

# THE CENTURIAN

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SPRING  
2020



From the Desk of Campus Executive Directors: Aisha Newsome, Dennis Ryan, Greg Daniel, Mike Bragg, Paula Massey and Robert Jones III.

## Follow CDC Guidelines



**Practice Social Distancing**  
6 ft when possible



**Wear Face Mask**  
When social distancing is not possible



**Wash Hands**  
With soap and warm water or 60% alcohol sanitizer



**Wear Gloves**  
When cleaning exposed surfaces or taking out trash



**Stay Home**  
With fever or flu-like symptoms

Click here to learn more.



## Tidewater Tech Cuts Ribbon on Spacious New Facility



On Friday, September 27, 2019, Tidewater Tech hosted a ribbon cutting at their new location on the corner of E. Princess Anne and Azalea Garden Roads in Norfolk, VA.

The new building has almost double the square footage of the old building a mile down the road. This allows Tidewater Tech to better serve the community and employers hiring skilled trades professionals in the ever-growing market. The Administration, Admissions and Education staff rallied together to welcome the community and city leaders into the new school.

Tidewater Tech now houses 92 state-of-the-art welding booths for Combination Welding, 9 skills labs including auto bays fully outfitted with Sonic Tools, and additional classroom space to comfortably fit a higher population of students. The ability to continue growing as a trades school allows Tidewater Tech to support the ever-growing trades industry in Hampton Roads. Tidewater Tech opened its doors to everyone on September 27th to share the joyous event. Mr. Gerald Yagen, Dr. Joel English, Norfolk City Councilwoman Adrienne McClellan, and Christian Rapper Legin all joined in to cut the ribbon and speak to students, staff, and members of the community.

“ Tidewater Tech now houses 92 state-of-the-art welding booths for Combination Welding, 9 skills labs including auto bays fully outfitted with Sonic Tools ”

During the ceremony, Paula Massey, Campus Executive Director, announced the naming of the Joe B. Banks Auto classroom in dedication to the Banks family's contributions to the school. Massey reflected on the many graduates who have benefited from the Banks family scholarships. Ms. Cynthia Barnett, daughter to the scholarship's namesake, accepted the dedication and spoke about her father's passion of the automotive industry and trades education. Dr. English announced the HVAC Skills Lab dedicated to Tidewater Tech's very own Dennis Brakeville for his many years of service as a committed leader and educator in the trades industry. After the ceremony, the community and special guests were given tours and enjoyed music and refreshments.

## Joel English: Six suggestions for distance learning success

By Joel English



Over the next two months, online courses will allow students to finish their school year. But a misconception about online learning is what I call The Myth of Convenience: Students often make the mistake of thinking, because online courses are convenient, then they must naturally be easy. Online courses aren't easy; they're actually more difficult than traditional courses.

At the brick-and-mortar campus, schools provide the schedule; teachers provide class structure; staff provides facilities; and a custodian cleans up at the end of the day. But online, students are not just the learner, they are also their own class scheduler, tech support technician to keep the computer and internet running, librarian to keep learning materials together, janitor to keep the learning space tidy, and the security guard to keep family members quiet during class time. Online courses might be convenient, but they sure aren't easy.

Because being a successful online student requires more effort—not less—it is important that every online learner consider a few strategies as they approach online courses.

**1. Believe in the Process.** *An online course isn't a simple website that provides information; rather, it's an environment where you, your teacher and your classmates explore subjects together, interact and work on projects. Respect your online courses the same way you respect the traditional classroom—interact with your teacher, complete your work on time and expect to learn and grow from this experience.*

**2. Schedule your time.** *Online students find the most important strategy for success is scheduling time for daily participation. If you don't set aside a strict time in the day*

*to complete your classwork, the 24 hours in a day will come and go without you making any progress on coursework. Start every week of classes by writing down the exact due dates of all assignments for the week and organize your work according to those due dates. Claim 3-4 hours of the day, every day, dedicated only to schoolwork. And make sure everyone in the household respects those school hours.*

