



## CFI Changing Misconceptions About Technical Schools Through Extraordinary Instructors



Stefanie Bourke  
MA CVT

Back when I was in high school, the running conception of technical schools was that the only students who opted for that type of education were those who did not have the grades or the conviction it takes for traditional college. So I went to a traditional college and proceeded to work in my chosen field for over a decade.

I aggressively climbed the corporate ladder and was doing quite well for myself for quite a long time. Then, life happened. I suddenly found myself a single mother in a struggling economy, not receiving child support, and in a profession that got hit first and hard. Always self sufficient, I was now laid off and facing foreclosure of my home. Without family nearby to seek support from, I had to act fast. I joined a growing trend of people in this country who had

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## CFI is Honored to Welcome Julie Janssen, Pinellas County Schools Superintendent



L to R: John Kearney Jr., VP of Career Path Training Corp.; John Kearney, President & CEO of Career Path Training Corp.; Julie Janssen, Pinellas County School Superintendent; Olivia Fields, CFI School Director

## Reaching Out Into the Community

A new community outreach project has kicked off at CFI Orlando headed by Externship Coordinator, Ms. Marilyn Hagerty. About once a month, a group of CFI

In March, CFI visited the facility and set up three different stations: oral hygiene, nutrition and personal hygiene. The Goodwill students were also given the chance to



L to R: Heather Olson, MA; Natalie Escobar, DA; Dana Patterson, DA

listen to a heartbeat through a teaching stethoscope. At the oral hygiene station, the dental assisting students taught

students will visit an ESE class at the local Goodwill and volunteer their time and share their medical knowledge.

them how to properly brush and floss their teeth. At the nutrition station, they were taught how to pick out the right types of food that will help keep them healthy. And at the last station, medical assisting students taught basic hygiene showing them how to correctly wash their hands.

“Our students have the opportunity to get out of the campus and into the community and use the skills we have taught them to really make a difference in people’s lives,” Ms. Hagerty said.

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## Central Florida Institute Welcomes and Highly Values our Partnerships with WorkNet Pinellas and Pinellas Education Foundation



1) Ed Peachey, CEO WorkNet Pinellas; Terry Boehm, President Pinellas Education Foundation; Clayton Snare, Pinellas County Schools Career & Technical Adult Education 2) Bill Protz, President, Charitable Foundation, Catalina Marketing Corp. & WorkNet Pinellas Board Chair 3) Kristin Dailey, WorkNet Pinellas Director of Employer Relations 4) Terry Boehm with MA student

**(Changing Misconceptions...Continued from page 1)**

to put their families, their homes, and essentially everything on the line to re-educate. I realized that I needed a fast track source of education to get back into the workforce, or face certain disaster. The only logical option was going to a technical school. After a great deal of research, picking apart of credentials, and very careful online and in person examination of various schools in Pinellas County, I chose Central Florida Institute. After a very short time of attendance, I was quickly humbled, and never more happy to be wrong about my previous perception of vocational schools.

*“To CFI as a whole, I thank you for everything you have given me. Coming here was the best career decision I have ever made.*

Since my start in the MA-CVT program this past May, I have had the pleasure of being instructed by some extraordinary people! Ms. Roberts, whose down to earth and jovial attitude coupled with her delivery of information exuded an amazing and personal learning experience. Mrs. Cusumano who’s caring attitude toward the students, and personal consideration of externship placement makes it clear that her focus is your success. Don’t let Mr. Senger’s no-nonsense teaching style fool you. If you really want to own even the most complicated of skills, Mr. Senger will bend over backwards to make sure you receive the highest level of understanding possible! Mrs. Hern’s sweet smile and gentle approach to instruction as she teaches you how to handle large needles, made for a fun duality of the phlebotomy class! I also had the

pleasure of meeting such instructors as Mr. Hartley and Mr. O’Brien. These two were never my direct instructors and yet were always handy with extra instruction, advice, information, or just a great intellectual conversation.



As I moved from the MA program into my chosen cardiovascular technology specialty, I met Mr. Spankowski, the EMT who, figuratively speaking, saved my life. For starters, he gave total credence to the phenomenal value of a hands-on technical school experience. His enthusiasm and extensive knowledge combined with years of real-life emergency medicine mix to create the most detailed, and extensive transfer of information I could possibly imagine.

There is no doubt in my mind that emergency medicine is the place for me. To CFI as a whole, I thank you for everything you have given me. Coming here was the best career decision I have ever made. I hope to always reflect my respect for this school in my work, and represent you honorably! I wish to use my new found knowledge and skill to further my career and give back to the institution that gave me back my sense of importance, intelligence, and integrity!

