

PROGRAM: Orleans Technical College

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By Claudia Salvato, The Northeast Times

According to the CDC, February is American Heart Month. It's also Black History Month, Cancer Prevention Month and CTE Month.

CTE Month seeks to spread awareness about Career Technical Education.

CTE Month was established by the Association for Career and Technical Education. According to the ACTE website, CTE month "takes place each February to celebrate the value of CTE and the achievements and accomplishments of CTE programs across the country."

A technical education combines academic and hands-on, applied skills training across various fields, including hospitality, automotive, construction and human services industries among others.

So how does a technical education compare to a collegiate education? For one thing, it's cheaper.

"While community colleges and 4-year colleges offer a well-rounded education, they are not for everybody," said Rodney Brutton, campus president of Orleans Tech.

"The average cost for one year of a college degree education (including tuition and fees) was estimated to be \$11,171 at public institutions. This is comparable to the cost to fully complete a building trades training program at Orleans," he said.

There is also a great need for people with the skill sets acquired in a technical education.

For example, according to the National Center for Construction Education and Research, about 41% of the construction workforce will be retired by 2031. This opens up plenty of opportunity

and demand for those with a technical education, as the demand for construction workers will remain constant.

“Commercial and residential buildings are constantly being built and always need repair, and a technical education is the perfect way to not only set someone up for career, but it also allows them to contribute to their community as well,” Brutton said.

With many high schools placing a large emphasis on college, which can seem like an unaffordable and sometimes risky option, a technical education could offer an alternative for Philadelphians.

“JEVS is putting its resources full force into getting Philly back to work following pandemic-related job losses and individuals in businesses hurt by the recession,” Brutton said.

“Orleans Tech, along with JEVS Human Services, have been working to help Philadelphians earn jobs and thrive independently for decades and knows the importance of how opportunities like establishing a career in the trades can change not just one life, but generations,” he said.