**3. Claim your workspace.** *Some students benefit from a quiet, secluded spot so they can concentrate on coursework without interruption; others are distracted by silence and work better spread out at the kitchen table where household background noise provides a comforting backdrop. Wherever you complete your work, make sure your family respects that your workspace is your virtual classroom, that you have enough space for your computer and textbooks, and that you have reliable internet access.*

**4. Participate actively.** *During online class time, actively communicate with your instructor and your peers. Let your teacher know if you're struggling with course content and let them know when you've mastered it. If there are group discussion questions in your course, answer the questions and respond to other classmates, just like you would during class discussion at the campus. Remember, an online course is not a website; it's a classroom full of learners.*

**5. Take breaks.** *Take a 5-10 minute break during every hour of online work. Breaks help you refresh your brain, relax your body and avoid physical and mental fatigue. Set your phone to remind you to take a short break each hour to stand up and stretch, as if you were walking between classes at school.*

**6. Know your resources.** *At the campus, you probably know what tutoring, counseling and other services are available to you. Most of those resources are available to online students by telephone or email. Tutoring is actually more important for online students, since they don't always have the opportunity to stop and ask questions during lecture time. Call or email your instructor about tutoring and support options, so you'll know how to get help when you need it.*

Dr. Joel A. English is the executive vice president of Centura College, Aviation Institute of Maintenance, and Tidewater Tech in Virginia Beach. He is author of "Plugged In: Succeeding as an Online Learner" and was previously a professor of English and Distance Learning at Old Dominion University.

## Tidewater Tech Cares About Cars

On October 12th, Tidewater Tech Automotive Technician students Sa-Don Bruington, Avion Megget, Robert Burton and Nicholas Donovan, accompanied by Automotive Instructor Roger Tesson, Automotive Coordinator Brandon Newsham and Director of Admissions Andrew Sprowel, participated in the AAA Annual Car Care Event at the AAA Corporate office in Virginia Beach. At this event, the

“ The AAA Car Care Event not only allowed students to gain real hands-on experience, it allowed Tidewater Tech to offer services to the surrounding communities.”

Automotive Technician students and staff offered free 15-Point Vehicle Safety Checks to community members from all over the Hampton Roads area. These checks included inspecting the vehicle’s glass, the wiper blades and the mirrors, as well as testing functionality of the vehicle’s horn, safety restraints and lights. Students went on to check the levels and conditions of the vital fluids such as engine oil, transmission fluid, coolant, power steering fluid and brake fluid. Students also checked to ensure the conditions of the vehicle’s coolant hoses, serpentine/ drive belts, and tire tread, including tread depth and air pressure. Lastly, the students checked the condition of the battery and the functionality of the charging system to ensure each vehicle was roadworthy and trip ready. The AAA Car Care Event not only allowed students to gain real hands-on experience, it allowed Tidewater Tech to offer services to the surrounding communities.



## Centura College Sends PPE to Healthcare Workers

Jul DeGeus



Wednesday, April 1st, Centura College’s Chesapeake campus collected food and beverage donations and assembled nearly 100 facial masks for healthcare workers within our community, all while practicing social distancing. This event was held so that the campus staff members could collect materials and food for individuals within the community who need extra supplies and support.

“We at Centura College Chesapeake wanted to provide support as communities struggle throughout our nation,” said Centura College Chesapeake’s Campus Executive Director Michael Bragg. “We made the decision to collect PPE and food to help make sure that basic needs for healthcare workers, who are on the front lines of this pandemic, and children, whom represent our future, can be met.”

The food and beverages were donated to Buffalow Family and Friends Community Days (BFFCD), which is a family-oriented organization that offers support, food and clothing to the Chesapeake community. Currently, BFFCD is putting together daily lunches for thousands of children since the schools were closed for the remainder of the year.

The facial masks will be donated to The Chesapeake Taskforce on Aging which is a non-profit organization that focuses on providing quality of life for seniors within the community. The masks will go to home healthcare workers who are performing their duties within assisted living facilities and homes right here in Chesapeake.

## Centura Newport News' Seventh Annual Fall Festival Karen Barfield

Centura Newport News' campus celebrated its 7th Annual Fall Festival on October 26th at the campus. Staff, faculty, and students all played a special part in the event. There were also a variety of vendors, community services, a haunted house, refreshments, games, music and more!