Sincerely,  
Stefanie Bourke, MA CVT



L to R: Kat Przekwozniak, DA; Ashley O’Neil, MA; Heather Hageman, MA; Marilyn Hagerty, Externship Coordinator

**(Reaching out...Continued from page 1)**

“This was not only a learning experience for the Goodwill students but for the CFI students as well. The interaction was truly touching,” Ms. Hagerty said. “We gave them a prize after they learned a skill at each station. This prize will help them practice their newly learned skills at home.” At the end, the bag included a

toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, soap, an apple, raisins, water and a granola bar.

“The Goodwill students were given a personal growth book that we made for them so they can track their skills and remember the things we have taught them. Hopefully, we can help them become a little more independent,” Ms. Hagerty said.

**Thoughts for the Day:**

*Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.*

*~Nelson Mandela*

*I can’t change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.*

*~Jimmy Dean*



**DO YOU HAVE ANY STORY IDEAS?**

**If you have any events, thoughts, or stories, please submit to:**

**Palm Harbor**

**Sondra Cranford, Health Education Director/Editor, [Scranford@cfi.edu](mailto:Scranford@cfi.edu)**

**Orlando**

**Kristina Pein, Health Education Coordinator, [Kpein@cfi.edu](mailto:Kpein@cfi.edu)**

## Letters From The Field

**H**ello Mrs. Fields, I wanted take a few minutes to let you know how much I enjoyed my experience at CFI. This past Thursday was my last day of the Dental Assisting Program and I enjoyed every minute of it. I chose CFI over PHCC even though it was a lot closer to my house in Spring Hill and a lot cheaper, but it was completely worth the drive and every penny of the tuition. I feel the education I received at CFI is unmatched and the teachers were excellent. Mrs. Castro was great and you couldn't have made a better choice in hiring Ms. Scribner, they are both exceptional teachers who really know what they're doing. I know for sure I wouldn't be leaving CFI with the confidence, knowledge, and skills I now have without those two. So thank you for a wonderful experience, I have been recommending CFI to everyone I know!

*Samantha Hegwer, Dental Assistant*



**I**would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude regarding my recent learning experience with your Surgical Technology Department. Your instructors, Mrs. Gibson and Mrs. Frasier, have taught with unending enthusiasm and passion for their field, taking every opportunity to teach creatively and "outside the box." They have worked tirelessly to sharpen my skills, challenge my intellect, and inspire me when I faltered. These women have inspired me. I am touched and humbled by their strength and grace. Thank you for having them on your staff!

Sincerely, *Adrienne S. Andrews*

**M**r. O'Brien, Thank you for such an inspiring send-off message! I want to let you know that I had another epiphany today! I was fortunate to see a left heart cath today and I was enthralled! I want to be in the cath lab! My adrenaline was pumping, my eyes and brain were taking in everything, from the monitors to the doctor, the scrub tech, the circulator, the monitor. I couldn't believe that I stood for that time period and didn't notice anything about my own body (we've been sitting for so long!). Such important work! So much to learn! I am ready! I will be there!

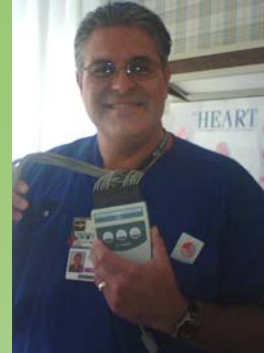


Thank you for all you have done for me. This entire experience has been so much more than "school" for me. I have taken everything you have taught to heart and will carry and apply it in the field. I will utilize this opportunity for externship to its utmost on a daily basis. Thank you again!

Warm regards, *Kelly Williams*

## What Was It Like To Do Externship?

**I**t is very important to note that YOUR externship is only as good as you make it! The more you give, the more you get! Make your externship the best it can be! Take notes, ask questions, and research anything you hear that you are unsure about online (when you get home). LISTEN and OBSERVE. You have probably heard it said, and it's certainly true, this is not only part of your education, it is ALSO part of an interview process.



Get to know the staff. Since they do this all the time, if they will let you, try to do as much as possible, (pretend you are an employee, the rest of the staff has called out sick and you are the only one there.) Clinical is part of your education, and you are getting an excellent opportunity to get hands on experience. If you were not part of CFI, this would not be happening. When your externship is done, is not the time to be thinking, "I wish I had done...more often". CFI definitely got me prepared for my externship, and the same machines we used in training were out in the field! CFI did their part; the rest is up to me!

