The new name was created to better reflect the program's curriculum and the overall emphasis of the field. "Machine Technology is a perfect description of our program if you already know what machining is," says

department head Dan Steinmetz. "Unfortunately, the average person really has no idea of what a machinist is or does. We wanted to choose a name that makes people ask the question 'What is machining?'"

The name change was approved by the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges.

Perry's two-year Precision Machining & Manufacturing Program prepares students for entry-level positions in a variety of manufacturing fields. The program introduces the machine trade by combining theory with practical application in the shop.

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Plath Hall Represents Perry Tech's Future



Christine Coté

There's excitement in the air as we see the future emerging in our backyard.

Plath Hall will serve as the new home for Perry's Instrumentation Program. But the building represents even more – it signifies growth of the dream that Harriet I. Perry envisioned when she established the school more than 75 years ago.

Many dreams have brought us to this day – the dreams of our founder fueled by the dreams of the thousands of students who have launched successful careers with the foundation of skills they gained

at Perry. The dreams of the donors who recognize all that Perry has to offer and who share their resources to help us grow. And the dreams of the faculty and staff who have dedicated themselves to providing an excellent education to students from all walks of life.

Plath Hall is something all friends of Perry, as well as the Yakima

community, can be proud of. Designed to mirror the school's original architecture, the building is industrial and utilitarian, yet an attractive addition to our campus.

Plath Hall will bring the Instrumentation to a new level. It will allow the Electrical and Welding programs to grow in spacious classrooms and shops. It will enable us to reach out to more students with new programs which serve identified needs in industry.

Plath Hall was born through the generosity of Dorothy and the late Fred Plath. They believed in the mission of Perry Tech and invested in that mission by funding scholarships for students, by giving of their time, and by donating the seed money which would launch our first-ever capital campaign.

As we wrap up the construction of Plath Hall and make plans for our move, we focus on what served as the impetus for this project – the desire to put family-supportable jobs within reach of those who have the determination to work for them. •

### Help Us Meet Our Goal!

Invest in the future of Perry Technical Institute by donating to the Capital Fund Drive to build Plath Hall. We need your help to reach our goal of \$8 million to expand our campus. Please return the form below, along with payment, to Perry Technical Foundation. For information, please contact Erin Fishburn at [erin.fishburn@perrytech.edu](mailto:erin.fishburn@perrytech.edu).

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#### PAYMENT INFORMATION

Make checks payable to Perry Technical Foundation. Perry Technical Foundation is a 501c (3) organization and donations to Perry are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

#### DONOR RECOGNITION

Donors will be recognized in campaign materials unless anonymous gift is requested. Please use the following name(s) in all acknowledgments:

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### Georgia-Pacific Donation Funds Plath Hall Classroom

A classroom in Plath Hall will be named in recognition of Georgia-Pacific's donation to the Investing in Excellence Capital Campaign.

Two representatives from Georgia-Pacific, maintenance superintendent Dave Hathaway and process engineer Jake Dahlquist, were on campus in April for the Spring Employer Expo.

Georgia-Pacific is one of the world's leading makers of tissue, pulp, paper, packaging, building products, and related chemicals.

Georgia-Pacific was founded in 1927 as a lumber wholesaler in Augusta, Georgia. Today, Georgia-Pacific LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Koch Industries, Inc., a private company based in Wichita, Kansas. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, Georgia-Pacific is committed to investing in the communities in which its 35,000 employees live and work. •



# New Instrumentation Building Nears Completion

A state-of-the-art, 38,000-square foot building will soon be home to Perry's Instrumentation & Industrial Automation Technology Program.

Plath Hall, located northeast of the main campus, is the first expansion outside the school's original footprint since Perry was established in 1939. General contractor Tri-Ply Construction broke ground on the building in October 2014 and mild winter weather has put the project ahead of the original construction schedule. The building is expected to be completed in late August.

Designed by BOR Architecture, the building has a rounded front which mimics the school's original design. The exterior of the building is brick and stucco with a curved main entry with an open metal canopy supported by six brick columns. A pathway will connect the new building to the main campus.

The two-story building features eight large classrooms equipped with wall-mounted smartboard projectors, eight labs and instructor offices, and an employer interview room. The lobbies on each floor will have tables and seating for students to study and take breaks.

To the right of the entryway, a donor wall will pay tribute to the donors whose gifts made the building possible. A TV screen will welcome visitors and serve as a monitor to display how much power is being produced by the solar panels mounted on the roof. The solar system was funded by a Blue Sky grant from Pacific Power.

When completed, the building will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certified.