As always, the haunted house did not disappoint. Elizabeth Jones, Business Program Lead Instructor, led small groups of people through classrooms transformed into laboratories with mad scientists, roaming zombies, and a graveyard for the undead! Ms. Jones did a terrific job recruiting students to play the roles of some frightful asylum residents. Several young family members of the staff and faculty played a part too. The haunted asylum was the biggest hit of the day, often with a line of people waiting for their turn to be scared crazy.

The rest of the festival was full of energy and excitement. Account Executive Kenneth McCants, along with DJ Fountz of radio station 103 JAMZ, provided music for all to enjoy. Children's entertainment included an arts and crafts station, face painting, and a bounce house. About 50 vendors participated in the event, some selling wares and some providing information about community resources available in Hampton and Newport News.

“Free vital signs and chair massages were offered by our very own Medical Assisting and Massage Therapy students.”

Vendors included the YMCA, the Newport News Community Free Clinic, representatives from the Hampton VA Medical Center, as well as food trucks, military recruiters, and local banks just to name a few.

There was also a Trunk-or-Treat, demonstrations by the Newport News Fire Department, and the chance to try live-action role-playing (LARPing) sword fights with a local group from Briarfield Park.

Centura provided drinks, chips, nachos, and popcorn as well as cornhole, Jenga, and other games. Free vital signs and chair massages were offered by our very own Medical Assisting and Massage Therapy students.

The 2019 Fall Festival was the best one yet! It gets bigger and better every year; we look forward to sharing this event with the community again next year.

## Centura Virginia Beach Gives Thanks

What comes to mind when you think of Thanksgiving? Are you excited about the upcoming Black Friday sales or is it a time for you to gather with loved ones to give thanks for the blessings you received over the past year? At Centura College, Virginia Beach campus, we are grateful for our students, amazing colleagues, and supportive leadership. With the help and partnership of Lori Bedford, Medical Assistant Coordinator, the United Full Gospel Revival Center donated ten Thanksgiving baskets. The baskets were given to students that were recommended by faculty and the Student Service Coordinator. Gratitude fosters optimism and helps us to develop a more positive outlook on life. The students were appreciative and thankful for receiving such a wonderful gift. And we are grateful for the United Full Gospel Revival Center!

## Local Community Turns Out for Tidewater Tech Fall Festival



Tidewater Tech hosted a Fall Festival Saturday, October 26, 2019, from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Music for this event was provided by DJ Miles Mulkey. Food was available from vendors such as Got Fish!, MP Island, Kona Ice, and That's My Grandson's Cooking, which were a hit to all of the local community members and staff in attendance. A broad array of community resources including the YMCA, the STOP Organization, The City of Norfolk Recreation, Parks, & Open Spaces, and the Veteran's Center were all available sharing information and goodies with attendees. Many vendors came out to sell merchandise such as Origami Owl Jewelry, Mary Kay Skin Care, LulaRoe Clothing, and Children's Positive Character Books. Tidewater Tech also had numerous free activities and snacks for everyone including face painting, pumpkin decorating, cornhole, giant Jenga, cotton candy, popcorn, and a costume contest. Each academic program presented activities that represent their trade, and the admissions department offered tours of the new building. The Norfolk community showed up – with this being the largest turnout for the Annual Fall Festival in Tidewater Tech history. Fun was had by all!

## Centura Virginia Beach Commencement Ceremony with Vice Mayor James L. Wood Jeff Barbour



The Virginia Beach Campus of Centura College held its 2019 Commencement Ceremony at Spring Branch Community Church. The Commencement Ceremony began with the Graduation Processional and "The National Anthem," followed by Mr. Dennis Ryan, Campus Executive Director, welcoming the graduates and their families. Nearly fifty graduates participated in the ceremony and there were numerous distinguished academic awards presented to the most outstanding graduates of their respective programs.

