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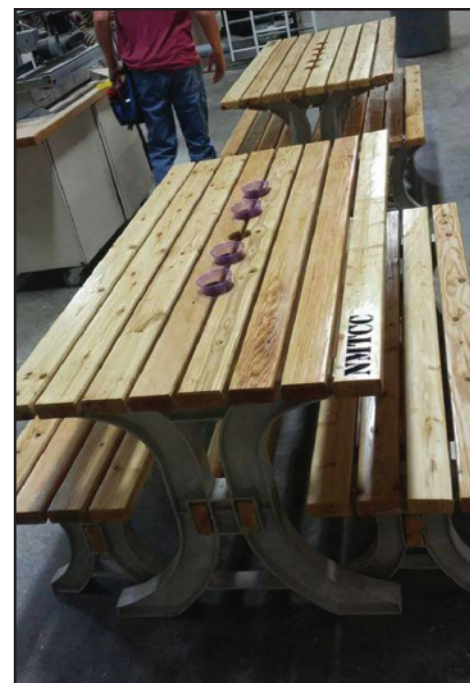
# FROM CONSTRUCTION STUDENT TO TEACHER

North Montco Technical Career Center's Carpentry program has gained considerable interest among many students wanting to prepare for a great career path after high school. Malcolm Roach, North Montco's Carpentry teacher, has garnered an impressive reputation as a teacher and mentor with his students.

Roach's interest in carpentry grew in high school. Under the tutelage of his well-respected teacher, Robert Miller, at Bucks County Technical High School, he took Building Trades and Maintenance. There he took advantage of participating in the co-op program, which is still a popular career pathway. His participation in the co-op program landed him a position at Nelson Brothers in Langhorne, where he learned how to install windows, doors, roofing, and awnings. Gaining even more experience, he worked for his father's company on weekends, installing resilient floor covering.

Roach's technical training gave him a foundation to build his career and further his learning. He began his career working in commercial construction while simultaneously building his own handyman business. Home repairs gave way to living room remodels. As his references grew, he added bathrooms and kitchens to his offerings.

Despite his impressive skill set and entrepreneurial spirit, his greatest asset might be his ability to connect with his 42 students. Roach explains to his students the importance of a positive mental attitude (PMA). "I stress production, pride, and positivity as keys to learning and success. The outcome is always better.



Roach's instructional skills have not gone unnoticed by the administration. Stephen Monstrata says, "Mr. Roach has been able to turn the program into a robust CTE program incorporating academics throughout the curriculum. Students also earn a plethora of industry-recognized certifications. He uses literacy and numeracy instructional strategies, including videos and interactive assessments, to support the students' learning and encourages them to grow into highly skilled workers."

As part of building a solid foundation in this business, Roach spends considerable time teaching math skills. He says, "Students should learn to estimate like a boss." Roach created a couple of YouTube videos, "BluePrint Madness" and "Estimate like a Boss," to help demonstrate relevance.

*(Continued on page 50)*

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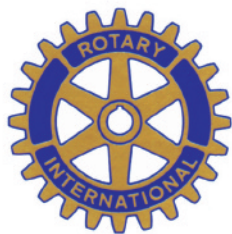
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## FROM CONSTRUCTION STUDENT TO TEACHER

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Roach enjoys teaching the basics of carpentry; however, it is also apparent how much he values soft skills. He says, "Students need to grow socially and emotionally."

And as part of his preparing students for their careers, he frequently reminds them that "no one holds your hand out in the field, and there isn't always a lot of praise for what you've accomplished."

Whether through virtual instruction or in the classroom, Roach likes to create an area where there is room to engage freely and a real-world balance. This year several students are working in residential construction with local employers, gaining some good experience. Roach states, "There are so many career pathways to explore with carpentry skills. For example, I have a couple now building furniture. Once students complete this program, they are ready to begin an apprenticeship that does residential or commercial construction work. Other students continue to college to pursue construction management or other areas of study."

Regardless of the pathway his students choose, Roach says that teaching has been a rewarding part of his career. Although he knows he's in a great place, especially

with the growing student interest and enrollment in carpentry, Roach likes to think of ways he could take more students in the future. "I envision a grassed in area outside where students can learn to work in an outside environment, similar to the building trades." While he continues to expand learning opportunities and set new classroom goals, Roach's students make meaningful strides towards a fulfilling and valuable career.

For additional information, please contact: North Montco Technical Career Center at 215.855.3931 and visit: [www.nmtcc.org](http://www.nmtcc.org).

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