Plath Hall has served as a practical training ground for students in the Electrical, HVAC/R, and ITCS programs. The Electrical students have worked on roughing in inside wiring, running conduit, and later in the summer, will work on installing outside lighting and receptacles.

"By working on the project, students are experiencing the kind of work they need to be able to do when they graduate,"

said Electrical Technology instructor Ron Zike, who supervises students working in the field. "They need hours on new industrial construction projects. By working on this project, they are preparing to work for companies that do this type of work."

HVAC/R students have set up economizers for each of the rooftop units on Plath Hall. "Economizers allow for outside air to enter the building when it is cool and dry enough to make it practical," explains Justin McRitchie, head of the HVAC/R Program, adding that the students also assisted with plumbing and setting up roof units and with the installation of two ductless split systems.

ITCS students have also gained practical work experience helping with the installation of the network cabling throughout the building.

In addition to the industrial experience the students are receiving, Ron says the project is a chance for students in the three programs to work on a building which will play an important role in the future of their alma mater. "They can take pride in the building and point it out to their grandkids and say, 'I helped build that building.'"

Ron says that pride carries over to other areas of their lives. "Everyone is watching this building go up. Students will know they had a part in building something that is

important in their community. When they leave, they can say they helped make Perry what it is."

Kaila Lockbeam, Perry's Facilities & Safety Manager, says the project has progressed in a timely fashion because the contractor and sub-contractors have worked in an organized and timely fashion. "This project has operated with strong leadership and a team effort approach," she says. "They have set high standards for our students in training."

When the building is finished in late August, the Instrumentation Department will begin moving lab equipment and expect to begin classes in the new facility in the fall. •



## CLASS NOTES

After graduating from the Instrumentation Program in 1993, **Michael Berger** worked for seven years as a system integrator and PLC programmer for IDC (Industrial Design Corporation) on start-up and maintenance of Intel chip plants in the Beaverton/Hillsboro, Oregon, area. He then went to work for Intel doing the same work he did as an outside contractor. Michael retired from Intel in 2012 and is enjoying a "stress-free life" in Olympia.

**Jennifer (Noel) Chism**, who graduated from MOAC in 2014, is a certified coder at Kadlec Regional Medical Center in Richland.

**Nathan Esparza**, a 2010 Electrical graduate, earned a bachelor of science degree in electronic engineering from Central Washington University and worked as an electrical engineer for the Grant County PUD for a year. In April 2014, he accepted a position with Bechtel National Inc. as an electrical field engineer working at the vitrification plant on the Hanford site.

**Gary Jansen**, a 1965 Instrumentation graduate, retired from ARCO Alaska Oil & Gas Consulting in February 2014. He worked on the Alpine North Slope operations for the last 30 years of his career.

A 2009 BTA graduate, **Rachel Radford** is employed as a document control coordinator for PLC Multipoint, a lighting sensor and controls manufacturing company in Everett. She is engaged to be married in September and is currently attending Everett Community College with the goal of earning a degree in mechanical engineering.

*Your Perry family wants to know what you have been up to. Please email any recent news about yourself which you would like to share with fellow alumni to [perrynews@perrytech.edu](mailto:perrynews@perrytech.edu).*

# Walmart Foundation Grants Funds to Welding Technology Program

Thanks to a grant from the Walmart Foundation, students in the Welding Technology Program are learning fabrication skills on two pieces of state-of-the-art equipment.

Officials from Walmart were on the Perry campus in February to see students demonstrate use of a plasma table, accompanying software, and an ironworker which were purchased with a \$35,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation's Washington State Giving Council.

"This equipment allows our students to learn to operate equipment which is commonly used in industry and gives them the capability to do more complex projects," says Jason Lamiquiz, Perry's associate dean of education.

Using computerized numerical control (CNC) software, the plasma table is used to cut complex, single-dimensional shapes from sheets of metal with accuracy within 1,000th of an inch. "Plasma tables are common in industry because they can precisely cut metal pieces in a time-efficient manner," Jason explains.

The ironworker, also purchased with the grant, is used to shear metal, punch holes,

and create notches.

"The work being done here is incredibly important to the community in readying students for future careers in fabrication and welding," says Mike Baecke, assistant general manager of Walmart's Grandview distribution center. "Washington Walmart State Giving Council is proud to support career development programs like the one at Perry Technical Institute."

The curriculum for the 12-month program includes classroom theory and hands-on instruction in welding, fitting, and related metalworking processes. Students also learn blueprint reading and fabrication. During the course of the program, students

have an opportunity to explore a variety of certification options offered by the American Welding Society and the Washington Association of Building Officials.

