

# H

## ead of the class



Mechanical  
Contractors  
Association  
Central  
Florida

For over a generation the MCA of Central Florida, Local Union 123, and Hillsborough Community College have been working together to bring new plumbing, pipefitting and HVAC service technicians into the labor pool of their union mechanical contractors. However, these many years of success have not brought complacency to the Tampa Bay Pipetrades Apprenticeship Program. The school is working as hard today as it was some 50 years ago to lead its students into the forefront of their trades.

The school not only educates future plumbers and pipefitters, but it also provides specialty certifications such as CFC, valve repair, pipe-end preparation, orbital tube welding, manual welding, and medical gas. In addition to these certifications, the school has also recently added training and testing for the prestigious UA STAR certification. "We have a fantastic welding certification program. We have a fantastic Med Gas program. We have a fantastic HVACR program. And this year we had more recruits than we've had in years," raved Training Director Larry Utt. "I think a lot of people don't realize what a great program we have here."

All of the instructors in the training program participate in the UA 5-year instructor certification program, and over half of them have completed it. This training and dedication really comes through in the classroom.

"There are as many methods for welding as there are people," Assistant Training Director Randall Gandy explained about his theory of education.

"Everybody in the classroom should be an instructor. I'm just there to bring it out of them."

In fact, the program has been so successful that this year it will be taking on the biggest load of apprentices it's carried in recent years. And all of this growth has necessitated an expansion of the program. "We're adding a satellite school and two new instructors this year," explained Larry. "The classes will be held at Hillsborough Community College's Environmental Studies Facility on the border between Hillsborough County and Manatee County on Highway 41." This satellite school and the additional instructors will allow the program to take on the growing student body and provide a more convenient location for some of the traveling students.

The Tampa Bay Pipetrades Apprenticeship Program has been serving the plumbing and mechanical contractors of central Florida since the 1950s, and it's still at the head of its class.



# T

## om Kamprath

### President of MCA Central Florida

I am honored to be the new president of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Central Florida. I hope to continue the good work that Richard Dickenson, the past president, has accomplished.

We have a diverse group of contributing contractors. They range from residential service to heavy industrial construction; from small plumbing shops to large general contractors. I will strive to make sure the MCA of Central Florida serves the needs of every contributing contractor.

The MCA of Central Florida will continue to work with Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 123 in training new men and women in the mechanical trades. The number of apprentices in the training program

has increased dramatically recently. We will continue to strive to produce highly trained technicians and craft people.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

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# UA STAR Raises the Bar

Physicians have their board exams. Lawyers, realtors and other professionals have tests to measure their skill levels. And the leaders at the United Association (UA) believed their industry needed a similar testing standard to delineate workers who possessed outstanding skill levels – and so the UA STAR certification program was born.

“UA journeymen receive state-of-the-art training, and this program identifies those with the highest degree of proficiency,” said Donald C. House, Director of HVACR and Residential Plumbing for the UA. “Plus, the program has been recognized by major standard-accrediting organizations and requires a solid base of education or work experience. UA STAR certification offers end-users the best of the best.” The UA developed its STAR certification program in conjunction with Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan, which has a prominent history of vocational education.

“The UA STAR certification program began as a certification program for HVACR service technicians,” said Larry Utt, Training Director of the Tampa Bay Pipetrades Apprenticeship Program. “And then as they added more certifications, we made them available through our program.” Because of the success of the HVACR program, STAR certification tests were developed for all the trades represented in the United Association. Using this same process, two new STAR exams have been added this year: Residential and Light Commercial HVACR Service Technician and Commercial Refrigeration Technician.

To take the UA STAR exam, a journeyman must have either five years of work experience or have graduated from a five-year union apprenticeship. Successful completion of the exam earns candidates 32 hours of college credit from Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Michigan, some of which are transferable to Hillsborough Community College. These credits may be applied toward an Associates Degree in HVACR technology, industrial training, fire sprinklerfitting, or construction supervision depending on the candidate’s trade and future plans. To date, over 120,000 college credits valued at over \$8.6 million have been issued nationwide.

The UA STAR Certification exam tests applicants for expertise in their trades, as well as inspection and testing, safety, science, mathematics, and even customer service. The UA STAR test is administered and supervised by Ferris State University and the National Inspection Testing Corporation (NITC). “NITC is an internationally recognized third party personnel certification agency,” explained Mr. Allen. Their third-party participation



helps the UA STAR test to meet the criteria for American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accreditation and the International Organization for Standardization’s (ISO) ISO-9002 certification.

Many manufacturers consider ISO certification fundamental to doing business internationally, and the UA STAR exam is the only test of its kind recognized by ISO. “ISO certification means that the UA STAR exam has met an important international standard, respected worldwide,” said Mr. Allen.

