



**MEDIA INFORMATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Career Center honors 22 Distinguished Alumni

JACKSON, Mich. – The Jackson Area Career Center honored 22 former students who have been exceptionally successful in their field of study during the annual Distinguished Alumni dinner on Tuesday, Oct. 16.

“These former alumni are great examples of how the Career Center can be a huge boost to a young person’s future,” said Bob Engel, Career Center job placement coordinator.

The 2012 Distinguished Alumni included Sarah Soltis (Jackson High School, 2001), a former Agriscience student who is now a floral designer at Hyacinth House in Lansing.

The Automotive Technology program added Ron Richards, a current instructor and former student (Columbia Central, 2000), and Auto Body added John Eastes (Columbia Central, 1999) of Art Moehn Chevrolet.

From the computer classes, three former students were honored: Travis Moore (Columbia Central, 1989), a project engineer supervisor at Accubilt, Jacquie Cummins (Columbia Central, 2011), now working for Scott Machine in quality control, and Cody Aldrich (Western, 2007), who enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and is working as an information technician.

Former Cosmetology student Christin Smith (Columbia Central, 1985), now working as master stylist at J.C. Penney, was added as to the 2012 class along with Culinary Arts alumni Alex Denato (Napoleon, 2002), working as dishwasher at Napoleon Café, and Ken Foster (Michigan Center, 1981), who is manager of Smokey Bones restaurant in Lansing.

The Construction program was represented at the dinner by Nic Rowley (Michigan Center, 2005), owner of N.C.R. Construction. Former Dental student Alicia Owens (Jackson High, 2006) made the trip up from Cincinnati, where she is working as a dental hygienist for the Center for Esthetic Dentistry.

Engineering added distinguished alumnus Troy Wancha (daVinci, 1997), who is employed by Accubilt as a project coordinator, and the Firefighting/EMS program added Brian Delano (Jackson High, 2004) to its list of distinguished alumni. Delano is currently working for Dekalb (Ga.) County Fire Rescue as a firefighter and medic.

Health Sciences recognized Meija Jones (Jackson High, 2010), who works as a certified nurse assistant at Allegiance Hospital.

Law Enforcement added two former students to its Distinguished Alumni list: Eric Baker (Northwest, 1993), working as a deputy for Jackson County Jail; and Jeremy Bush (Grass Lake, 1995), working as a lieutenant with the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Kelley Kuehn (Jackson High, 2001), a manager at Bilbo’s Pizza in Kalamazoo, TJ Booth (Michigan Center, 2004), a machinist at Mid America Machining, and Hillary Fairbanks (Vandercook, 1995), an elementary school teacher at Northeast Elementary, also were honored at

the dinner as students in the Sales & Marketing, Precision Machining/CAM, and Teacher Education programs, respectively.

Visual Communications chose two representatives: Ben Folts (Columbia Central, 1999) now a film editor and Emmy Award winner for Chainsaw, Inc., in Los Angeles; and Brendon Risner (Napoleon, 2011) an IT technician for American Office Solutions.

The Welding program was represented by Travis Green (East Jackson, 2006), a welding supervisor for RTD Manufacturing.

“Our alumni are the *real* ambassadors for the Career Center,” said Engel.

Since 1995-96, the Career Center staff has chosen 15-25 deserving individuals each year. To date, 373 graduates have earned the title of Jackson Area Career Center Distinguished Alumni.

2012 Jackson Area Career Center Distinguished Alumni

Name	Position	Company	Year	Program	School
Cody Aldrich	Information Technician	U.S. Air Force	2007	Computer Information Technology	Western
Eric Baker	Deputy Sheriff	Jackson County Jail	1993	Law Enforcement	Northwest
TJ Booth	Machinist	Mid America Machining	2004	Precision Machining/CAM	Michigan Center
Jeremy Bush	Lieutenant	MI Dept. of Corrections	1995	Law Enforcement	Grass Lake
Jacque Cummins	Quality Control	Scott Machine	2011	Computer Information Technology	Columbia Central
Brian Delano	Fire Medic	Dekalb Co., GA Fire/Rescue	2004	Firefighting/EMS	Jackson High
Alex Denato	Dishwasher	Napoleon Cafe	2002	Culinary Arts	Napoleon
John Eastes	Auto Body Technician	Art Moehn	1999	Auto Body	Columbia Central
Hillary Fairbanks	Elementary Teacher	Northeast Elementary	1995	Teacher Education	Vandercook Lake
Ben Folts	Video Editor	Chainsaw, Los Angeles, CA	1994	Video Editor	Columbia Central
Ken Foster	Manager	Smokey Bones, Lansing	1981	Culinary Arts	Michigan Center
Travis Green	Welding Supervisor	RTD Manufacturing	2006	Welding	East Jackson
Meija Jones	CNA	Allegiance Hospital	2010	Healthcare Technology	Jackson High
Kelley Kuehn	Manager	Bilbos Pizza, Kalamazoo	2001	Sales & Marketing	Jackson High
Travis Moore	Project Engineer	Accubilt	1989	Computer Information Technology	Columbia Central
Alicia Owens	Dental Hygienist	Center For Esthetic Dentistry	2006	Dental Occupations	Jackson High
Ron Richards	Automotive Instructor	Jackson Area Career Center	2000	Automotive Technology	Columbia Central
Brendon Risner	IT Technician	American Office Solutions	2011	Visual Communications	Napoleon
Nic Rowley	Owner	NCR Construction	2005	Construction	Michigan Center
Christin Smith	Master Stylist	JC Penney Salon	1985	Cosmetology	Columbia Central
Sarah Soltis	Floral Designer	Hyacinth House, Lansing	2001	Agriscience	Jackson High
Troy Wancha	Project Coordinator	Accubilt	1997	Engineering	daVinci

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The Jackson Area Career Center was established in 1976 and is a service of the Jackson County Intermediate School District. More information about the Career Center is available at <http://www.jacc-mi.net>.

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