

CLASSROOM

CHRONICLES

CELEBRATING CTE

How a

St. James Parish Educator
Brings High School Football's
Biggest Day to CTE

DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

W

hen longtime educator Troy Borne was offered a job as the lead Jump Start teacher at St. James Parish School System's Career and Technical Center (CTC) four years ago, he was excited about the opportunity to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the workplace. His only hesitation in accepting the position was that he had to leave behind his role as a high school football coach.

"It was an emotional decision," he said, "because in order for me to commit to career and technical education (CTE) full-time, I had to give up something that I had done for 21 years."

Borne has since found a way to bring an aspect of high school football to CTC by hosting a sort of National Signing Day, an annual and widely publicized day in which high school athletes attend special ceremonies to publicly sign letters of intent to play for collegiate sports teams. But instead of applauding sports talent, Borne's version of the event celebrates students who successfully earn career credentials and land their first jobs.

Borne hosted the first-ever "signing day" in January. At this inaugural event, four students were hired by Apache Industrial as scaffold builders with a starting salary of \$40,000. The first signing day was so successful that Borne is planning another, larger scale event to take place in May. At that event, an anticipated 30 students will "sign" for jobs.

NATIONAL SIGNING DAY!



“Seeing and recognizing students’ attainment of industry-based credentials in high wage, high demand sectors is what propels us forward,” Borne said. “They are leaving the CTC with an opportunity to be successful adults, which in turn will make our rural community a better place to live. We strive to provide the next generation of skilled workers for St. James Parish.”

Borne attributes the success of St. James’ Jump Start program to the team of dedicated educators and industry-based professionals he works with on a daily basis. They all strive to make the CTC the best it can be, he said.

“This program would not be where it is today without every single person on our team, and the support I have from our district office,” he said. “There are so many people with differing roles that make every aspect of this program run smoothly and continue to grow.”

The importance of CTE is not a new concept for Borne. His father has a tech degree in drafting and worked for Shell in Norco, La., for more than 30 years. His mother was a small business owner, and his brother is currently a small business owner and a mechanic. He has seen firsthand how gratifying learning a skill and earning a high wage to provide a living for yourself and your family can be, he said, and he is honored to share this opportunity with his students.

In St. James Parish, he said, only 15 percent of the population holds a college degree. “CTE can be used to help close the skills gap. Not all students are college students, but all students are career students.”

According to Borne, St. James Parish is about to experience huge growth in industrial manufacturing. Over the next year, 335 jobs averaging \$72,000 in annual salaries will be needed in the area, with 1,200 additional employees being sought after in the near future. With Borne and the rest of the St. James’ team at the helm of CTE, the CTC will be ready to meet those needs.

“In order to compete for these jobs,” Borne said, “we need to provide as many opportunities as we can to make sure our community is ready.”



Troy Borne
Career and Technical Center (CTC), St. James Parish