Addressing the Class of 2019, Virginia Beach Vice Mayor James L. Wood delivered the Commencement Speech discussing heroism and bravery. He noted those traits of heroes, such as working hard, inspiring motivation in others, and serving others within the community. On a related note, He said that heroes shared similar virtues including integrity, problem solving and transforming

the present to shape the future. Vice Mayor Wood praised the graduates and encouraged them to follow their passions, remain true to themselves and help others by volunteerism.

To inspire the graduates, Vice Mayor Wood offered the words of singer/songwriter Bono, who once said, "The world is more malleable than you think, and it's waiting for you to hammer it into shape." Wood concluded his keynote speech by pointing out that everyone had different skills and talents, and heroes will be remembered for generations for their service to others in society. He congratulated the graduates and wished them continued success in their future endeavors.

There were many distinguished awards presented during the Commencement Ceremony. The Richard E. McLeod Memorial Award recipients, for graduates who have excelled academically in their programs,

were: Ashlee Eley, Massage Therapy; Elizabeth Forrest, Medical Assisting Clinical Support; Antoinette Houston, Business Management; and Brandon Moore, Information Technology.

Ashley Flynn, Medical Assisting, was presented with the Award of Excellence. The Perfect Attendance Awards were presented to Nancy Caelen, Medical Assisting, and Elizabeth Forrest, Medical Assisting.

Mrs. Emily Simmons, Director of Education, presented Mr. Carl Baker, Medical Assisting Instructor, with the Instructor of the Year Award. Following the presentation of diplomas to the graduates, Mrs. Simmons concluded the Commencement Ceremony with the conferring of the degrees to the Class of 2019! Congratulations to our CVAB graduates!

## Centura Virginia Beach Career Services Workshop

Jeff Barbour

Centura Virginia Beach's Career Services Coordinator put on a "Getting Career Fair Ready" workshop and a "Speed Interview" workshop to help students prepare for the upcoming Career Fair on December 11th, 2019. Students were able to schedule an appointment with the Career Services Coordinator, Olivia Jordan, to go over their resume and make sure they had a completed copy in preparation for the Career Fair. During the workshops, students learned how to prepare their 30-second elevator pitch and went over topics such as resume writing, dressing

for success and interviewing skills. During the "Speed Interview" workshop, students were able to interview with 6 diverse interviewers and go over 30 different interview questions to get an array of different experiences and potential possibilities. They also received feedback on their interview skills and were given encouragement as well as areas to improve upon for the future. Overall, students became better equipped with an array of professional skills in preparation for the Winter Career Fair.



