Welcome to the December issue of *Spotlight on Student Success* featuring articles about successful students who are currently working in positions in their fields: Mechanical Design, Automotive, and Welding. Read about the recent articulation agreement with Michigan Technological University, and meet College Advising Specialists Houa Lee and Bill Schultz who work with Tech & Trades students.

### Faces of Successful Students

NTC recently sponsored a Job Fair for Tech & Trades students. These Mechanical Design students attended and made initial contact with the companies where they are now working.

- **Eric Woller**
  Greenheck Fan

- **Jody Giese**
  Greenheck Fan

- **Trevor Conley**
  A and B Process Systems

- **Ethan Weber**
  A and B Process Systems

- **Ben Lehman**
  Greenheck Fan

*MD student comments about the T&T Job Fair:*

...Gave me a good understanding of what is available in the field...Very helpful...Opened my eyes to all the job opportunities that are available...Created a bright future and helped me start a career...Helped me learn about the different companies in the area....
Welder Brandi Fox and automotive technician Sharleen O’Brien are non-traditional students who are working in their chosen fields of employment.

Hello. I’m Brandie Fox, and I graduated with the one-year Production Welding Certificate in August 2013. I was born and raised in Illinois, and we traveled a lot when I was younger because of my Dad’s job. When I was in high school, we moved from Illinois to Kansas to Wisconsin. Growing up, I loved to play sports – softball, volleyball, basketball and track. I was also a cheerleader. Shop class made me cringe, and I thought it was “just for the boys.”

I first came to NTC in 2007 for the Human Services program. I loved to work with people, but fearing that I would bring my “job” home with me, I decided it was not the right fit for me. I got married and moved to Las Vegas for a few years. In 2010, we moved back to Wausau to be near our families and start a family of our own.

My interest in welding developed by watching my husband and his friends weld. They teased me, and I showed them I could weld on the spot. I kept practicing with the welder, and I fell in love with the craft. In October 2012, I started the welding certificate program at NTC. It was very convenient because I lived right across the street.

I was told I was a “non-traditional student” in a class of 13 males. But it didn’t make any difference to me because I was going to school for a career. I wanted to better myself and my family.

My advice to women is don’t be afraid. For every man that says you can’t do it, there’s a female out there who is doing it. The male instructors at NTC did not treat me any differently than anyone else. I was the same as every other student. My husband loves the fact that I am a welder; he was supportive of me getting into the program. We work on projects together at home, and he is proud of my accomplishments.

Just go for it. I went back to school when I was married, had a child, and worked a full-time job. But that did not stop me from achieving my dream career. I’m a full-time welder at Steel King in Steven’s Point.

My name is Sharleen O’Brien. I grew up in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, and my mother was a single parent, so I didn’t have a “father figure” to “hang out” with in the garage to learn about cars. But, I had a younger brother that had electrical toys that I took apart and put back together, or even turned into something new. I have always been puzzle oriented. Initially, I went to Blackhawk Tech for Criminal Justice and loved the aspect of forensics or puzzle solving. However, I took a year off of college when my employer offered me full-time employment, and that one year actually turned into sixteen years off – ending when I enrolled at NTC.

Besides working, I eventually owned a successful business. Still, I felt there was more that I wanted to do with my life. I chose Auto because I love driving and owning cars from the 1990s. When you own an older vehicle there is more maintenance and repair, and I enjoy working on my own vehicles because the cost of repairs can be very expensive. My thought was to go into an auto program, and in 2012 I enrolled in the Automotive Technology Program at NTC. In December of 2014, I will graduate from the program.

There are not a lot of females in the industry. I don’t think I am treated any differently in the program; however, it is interesting in the field. Women customers sometimes prefer to have a woman working on their cars. Men may think they need to help females on the job. However, I know that I can do whatever a male does.

Women going into the auto mechanic field should not get discouraged. I currently work at Breaman Merrill Ford and enjoy the daily, complex puzzles that I solve on the job.
On Friday, December 6, a special recruitment event was held: **Females Interested in Technology and Trades - F.I.T.T.** Forty-four females (last year there were 17) representing eight high schools were on campus to have “hands on” activities in the Architectural Design & Technology, Automotive, Electromechanical, Graphic Communications, Machine Tool Technics, Mechanical Design, Residential Building, HVAC, and Welding programs. The luncheon featured Marlene Lappeus of Michigan Tech leading a discussion on the topic “My Dreams... My Future,” which focused on getting women excited about a career in Tech & Trades fields, as well as the Michigan Tech tuition/articulation agreement.

