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Autry Tech Student Finds Success in Industrial & Mechanical Technology Program

ENID, OKLA. — After spending 10 years in the fast-food industry, Darian Reed was working a late shift a Domino’s Pizza when she realized she wanted to pursue another career., She often saw individuals come in to repair equipment like freezers and ovens which sparked her interest. That spark led her to Autry Technology Center’s Industrial & Mechanical Technology program and now an internship opportunity at Koch Fertilizer.

“Whenever I was in high school, I had no idea what I wanted to do,” said Reed. “It wasn’t until the last couple of years that I decided that I wanted to go do that, I wanted to go fix things. Before I came to Autry Tech, I had actually applied at a couple of places where you can start out as an apprentice, but that didn’t go so well. I knew if I was going to do this, I should probably go to school because that is the only way that anyone will look at me and take me seriously. I had to get the necessary skill set.”

Reed found the training program at Autry Tech online and applied immediately. The program is designed train technicians to install, repair and maintain commercial or industrial machinery in buildings, a plant or a manufacturing setting. These technicians ensure all machines function properly through troubleshooting and preventative maintenance service.

She started the program in June 2020 as one of the first students to go through the training. Since then, she has gained hands-on training and industry-recognized certifications to prepare her for a career in the field. Her instructor, Luis Andrade, approached her about the internship opportunity at Koch Fertilizer. Reed participated in numerous interviews before finally receiving word that she earned a spot!

“I applied in December and they finally called me to say we picked you!” said Reed. “I think just the chance to go out there is like a big thing for me. There’s even a possibility if I go out there and do well, I might be able to stay out there after my internship is over. That was my goal after I started the class and here, I am now, going to do it!”

Reed doesn’t let her busy schedule slow her down – student, employee and mother are just a few of the titles she juggles on a daily basis. She is grateful to have a strong support system to help her achieve her goals.

“I’m in the program at Autry Tech from 8 a.m. to noon and then I have a couple hours off,” said Reed. “I go in at 4 p.m. to work at Domino’s and usually work about 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. because I have daughter that I have to get home to get ready for bed and ready for school the next day. My boyfriend is very supportive, he does a lot to help out around the house. He does a lot of cooking, because I’m usually not home during dinner time. I probably wouldn’t be able to do it without him.”

Reed is ready to share the opportunities at Autry Tech with others – a decision that has changed her perspective in more ways than one.

“If you are thinking about going to Autry Tech or any sort of educational program, do it,” said Reed. “Even if you don’t end up going into what you are going to school for, it is still knowledge you can have for later if you need it. Now that

I'm in my program and have started to understand more, I look at the world a little differently. It's definitely a great experience to have."

Autry Technology Center is now accepting applications for the Industrial & Mechanical Technology program to begin training in August 2021. The 12-month program is open to adults only and is eligible for the Autry Scholarship, which allows recent high school graduates (last three years) who live in the Autry Tech district, lived in the Autry Tech district their senior year of high school and meet the enrollment guidelines to attend tuition free.

For more information about the program or to apply online, visit autrytech.edu

Autry Technology Center has been a part of the Enid community since 1967 and is one of 29 CareerTech schools across Oklahoma. The center has more than 25 career programs and offers a wide variety of evening and weekend short-term courses and certifications for many diverse career fields. Autry serves nearly 16,000 individuals each year, including many area employees who receive training through the Corporate Training Department that works with over 500 local businesses each year.

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Darian Reed trains with equipment in Autry Tech's Industrial & Mechanical Technology full-time program.