# VERY PROUD OF OUR GRADUATES IN PROFESSIONAL PLACEMENTS

ADKINS, MARSHALL W	USN DOD	COTTON, ASHLEY	SIMSTAFF
AGUILAR, ALAN	ARCHITECTURAL GRAPHICS INC (105767)	CRISP, NATHANAEL R	DESTRESS EXPRESS
ALAMAL, JAMI	TABET MANUFACTURING	DAWSON-BROWN, MA'ATSINATUN	ABOVE ALL HAIR SALON
ALVARADO, JUWAN E	SOUTHCOAST WELDING & MANUFACTURING	DIMAURO, MICHAEL	PEAK FALL PROTECTION
AMMONS, NICHOLAS	NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING (10120)	DOCALAVICH, SCOTT	B & Z SERVICES
ARTHUR, KIYONA	RIVERSIDE CARDIOLOGY SPECIALIST	DURHAM, LISA	INDIAN RIVER RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
ASHBY, SHAR-LES	TPMG WEST POINT FAMILY MEDICINE	ELLIS, IVORY	OCTAPharma PLASMA INC.
ASHCRAFT, CHRISTOPHER	SYSCO HAMPTON ROADS INC.	FELTON, SHEANEAQUA	FAMILY AND INTERNAL MEDICAL CENTER
ASKEW, DERRICK	DEJ HANDYMAN SERVICE	FERGUSON, KIMBERLY	HEALTHFIRST CHIROPRACTIC AND REHAB
ASKEW, DOMONIQUE	BAE SYSTEMS NORFOLK SHIP REPAIR	FREEMAN, DEMONTE	A&A MECHANICAL SERVICES
BAILEY, AMY	GREENBRIER OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY PC	FULLWOOD, JASON	FULLWOOD PROPERTY MGT.
BANG, JAE L	MASSAGE ENVY HARBOURVIEW	GANDY, TYRELL	TRI-STAR ELECTRIC INC
BELCHER, HORACE C	T&C HAULING SERVICES, LLC	GILYARD, DURANTE N	1ST MARINE CORPORATION
BELL, CANDICE	ADULT & PEDIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATES	GLENN, TESHARA	TIDEWATER PEDIATRIC CONSULTANTS
BENNETT, BROOKLYNN	OCTAPharma PLASMA INC.	GLORIA, NICHOLAS	SERCO INC - HEMDON
BERNARD, SAMANTHA	CORNERSTONE PRIVATE PRACTICE	GRANT, TRAYVON	CTR GOVERNMENT SERVICES INC.
BOND, ANGEL	LIKE BRAND NEW CLEANING SERVICE	GUADAMUZ, TYLER	PARISER DERMATOLOGY NN
BOWMAN, CHARLOTTE R	VISITING PHYSICIANS	HALL, KENYA	MA HALL MASSAGE/ BEAST MODE FITNESS
BOYKINS, JASMIN	SENTARA VASCULAR SPECIALIST	HARDEMAN, BAKARI	SYSCO HAMPTON ROADS INC.
BRASHER-EASLEY, KWAMAINE	SMITH & KEENE	HARRELL, ANDREW A	RELIANCE HOME COMFORT, LLC
BRAXTON, ALLISHA	TPMG OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY	HILL, AMBER	GATEWAY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
BRAXTON, STEPHEN	TRUEBLUE INC.	HILLIARD, WILFORD	SEAGER
BRYANT, TINAMARIE	PINTO CHIROPRACTIC & REHABILITATION	HOLMAN, LATONYA	MID ATLANTIC DERMATOLOGY ASSOCIATES
BUCHANAN, ALVA	HAND & STONE SPA - LANDSTOWNE	HUNTER, TAKIE	WINE AND UNWIND DAY SPA
CARVER, NICHOLAS	NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDERS	IAFRATO, ANNABEL	M. T. CURRY INC.
CEPERO DIAZ, RAFAEL H	1ST MARINE CORPORATION	JACKSON, TARESHA	MCKENZIE HASTING INSTITUTE
CHAMBLISS, BRANDON	MAJESTIC MOTORS	JAMES, ALANA	SL NUSBAUM / WOODMORE TRACE APTS
CHEVALIER, MARCELLO	AMIKO TRANSPORT LLC	JESTER, CANDACE	NEW HORIZONS REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTERS
COPELAND, ANTHONY M	RELIANCE HOME COMFORT, LLC	JOHNSON, DONTA	DAMUTH TRANE
COPELAND, TAKISHA L	SENTARA HEALTHCARE	JOHNSON, MONICA	CHKD OAKBROOKE