On Career Day, we all dressed up in our professional clothes and worked on our resumes, but your interview may likely be in scrubs and not dress clothes, mine was. Let me tell you, your TRUE interview is not going to happen when you are all dolled up in civvies, it happens at your externship! The people and staff you meet and help, THEY are the ones that are interviewing you. Get to know everyone you can, and respect the individual jobs they do. Everyone has a part, and you want to be part of the whole! To some, finding a job may not be a big deal, but to me... I lost my job 5/1/2009, and finding another job really concerned me.

As I start my first day of my NEW job, I reflect on several things... When I interviewed, the person hiring me stated, "Everyone I spoke to in every department had good things to say about you!" As I went about the daily meeting and greeting, I saw several people I had met during my externship that made me wonder who it was that may have put in a good word for me, who had helped me get HIRED??? And then I remembered, he said "everyone" said good things about me, so it was what I had done during externship and the staff recommendations that were the decisive factor in my hiring. It is not the clothes, it is not the resume, but it is YOU, the BEST YOU that you can be. Remember, you are on an interview when you go out for your externship.

Hi Ho, Hi Ho, It's Off to work I Go!

*Pedro Erasmo Pupo, CCT, NCT Graduate*

# ORLANDO GRADUATES



1 Ms. Perez and Ms. Grinion are the best! Amoy Thomas, DA



2 CFI is the best school I have ever been to. Francis Fernandez, MAC

3 I had a great experience. I learned a lot. I love all my classmates and teachers. Dawn Wilson, DA

4 It was a great learning experience. Very inspiring. Sergio Washington, MAC



5 CFI is a wonderful institution. Chris Smith, NCT

6 CFI is a great school! Eric Simmons, MAX



7 I'm going to miss all the fun at CFI. Thanks! Holly Anderson, DMS with Patrick Reed, DMS

8 The teachers were awesome! Lynsi Spinny and Pamela Phillips, NCT

9 I had a great experience and I love the teachers. Left, Icie Hennessee, Right, Ashley Lane, NCT



10 CFI was a great learning experience and we'll miss our classmates. Jessica Antonetti and Amanda Manning, NCT

11 Left to Right: Holly Anderson, Gary Price, Patrick Reed and John Edwards, DMS

12 Back row (left to right): Amanda Manning, Elieth Corea, Deborah Rivera, Abigail Estrella and Percy Walker. Front Row (left to right): Jessica Antonetti and Pamela Phillips, NCT



## Letters From the Field



My externship has been one of the best experiences. I was a little nervous at first because I was a stay at home mom for six and a half years, but the training I received at CFI put me into a great spot and I was able to slide in with relative ease. I've learned a lot in my externship and I feel confident that I will succeed in my future endeavors as a medical assistant.

Heather Olsen, MAC



During my hours when I first started my externship I was shy just watching. After my first week I was ready to jump right in. It's a rush because everything you learn in school you will see and assist with. You will change lives, and seeing the smiles on the faces of patients is the greatest feeling. Becoming a Dental Assistant was one of the best decisions I ever made in my life.

DeShonda Young, DA



CFI has been such a great experience. The instructors really do care, and show you through love instead of ignoring any issues you may be having. Going to CFI has been the best career decision I have made for myself yet. I would recommend the school to anyone who is looking to get into the medical field. THANK YOU!