This is the fifth Walmart Washington State Giving Council grant awarded to Perry Technical Institute since 2008. The past grants, totaling \$152,000, were awarded to Perry's Automotive Technology Program, Electrical Technology Program, and the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Technology Program. •



## Three New Instructors Join Faculty



**Mardell Newhouse**



**Ignacio Lopez**



**Rick Snider**

Three new instructors have joined the Perry Tech faculty. The new instructors include Mardell Newhouse in the Business Technology & Accounting Program and Ignacio Lopez and Rick Snider in the HVAC/R Program.

Mardell was raised in Sunnyside and earned a bachelor of arts degree in business administration from the University of Washington and a master's degree in business management and strategy from Western Governor's University. For the last seven years, Mardell has worked as a substitute teacher in the East Valley School District.

Ignacio grew up in Wapato and graduated from Perry's HVAC/R Program in 2006. After graduation, he went to work for Universal Mechanical in Redmond. Over the years, Ignacio kept in touch with his alma mater and welcomed the chance to return as an instructor in the program's second section.

Also new to the HVAC/R Program is Rick Snider. Raised in the Tri-Cities, Rick graduated from Perry's HVAC/R Program in 1984. He worked in the boiler/refrigeration department at the ConAgra Foods plant in Pasco for 28 years before joining the Perry faculty to teach the fourth section of HVAC/R. •

## Mike Smith: Retirement Won't End His Connection to Perry

With 29 years under his belt, one might assume that Mike Smith would hang on for another year and hit the 30-year milestone. But, according to the longtime ITCS instructor, the bucket list is growing and, after all, 30 is nothing more than a number.

Over the last 29 years, Mike has witnessed a revolution in the communications industry. He joined the Perry faculty in 1986, two years after the break-up of the Bell Telephone System. Perry was flooded with students seeking the skills needed to enter this booming industry.

"The number of students coming into the industry was increasing because there was a tremendous need for technicians because of all the new companies forming after the break-up," he said.

Mike has seen ups and downs and witnessed the program adapt as the industry evolved. When he came on board, the program's curriculum centered on telephony. By the late 1980s, the program starting teaching the skills needed to work on the new means of communicating – the computer. He remembers students building DOS machines in the late 1980s and doing cabling in the early 1990s.

The most challenging part of the job has been keeping up with changing technology. Students, too, have changed over the years. "Students are different because it is a different world," he says.

Mike enjoys following his students' careers after they graduate, keeping track of their jobs and their accomplishments. "You know you've been teaching for a long time when you start having the sons and daughters of graduates," he says, laughing.

The communications field is diverse, with opportunities in a

variety of industries, settings, and specialties. "People are attracted to the program because they like working on computers, but the field is not just computers," he says. "Graduates can go to work just about anywhere."

Born and raised in Goldendale, Mike served four years in the Air Force before enrolling in Perry's Instrumentation & Industrial Electronics Program. After graduating from Perry in 1975, he worked as an industrial instrument technician for Leeds & Northrup for 11 years. He grew tired of the traveling his job required and began thinking about a career in teaching. In 1986, he returned to his alma mater, becoming the third instructor in Perry's two-year-old Telecommunications Program.

Mike doesn't intend to let grass grow under his feet – his plans for retirement include traveling with his wife, Debby. He's also looking forward to having more time to attend concerts, see movies, and volunteer for groups like the Yakima Valley Museum and the Yakima Folklife Festival.

Mike has seen nearly three decades of growth and change at Perry. When he came on board, there were around 250 students enrolled and about 25 instructors. While he's looking forward to the freedom that retirement

will bring, he knows he'll miss his friends at Perry. "This is a great place to work, we have so many good people," he says.

Retirement won't put an end to Mike's relationship with the school – he plans to continue to be an ambassador for Perry and to serve on the ITCS Program Advisory Committee. "I wouldn't miss that free lunch," he says, laughing. •



Mike Smith works with ITCS student Tyler Murphy.

## Andy Fischer Named Department Head

Longtime faculty member Andy Fischer has been named to replace Mike Smith who is retiring as head of Perry Tech's Information Technology & Communication Systems Program.

Born and raised in Yakima, Andy graduated from Perry's Telecommunications Program in 1992. He worked at the University of Washington Medical Center before returning to Yakima to work for Hart Communications. In 1996, he accepted a position as the instructor for Perry's computer technology class at the Yakima Valley Technical Skills Center. He moved on the Perry campus in 1999 as an instructor in the Telecommunications Program.

Andy is looking forward to continuing the tradition which was established by his predecessor. "Mike has provided excellent leadership and a strong foundation for the program," he says.