JONES, III, SAM	HAND AND STONE	ROLLICK, COURTNEY	VINDECARE
JONES, JEFFREY	GREENBRIER PLUMBING HEATING & AC	ROY, RYAN	TABET MANUFACTURING
JONES, JQUAN	BLUE STAFFING AGENCY, LLC	SCHROEDER, CARLIE	A TIDEWATER WOMEN'S HEALTH & LGBT PRIMARY CARE
JONES, STERLING	SENTARA HEALTHCARE	SCOTT, QUINTESIA O	HAMPTON ROADS ORTHOPEDIC SPORTS MEDICINE
KILL, MATTHEW	ASSOCIATED MECHANICAL COMPANIES INC.	SHANNON, MICHAEL	NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING (10120)
KING, FREDERICK	GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES INSURANCE - GEICO	SHAVERS, MELODY	HEALTHCARE STAFFING INC.
LANE, SOPHIA	ANGEL, THE FIX IT MAN L.L.C.	SHOULDERS, RANDELLE	SHOULDERS & SONS, LLC
LEE, EMILY	GRYPHON TECHNOLOGIES	SIMMONS, LENORA	THE CROSSINGS AT HARBOUR VIEW
LIVERMORE, RACHEL	SERCO INC - HEMDON	SIMMONS, LENORA	UROLOGY OF VIRGINIA
LOFGREN, JACQUELINE	SENTARA VASCULAR SPECIALIST	SMITH, FLETCHER L	NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING
LOWERY, TYRONE	CANDLEWOOD SUITES CHESAPEAKE/SUFFOLK	SMITH, LINSEY	RENEW ENTERPRISES
LUMBLEY, AUSTIN	TRUEBLUE INC.	SONS, KRystal	MASSAGE ENVY-LOEHMANN'S PLAZA
LUTCHMAN, KAREEM	GRAYWELL EQUIPMENT	SPENCER, WESLEY	HARRISON MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL, INC.
MALYSZKA, MEGAN	REFRESH CLEANING	STRAWTER, KEYANA	HEALTHFIRST CHIROPRACTIC AND REHAB
MARTORELL, SHANE	GRYPHON TECHNOLOGIES	SUA, CHASTITY	BODY LOGIC CHIROPRACTIC AND MASSAGE THERAPY
MCKINNEY, DARIUS	CARLTON BUILDING SERVICES	SWEAT, CHRISTOPHER	SMITHFIELD PACKING CO.
MCMICKLE, JENNIFER	OCTAPharma PLASMA INC.	THOMAS, SHALONDA	MASSAGE ENVY
MEAD, MELISSA	SENTARA HEALTHCARE	TINSLEY, KESHARA	MCDONALD'S NEWMARKET
MILLER, TRAVIS	SOUTHERN STATES - TIDEWATER PETROLEUM	TOY, CAITLYN	BOARD CERTIFIED FAMILY PRACTICE
MITCHELL, DIAMOND	SENTARA RIVERWALK FAMILY PRACTICE	VANDIJK, JENNIFER L	RIVERSIDE DOCTORS HOSPITAL WILLIAMSBURG
MULLEN, KELLY	DR. MELISSA BURKLEY, OPTOMETRIST	VICKU, WISDOM	TRI-STAR ELECTRIC & HVAC
NELSON, MATTHEW	ODU RENT	WALLACE, THADDEUS R	SMITH & KEENE
OUTEN, AREEYA	WESTERN BRANCH CHIROPRACTIC	WARREN, DARRIEN	EPSILON SYSTEM SOLUTIONS, INC.
PEMBERTON, CHARMONIQUE	HAMPTON ROADS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER	WARREN, DEVIN	SERCO INC. (15588)
PEOU, JIMMY	MASON B TRUCKING, LLC	WEBSTER, CHRISTY D	OCTAPharma PLASMA
PHELPS, TAMMARA K	PEDIATRIC CONSULTANTS OF HAMPTON ROADS	WHITAKER, CHEAVONYA	OCTAPharma PLASMA INC.
PIKE, SAMANTHA M	OCTAPharma PLASMA	WHITE, DEANDRE	TRADE TEAM
PITYER, MICHAEL	BLUEGREEN VACATIONS	WHITE, JULIE L	RIVERSIDE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
POE, ERIC	GENERAL DYNAMICS CORP.	WHITFIELD-COLEY, AEJA	GREENBRIER OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY PC
QUIDLEY, TAMICA	GATEWAY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER	WILLIAMS, AUJAI	CHESAPEAKE REGIONAL SURGICAL SPECIALIST
RAMOSR, ALONZO	U.S. GYPSUM	WILLIAMS, RASHEEDAH	OCTAPharma PLASMA INC.
RICE, CLAY	SEAWARD MARINE SERVICES	WILSON, COREY	WILSON CAR DETAILING & PRESSURE WASHING
RICHARDSON, IVORY	SENTARA ENDOCRINOLOGY SPECIALIST	WITHERS, ANTOMEA	SENTARA INTERNAL MEDICINE
RIDDICK, DESJA	RITE AID	WOOLCOCK, CHRISTA L	HAMPTON ROADS ENT AND ALLERGY
RIDDICK, JAYSIAH	SENTARA HEALTHCARE	WORTHEN, RAVEN	QUEST DIAGNOSTICS (MEDXM)
RIVERA, MAYRA A	US ONCOLOGY, INC	YOUNG, CHELSEY	SMOC - SPORTS MEDICINE & ORTHOPEDIC CENT
		ZIMBRO, MARK	SYSCO HAMPTON ROADS INC.

