



Region 7 News

Baldwin-Choctaw-Clarke-
Conecuh-Escambia-
Mobile-Monroe-Washington-
Wilcox



New Jobs Coming to Thomasville



The Westervelt Company announced the construction of a new lumber mill in Thomasville that will create 125 jobs.

This will be the Tuscaloosa-based, 134-year-old company's second lumber mill in the state. Construction is expected to begin in mid 2019 and operations will begin in 2020.

To read the entire story, click [here](#).

Gender Diversity in Construction



Women have been a rarity in construction. Obstacles like improper safety equipment, maternity leave, and workplace harassment often still

stand in the way of women aiming for construction careers. By remaining a man's world, the industry has neglected 51% of the workforce and now faces a substantial labor shortage.

The industry is now actively recruiting women. These efforts include increasing visibility at recruiting events, creating proper fitting safety equipment for women, promoting participation in networking groups, increasing school programs for construction trades, and having more women in management positions.

It's working. More women are choosing construction careers. Currently women account for 9.1% of the construction workforce. By 2020, it is expected that women will account for 25% of the construction industry.

Do Career and Technical Education Programs Really Work? . . .

UPCOMING EVENTS



December 11th
Maritime Cluster Meeting

December 13th
Manufacturing Cluster Mtg

December 14th
Healthcare Cluster Meeting

Board of Directors

Jill Stork
Chairman
Alabama Power

Lee Lawson
Past Chairman
Baldwin County EDA

Janice Rehm
Treasurer
USA Health

Sandra Koblas
Executive Committee
Austal USA

Cleve Poole
Executive Committee
Pioneer Electric

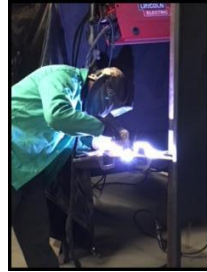
Stephanie Burt
Airbus FAL

Ketrenia Crenshaw
Packaging Corporation
of America

Frank Jelercic
Ceentral Gulf Industrial
Alliance

Bill Hafner
ST Engineering

Ronnie Hall
Georgia Pacific



During high school, Dajuan Finley decided to take a welding class through the career technical program in the Mobile County Public School system. To Dajuan's

surprise, he learned that he enjoyed welding, and even more surprising to him, he was told he was good at it. In fact, Dajuan earned awards including welder of the year and welder of the week three times while completing the career tech program (pictured above).

Dajuan had no idea what he was going to do after high school. He did not have a great support system in his home life and feared he would end up following the same path as those who lived in his neighborhood. He knew that path likely led to felonies and illegal drugs. Dajuan didn't want that life, and luckily, one of his high school instructors saw his potential. With the guidance of the high school welding instructor, Dajuan ended up enrolling in the AIDT Maritime Training Center's welding class. In the program, he improved his skills, and at eighteen years old, was placed into a job at a Fabrication shop making \$17.00 per hour. That was his very first job!

Dajuan improved his skills there, and when that contract ended, he met with the SAWDC project manager who placed him into a job at a local manufacturing company where he learned how to weld different alloys and perform mirror welding. When that contract ended, Dajuan informed the SAWDC project manager that he wanted to get on with a company where he could have a career. His timing was perfect because the Project Manager had just been informed that there was a local shipyard accepting applications for a pipe welding apprenticeship program. Dajuan and the Project Manager knew that should be his next step.

Today, two years later, Dajuan has one year left in the apprenticeship program. Upon completion Dajuan will be a National Accredited Journeyman Pipe Welder. He plans to continue working at the shipyard as he pursues a Bachelor's degree in Business.

At 22 years old, Mr. Finley is now engaged and has made an offer on a house in the Grand Bay area. Eventually, he would like teach welding and change the lives of others...just like his life has been changed.

David Rodgers
Mobile Area Chamber of
Commerce

Randy Rogers
Evonik Industries

Jason Slinkard
BASF

Lesleigh Smith
Performance Contractors

Christopher Valdez
UTC Aerospace

Council

Ken Berga
UTC Aerospace Systems

Pete Black
Parson & Whittemore

Greg Brown
Brown Precision

Mark Burgess
South Alabama Gas

Mahir Butt
MAWSS

Ken Corley
Olin Chemical

Nick Harrell
Choctaw County Chamber
of Commerce

Bob Jones
United Bank

Emily Jones
Quincy Compressor

Charlotte Kopf
Associated General
Contractors

Dani Pendleton
AMNS Calvert

Will Ruzic
Coastal Gateway

Carol Statter
Infirmary Health System

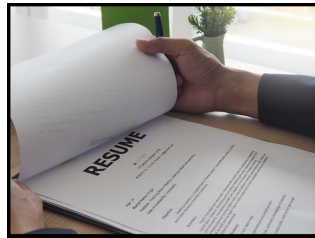
Jill Vinson
SSAB

Staff

SAWDC/AIDT to help displaced Virginia College Students

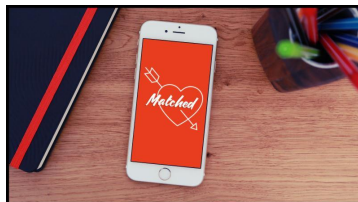
The private, for-profit school Virginia College is closing three Alabama locations in Mobile, Huntsville and Montgomery. The Birmingham location will remain open. The three locations scheduled for shutdown stopped enrolling new students yesterday. After the closure on December 5th, AIDT and the SAWDC Maritime project manager received calls asking from students that were enrolled in their welding program. AIDT and SAWDC decided they could help these students out. These students will be able to test for a local shipyard on Wednesday, December 12th at the AIDT Maritime Training Center. Assuming they pass the test, these students should receive a job offer.

Resources



4 Steps to Build a Skills List When Job Hunting

[Read](#)



The 8 Best Job Apps to get Hired

[Read](#)

Josh Duplantis, PhD
Executive Director

Shernita Taylor
Operations Director

Heidi Kearton
Sr. Project Manager

Conner Miller
Project Manager



During the holiday season more than ever, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible.

It is in this spirit we say, simply but sincerely...

Thank you and Best Wishes for the Holiday Season!