The new department head's goals for the ITCS Program are to build upon that foundation and to oversee changes to curriculum which align with the needs of industry. •



Andy Fischer

## IN MEMORY

A 2013 ITCS graduate, **Eugene Lamont "Gene" Ashman**, died on May 16, 2015, in Yakima.

**Clifford Davis**, a 1960 Aircraft Engine Mechanic graduate, recently died. He was living in Wichita, Kansas.

Former Perry Graphics instructor **John Freeborn** died on February 20, 2015, at the age of 75. He earned a bachelor of arts degree in graphic arts from the University of Washington and put his skills to work as director of graphic arts at KIMA-TV and over the course of his career worked for KSPS-TV in Spokane and for American Sign and Indicator before joining the Perry Graphics faculty.

A 1984 Graphics graduate, **Michael D. Goodman**, died on September 16, 2014, in Tucson, Arizona. He was 56.

**Max Miller** died in Union Gap on April 19, 2015, at the age of 91. He was a graduate of Perry's Carpentry Program.

Perry graduate **James H. Moore** died on Friday, May 15. Jim attended school in Selah and served in the Army from 1964-67 before enrolling at Perry. He worked for Pacific Power for 36 years, retiring in 2006.

**Jeris "Jerry" Ninnemann** died on February 20, 2014, at the age of 75. Jerry served in the Navy aboard the USS Hancock as an electrician and was honorably discharged in 1962. He graduated from Perry in 1987 and worked at Perry as an electrical journeyman.

**James Leonard Rayner** died on May 15, 2015. He graduated from the Automotive Program in 1966 and owned and operated Rayner Import Repair in Yakima and Montana for more than 40 years. He was 70 years old.

A 1966 Auto Body graduate, **John Sterbenz** died on May 20, 2014, at the age of 68. After graduating from Perry, John was drafted into the Army and served in Vietnam. He worked in the auto body shop at Hahn Motors until he started his own business, S & S Auto Body, with his friend, Dave Siebol in the mid-1970s. Later in his career, he worked for Paint and Equipment Supply and retired from PPG Industries in 2001.

*If you know of a Perry graduate who has recently passed away, please notify us by emailing [perrynews@perrytech.edu](mailto:perrynews@perrytech.edu).*

## Perry to Host Employer Expo

Perry continues to reach out to employers by sponsoring an Employer Expo on Wednesday, September 2.

The expo provides a chance for employers to recruit for current and future openings, do long-term workforce planning, and disseminate information about their companies and possible career paths.

The expo is free, but space is limited. For more information or to register, call Career Services at 509.453.0374 or email [chelsea.snodgrass@perrytech.edu](mailto:chelsea.snodgrass@perrytech.edu).



Thirty-six employers set up booths in Matson Hall and the auditorium at the Spring Employer Expo, held in April.

## Robotics Camp Is High-Tech Fun



Lead instructor Moises Gonzalez works with students participating in the 2014 Summer Robotics Camp.

Inquisitive young minds are convening on the Perry Tech campus this month for two weeks of fun and learning.

For the fifth consecutive year, Perry is hosting the Summer Robotics Camp. The camp is offered free of charge to 25 youths who are entering seventh grade in the fall. The camp was made possible through grants from the Yakima Walmart stores, GESA Credit Union, and Wilbert Precast.

The camp integrates science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in a fun learning environment.

Students learn to use simple hand tools and basic spreadsheets; to understand the fundamentals of DC electricity and motors; to control and manipulate a robotic arm utilizing computer interfaces; and to identify robotic parts and understand how they relate to real-world experiences.

The lead instructor for the camp is Moises Gonzalez. Moises teaches beginning to advanced engineering classes at Toppenish High School. Instructors from each of Perry's 10 training programs will lead sessions on their specialties.



**Scott Hoffine**, a 1991 Instrumentation graduate who serves as CO2 plant operations manager for John I. Haas, presents a \$5,000 check to **Erin Fishburn**, director of Perry Technical Foundation. The donation will be used to purchase equipment for Perry's Instrumentation Program. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., John I. Haas is a member of the Barth-Haas Group, the world's largest supplier of hops, hop products, and services. The company's Innovations Center is located in Yakima. The Yakima Valley is one of the world's highest producing hop-growing regions.

# STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



March 2015

## Derek Dowdy

Machine Technology

Instructors describe Derek Dowdy as the kind of student they never have to worry about – he's always on task, using every minute of class time to improve his skills.

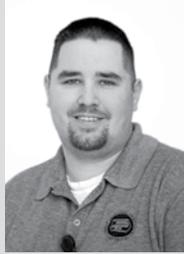
This quality earned Derek the honor of being named March Student of the Month. Dowdy is a student in Perry's Machine Technology Program.