## Centura Newport News: Graduate Spotlight

Micaela Reddick



Shar-les Ashby wanted to start our Medical Assistant program in February 2019. When I first sat with her, she told me she went to another college but wasn't able to complete her program because the school was closed. She came to Centura College Newport News because she wanted to make a better life for herself and her family. Ashby was married and had a huge support system behind her. But as life has its ups and downs, there was one thing standing in her way: Ashby didn't have her GED. She would need to get it to enroll in our Medical Assistant program. After only a few weeks, she called me and said, "I'm just going to do it. I registered and I'm taking my GED test today! Ms. Micaela, please pray for me. I'm ready to take the next steps and start my career." Less than 4 hours later, I received a text from her saying she passed and she's on her way to enroll for our Medical Assistant program. She came in and hugged me and was excited about this new change in her life.

Within 5 months of her enrollment in our Medical Assistant program, Mrs. Shar-les Ashby received a job with TPMG Family Medicine in West Point under Doctor Donald Carver, MD. He worked with her schedule so she was sure she would complete our program and work full-time with them. Ashby graduated in January 2020 with a huge support system including her family, friends, and Centura staff. She was so grateful for the experience she

**“Within 5 months of her enrollment in our Medical Assistant program, Mrs. Shar-les Ashby received a job from TPMG in West Point Family Medicine under Doctor Donald Carver, MD...”**

has had with the instructors, classmates, and family-oriented atmosphere at the Peninsula location. Shar-les Ashby isn't going to stop here. She is preparing to take her prerequisites and applying to go back to school to get her RN.

Shar-les is so thankful for her journey here and to the Centura family for changing her life. She's able to do more for her family financially and her future is very

bright thanks to her support from Centura College of Allied Health and Trades. I asked Ashby some questions about her time and here are her responses:

**Q: What was your favorite moment here at Centura Newport News?**

A: My favorite moment would have to be when I reached the capstone. It was a review of everything, and I noticed what I have accomplished when I was there.

**Q: How were our small class sizes beneficial to your learning?**

A: OMG, the small class sizes helped my focus tremendously. I felt connected to my instructors. The smaller the class, the better. It's important because it's hard to get the one-on-one training on the job. My phlebotomy class was small which gave me better opportunities in the field where I didn't feel like I was thrown in.

**Q: What advice do you have for future students who are discouraged and want to take this career path as you did?**

A: The biggest thing I can say is, "Stick with it." I used to work at a grocery store and now I work at a Family Medicine doctor's office as a Certified Medical Assistant. Listen to the instructors, come to class, and enjoy your experience. The instructors know their stuff, I've seen everything in the field that they've taught me.

## Centura Virginia Beach is First Virginia College with AMT Student Society

Lori Bedford



Centura College Virginia Beach Campus has the great honor of being the very first college in the state of Virginia to officially have a student society with American Medical Technologists (AMT)! The official meetings were held, September 23rd and 24th. This is a very big step for the Virginia State Society. Ms. Anna Catron, Virginia State Society president, has expressed her excitement with the induction of the student society here at the Virginia Beach campus. The student society is complete with official

advisors, Ms. Lori Bedford, AHI (AMT), and secondary Ms. Carlette Cooper.

**Our society chairpersons/presidents are:** Ms. Candace Dula, Ms. Kiana Buckner, and Ms. Felicia Laguerre. Others have been named as secretary, Ms. Leona Benton, and treasurer, Ms. DanYale Trott.

In addition to this, every student has been issued a custom-made lapel pin, which they are now wearing proudly! In the

first meeting, bylaws were formed and the mission statement for Centura's AMT student society was adopted. The students will be volunteering, assisting in whatever capacity is needed and doing outreach in our community. We are looking for great things from our students and this will be a direct line to become active AMT members once graduated!