

11/23/2006

Vol.: 34 / No. 46

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Mech Tech College, more than just mechanics

By CB STAFF

For many people, when they think about the Caguas Institution of Mechanical Technology, known as Mech Tech, they primarily think automotive mechanics. Well, that is the image that Mech Tech President Edwin Colón Cosme wants to change. Colón, who considers himself more a facilitator than a college president, spends a good amount of time researching, analyzing and accessing what Puerto Rico needs to meet current market demands for exemplary talent.

“We are focused on the future of Puerto Rican commerce and have always been at the forefront of technical developments in the industry,” stated Colón who took over the reins as current president from his father, Mech Tech founder José Colón Merced, in 1995. More than just an industrial / technical institution of higher learning, Mech Tech, which was established in the mid-1980s, has been placing an increasing focus on offering specialized degree programs in computerized systems.

Colón’s influence and foresight have helped him to evolve Mech Tech from its initial core business as an educational institution offering electronic and mechanical training to a highly skilled technical center combining, if you will, the latest technological advances affecting today’s business world. Among the plethora of educational programs offered in Mech Tech’s curricula include Computerized Microsoft Office Systems Specialist, Microsoft Certified Application Developer, Tool & Die Maker and Motorcycle Repair, to name a few. Colón also says all the classrooms are air conditioned, offer wireless Internet access and are equipped with a Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technological infrastructure on all four of their campuses (Bayamón, Caguas, Vega Baja and Mayagüez).

Among the many accolades and recognitions Colón has received over the years, he is most proud of the acknowledgment Mech Tech has garnered from the U.S. Department of Education and its accreditation by the Council of Continuing Education. “If you graduate with an associate’s degree from Mech Tech you can easily enter the engineering program at Inter American University,” he affirmed, adding, “I see Mech Tech as a true springboard...a facilitator toward the next level of career success.”

According to Colón, 92% of Puerto Rico’s students don’t know what to study and of

that figure 87% end up studying something completely different from what they had originally chosen. "With this in mind, I believe students who are indecisive about their studies should consider exploring the possibilities of a vocational education before going to a university," he professed. "Those who study toward vocational employment are highly employable. I want to create programs that no matter where in the world you are you will always be able to find a job."

The educator / president would also like to have more women studying at Mech Tech. "Currently, our female enrollment is less than 2%," says Colón. "My business plan for next year is to raise that to 15%." He went on to mention that women who are currently enrolled at Mech Tech favor courses such as Tool & Die Making as well as Computerized Office Systems.

He states his institution's success is due to an "out of the box" type of management. "My goal has always been to design educational programs that can help secure employment. When I look at Mech Tech, I see that our job is to collaborate with the private sector to create a curriculum that reflects not only industry needs but also real-world experiences with the latest equipment available," stated Colón. One of Mech Tech's greatest assets, expressed Colón, is his dedicated team of educators. "Each of them is fully certified and thoroughly capable to handle the challenge of teaching our students. Many of our teachers are also Mech Tech alumnae and share in our mission to prepare our students to be fully and completely integrated into the workforce."