"Derek even keeps busy while he is waiting for a machine to run a part," says department head Dan Steinmetz.

A 2012 Selah High School graduate, Derek followed in the footsteps of his father, Don Dowdy, a 1984 Perry Machine graduate. Derek is currently doing an externship, working full time at the company where his father works, Triumph Actuation Systems (formerly GE Aviation).

"I really like the work I am doing," he says.

Derek will graduate in June and is looking forward to continuing to work for Triumph.



April 2015

## Andrew Root

Electrical Technology

Andrew Root credits his grandparents for encouraging him to make what he calls one of the best decisions of his life.

Andrew had attended culinary school and was working part time as a cook in Portland when his grandmother suggested that he check into attending Perry Technical Institute. He toured the school and ended up enrolling in the Electrical Technology Program. "I was deathly afraid of electricity, but soon learned that with the right skills, I had nothing to fear," he says.

It didn't take much time in the program for Andrew to establish himself as a stand-out student and worker. "Selecting Andrew as Student of the Month was an easy choice," says Mike Yusi, head of the program. "He is an outstanding student who is always ready and willing to help his classmates."

A native of Philomath, Oregon, Andrew is working two part-time jobs while in school. When he graduates in September, he is interested in pursuing a career as a commercial electrician.



May 2015

## James West

Welding Technology

James West demonstrates commitment to his education in various ways: performance, attitude, leadership, not to mention holding down a full-time job and commuting to school from Goldendale.

James, who is enrolled in the Welding Technology Program, earned the honor of being named May Student of the Month. Instructors describe him as a mentor who is always willing to help his classmates.

Raised in Goldendale, James is looking for a career instead of a job when he decided to enroll at Perry. "I've always liked working with metal," he says, explaining that he enjoys blacksmithing as a hobby.

The father of two, James is looking forward to exploring how he can use his new-found welding skills when he graduates in December. His goal is to start his own business in the next five years and to be able to give back to his community.

## Financial Literacy *Continued from page 1*

determining if they need them versus wanting them," says Jennifer Snellink, Financial Aid loan specialist.

When the last batch of excess checks was distributed, the Financial Aid Department attached a note to each check encouraging students to return excess funds. As a result, Perry students returned \$32,338 last quarter.

Jennifer and Amanda, both graduates of Perry's Business Technology & Accounting Program, often share personal experiences with the students. "Sharing real-world scenarios from our lives makes what we're teaching more meaningful," says Jennifer.

They are also encouraging all students to share how they've saved money by writing tips on a large white board. "We'd like graduates to share what worked for them so we can share that wisdom with current students," Jennifer says.

While the emphasis on financial literacy is in response to the national trend of rising student debt and loan default rates, Amanda points out that it is really just another benefit Perry offers students. "We are focused on serving students so it makes sense that we would help them make sound financial decisions." •

## In Brief *Continued from page 1*

### Help Us Clean House!

Our database contains duplicates and incorrect contact information. Please help us stay in touch by updating your contact information. Send us your current mailing and email addresses and we'll send you our new alumni decal which you can display to show your Perry pride.

We're also interested in learning where your Perry education has taken you. Please send information about yourself which we can share with fellow alumni in upcoming issues of the Perry News.

You may update your information on our website at <http://www.perrytech.edu/alumni/update.html> or email [foundation@perrytech.edu](mailto:foundation@perrytech.edu). Thanks for your help. We look forward to hearing from you!

### Bank Partnership Provides Resources

HomeStreet Bank is partnering with Perry Technical Institute to provide employees, students, and alumni with a variety of resources for buying a home.

The Hometown Home Loan Program offers services such as:

- Free home-buying seminars
- Budget and credit resources
- Special loan programs
- Access to down payment assistance
- Significant savings on closing costs

For further information on the program, call 509.494.8717 or visit [www.homestreet.com/PTI](http://www.homestreet.com/PTI).



**Perry Technical  
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**FRI., JULY 10TH**

**10AM-12:30PM**

**Presentation, tour, and BBQ lunch**

**PRE-REGISTRATION ENCOURAGED**

**PERRYTECH.EDU**

For more information about our graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed the program, and other important information, please visit our website at: <http://www.perrytech.edu/programs/disclosures/>. Perry Technical Institute does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Title IX Coordinator/Director of HR for Faculty & Staff Development | Perry Technical Institute | 2011 W. Washington Ave. | Yakima, WA 98903 | 509.453.0374 or 888.528.8586

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