**Articulation Agreement Announced between NTC and Michigan Technological University**

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) and Michigan Technological University (Michigan Tech) in Houghton, MI, are proud to announce a renewable scholarship program that will allow NTC students to attend Michigan Tech at the resident rate. Students who transfer from NTC to Michigan Tech and meet the requirements will be eligible for a scholarship equal to the difference between resident and non-resident tuition.

“We’ve had successful students transfer from NTC in the past, and we look forward to their students continuing in these programs at Michigan Tech,” says John Lehman, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment at Michigan Tech. “This tuition agreement will open opportunities for more NTC graduates to continue their success at Michigan Tech.”

NTC and Michigan Tech also have four new articulation agreements that allow for a smooth transfer between the two institutions.

Students graduating from NTC with an Electromechanical Technology Associate Degree will be able to transfer immediately to Michigan Tech to work on their Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering Technology with junior standing.

For students who have completed NTC’s Mechanical Design Technology Associate Degree program, transferring to Michigan Tech’s Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology will be an option to take their education to the next level, entering Michigan Tech as a junior.

NTC’s IT – Network Specialist Associate Degree will now transfer to Michigan Tech’s Bachelor of Science in Computer Network & System Administration with 52 credits transferring to the bachelor degree program.

Students who complete their Architectural Design & Technology Associate Degree at NTC will be able to seamlessly transfer to Michigan Tech’s Bachelor of Science in Construction Management program with more than half of the bachelor degree work already completed.

For more information regarding transfer opportunities and to view the transfer guides, visit [http://www.ntc.edu/transfer](http://www.ntc.edu/transfer).
Meet the Technical & Trades College Advising Specialists

Houa Lee was born and raised in Laos. He also lived in Thailand for five years prior to moving to the United States in the 1980s. He has been living in the Wausau area for over thirty years. He earned his bachelor degree from Mount Senario College and is working toward a master degree in Guidance and Counseling through UW-Stout. Houa has been working at Northcentral Technical College for twenty-four years, during which he served as LEP Student Coordinator, LEP Student Transition Specialist, Admission Specialist and Minority Student Advisor.

Currently, Houa is a College Advising Specialist for the Technical & Trades Division, along with Bill Schultz. He advises students in the Welding, Machine Tool, Automotive Technology, Auto Collision, Manufacturing Technician and Wood programs. He assists students with their courses and program planning, academic issues, and credits for prior learning, developing Individual Educational Plans and making referrals to campus resources as needed.

“Adult education has always been my greatest passion, says Houa. “My goal as an advisor is to make sure our learners have a positive learning journey and to guide them so they can achieve their goals.” Contact Houa at lee@ntc.edu or by calling (715) 803.1797.

Bill Schultz came to Northcentral Technical College after teaching Technology Education for the past ten years. Bill taught in smaller rural school districts, teaching in a variety of technical and trades fields. Bill also has experience working in industry as he has worked in the carpentry, manufacturing, and mechanical fields as well as the paper industry.

Bill is currently a College Advising Specialist for the Technical & Trades Division, along with Houa Lee. He is also the advisor for the Agriculture Division. Programs Bill is responsible for include Agri-business, Dairy Science, Veterinary Science, Agriculture Equipment Technician, Applied Engineering, Electromechanical Technology, Residential Building, Heating/Air-conditioning/Refrigeration, Graphic Communications, Mechanical Design, Sustainable Architecture, and Apprenticeship. Bill is responsible for course and program advising, academic concerns, credits for prior learning, and developing Individual Educational Plans and making referrals to campus resources when needed.

He especially likes working with such a caring and devoted team, an attitude that radiates throughout NTC. Contact Bill at schultzwil@ntc.edu or by calling (715) 803.1797.

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Best Wishes for a happy Christmas

You follow tradition every day... Why not create a new one?