Contractors who employ UA STAR-certified craftsmen find their enhanced skills make for greater productivity and customer satisfaction. Dick Starr, president of The Enterprise Corporation, in Cleveland, OH, employs UA STAR-certified journeymen. “Clients often tell me I have the best people in the industry,” he said. “One person once told me, ‘Your technicians analyze problems, while others just treat symptoms.’ We have a strong industrial base of customers, and they appreciate that we employ technicians with certification recognized by ISO.”

The UA STAR certification exam offers greater opportunities for the union laborers, a more marketable workforce for the contractor, and superior results for the end-user, making everyone an equal winner in this industry trio. As Steven Allen explained, “ANSI accreditation, ISO certification, and the five-years of experience combine to make the UA STAR certification exam the standard to which all workers in this industry should aspire.”

# Bob Tiemann

## A year of progress

It's a year since I started with the Mechanical Contractor Association of Central Florida and I can honestly say it has been one of the most interesting and rewarding years of my career. It also has been one of the fastest years of my life.

MCA of Central Florida has had some accomplishments. The website ([www.mcacentralflorida.com](http://www.mcacentralflorida.com)) is up and running and getting more and more visits every day. I hope you have checked it out and used the calendar to find out about both the MCAA's and other's events and educational opportunities.

This is the second edition of the newsletter. This one appropriately focuses on education. With our partners at Local 123, we have obtained a five year HVAC apprentice training curriculum that has all the lesson plans and training aides on CDs. It even has software to produce written examinations. Obtaining such a program was a major goal of our former Executive Director Dick Bement. Mission accomplished!

The Annual Meeting was a success and new officers were elected and installed. They are President Tom Kamprath, Vice-President Dennis Hoshman, Secretary/Treasurer Art Faggion, and Immediate Past President Richard Dickenson. The other Directors are John Craig, William Nulton, and Bill Shelton.

That is where we have been and where we are now. So now, let's talk about where we are going. Watch for a supervisor training seminar this fall. There will be more details soon and we will also put it on the calendar. The MCAA Annual Convention will be in Orlando from February 25 to March 1, 2007. The Convention always features an extensive menu of educational sessions, and this time it is close to home. You can check it out at [www.mcaa.org](http://www.mcaa.org).

Finally, the Fourth Annual Charity Golf Outing is Saturday, November 4. This event, co-sponsored by Local 123 and MCA of Central Florida, has raised over \$40,000 for donations to area charities. We are very proud of this effort. Let us know if you would like to participate or make a donation.

As I said, it has been a great year and I'm looking forward to many more.

Bob Tiemann  
Executive Director



# Back to school

Whenever Apollo Construction gets to work within a school system, we are always thoughtful of the educational process taking place, and are grateful we are allowed to play some part. This summer Apollo Construction was fortunate to work in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee County School Districts on several projects.

Working within the school system now presents greater challenges for all involved. Since the Jessica Lunsford Act passed last year, all workers on school jobs must possess the correct badge to reflect completed background verification for the county in which they are working. This means more paperwork for all concerned: the school, the state, and contractors. We here at Apollo are happy to say, we passed this particular test.



Glenn Johnson and Jerry Fulton from Apollo Construction worked together on the Hillsborough County School District to manage the on-call Sewer Repair Project. This project so far has consisted of forty-two schools requiring mobilization of equipment and manpower for everything from small repairs to large replacements. The scope of work included grading and concrete work in conjunction with underground sewer pipe inspection, repair or replacement.

The Pinellas County School Board was not to be left out of our summer fun. The challenge of getting their schools ready was all about the water! The portables the schools were using needed to be ready for action by the first week of August and we were racing to keep on the school schedule. With the help of our efficient Union Labor we were able to get all the students in the portable classrooms with the required water and sewer connections, as well as complete several other replacement projects.

## MCAA '07 Convention Registration Now Open!



Join MCAA at Grande Lakes Orlando for MCAA '07, Meeting the Challenge of Change. This convention is designed to arm you with strategies and techniques that will help you anticipate and prepare for the many changes that pervade our highly volatile industry. The convention planning brochure will reach you in early September; or you may look it over online at [www.mcaa.org/mcaa2007](http://www.mcaa.org/mcaa2007), make your hotel choice and register for this important event.

## Tax Collection Withholding Makes Flawed Procurement Policy

MCAA and other business industry and construction groups oppose an additional withholding requirement on federally funded contracts set for 2011, and are seeking repeal. Section 511 of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act (H.R. 4287) sets an across the board withholding of 3% on all federally financed projects by public agencies with budgets of \$100 million to prevent tax avoidance by government independent contractors. MCAA and its allies oppose penalties for tax compliant business that also jeopardize successful contract competition by restricting project cash flow. MCAA asserts that federal government procurement policy, as reflected in Prompt Payment laws, recognizes the benefits of proper cash flow and supports tightening tax criteria for classifying workers as independent contractors; adding withholding on pay to independent contractors; imposing more stringent public contract responsibility/eligibility determinations; and requiring demonstration of tax compliance as a precondition to public contract eligibility.



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