Ashley Sarver, DA Student

## PALM HARBOR GRADUATES

- 1 CFI helped me to live up to my full potential. Working at Corbett Internal Medical. Karen McKay, MAC
- 2 Got hired right after externship and love every day of my job. I never thought I'd work in Pediatrics. Working at Better Health Medical Center. Alyson Nappi, MAX
- 3 Very good school. I came from a different country. If I can do it, anyone can! Working at Trinity Health Center and I love it! Majda Rakanovic, MAX
- 4 Awesome teachers that listen and understand. I couldn't have made it through without them! Kimberly Guarino, MAX
- 5 So glad I went to school and got a job in the career I chose! Working at North Pinellas Children's Medical Center. Heather Ensley, MAX
- 6 Had awesome teachers that listened and were very understanding. CFI helped me live up to my full potential. Maria Melendez, MAX
- 7 Teachers and staff were beyond expectations. They went beyond my expectations to help me reach my goals! Robert Sobieski, Poly Tech
- 8 I'm thankful for everything I have learned and the friendships I made along the way. John Indorato, Poly Tech with Andy Rosario, Student Activities Representative
- 9 Me with my best friend and wife of 22 years, Jana Wofford Pupo. She's been supportive, patient, and understanding every step of the way! Pedro Erasmo Pupo, NCT
- 10 Excited to start my new career in the Cath Lab! Judy Newborg, ICT; Long time coming, but glad it's here! Gail Varlese, Echo
- 11 You have all assisted me in making the impossible become possible and a distant dream become reality. Maureen Robinson, MA CVT, with family
- 12 High five, we did it! Maria Melendez and Majda Rakanovic, MAX
- 13 Wonderful opportunity. Externship led to scholarship for RN and PA. Thank you for all the extra help and genuine caring. DeVere Michael Kiss, NCT, with Pam Hern, MA Instructor
- 14 Got hired where I did my externship! Working at Central Clinic. Amanda Mancini, MAX; DeVere Michael Kiss, NCT; We did it!! Working at Bay Central Medical Group in Tampa. Deanna Nieves, MAX
- 15 Left to right: Alicia Louise, Elaine Reeves, Edwin Kiessling, George Bilbrey, Suzanne Mauradian-Kirby, John Indorato, Robert Sobieski with Mr. Daoud, Program Director/Instructor and Mrs. Ickes, Instructor
- 16 Left to right: One big happy family! We ride together; we die together! Brittney Behmer, Lorena Sty, LaSondra White, Melvin Daniels, Ashley Patten, George Haley, Lindsey Wilson, Susan Jack, Betty Ferencsik and Michael DeVack, Surgical Tech graduates with Jim Davis, Clinical Instructor



## Zephyrhills HS Academy of Health Sciences CFI Tour

Mrs. Brenda Carlson, RN, Health Academy teacher and students with Mr. Urban, Assistant Principal, Mr. Benedini, Career Specialist and Mr. Brady  
Thank you note from the teacher: Our tour of CFI was a wonderful opportunity for my students. They were able to get a first-hand look at life after high school and the opportunities available to them. I am very thankful for the instructors and students who were happy to demonstrate what they were learning and answer my students questions. - Brenda Carlson RN, BSN



## Pasco HS Teach-in - Jennifer Wilson, RN: Health Classes Have Fun While Learning About Health Careers!



## Palm Harbor University HS Great American Teach-in CFI Medical and Dental Students Demonstrate Allied Health Careers to Medical Magnet Students



## Pinellas Park Middle School, AVID Classes: Career Exploration

Dear Mrs. Cranford, being a doctor is one job I wanted to do when I grow up. I learned that there are a lot more jobs in the medical field than doctors and nurses. I learned that a person who draws blood is called a Phlebotomist. I learned about the stent, it helps you with plaque. Thank you for coming and spending your time with us. Sincerely, Kevin Kha



Dear Mrs. Cranford, thank you so much for coming to our class. I plan to go into the medical field when I grow up, so I thought it was really interesting to hear you talk about the many different programs at CFI. I loved seeing the 4-D video of the baby while it was still in the womb. It was so cool! It was also very interesting to hear about the surgical unit, since that's the area I want to work towards. You were a great speaker, and I enjoyed having you here! Sincerely, Abby

## Sunlake HS Teach-in: Mrs. Grego's Health Class Students

Thanks SO much to you and your students for your wonderful presentation on April 15th! My Medical Skills students loved it!  
Here are some direct quotes from them - Sue Grego, RN, Health Science Education Teacher  
"It made it easier to learn by having students demonstrate exactly what to do!" "It was so informative and interesting!"  
"It was good to see it from the students' perspectives and hear from them!"  
And last but not least, an uncensored quote from Will Gonzalez (Senior student and comedian) - "When in doubt, floss it out!"



## Gulf HS Health Academy Students Career Shadowing Day



Thanks on behalf of the Health Careers Academy of Gulf HS to the students and staff at CFI for taking time from your day to demonstrate the interesting studies provided by the school and allowing us to use the equipment to experience hands-on learning.

We appreciate the instructors allowing us to spend time in their classes to receive demonstrations from the students. And special thanks to our tour guide, Mrs. Sondra Cranford for organizing our first career shadowing day and providing a great tour for us. Thanks to everyone for answering our questions and teaching us about your healthcare fields.

Sincerely, GHS HCA Students: Lisa Curinga, Katelyn Hardy, Grant Stafford, Adam Blazek and Kasey Hilton



Dear Central Florida Institute

We students from Gulf High appreciate the opportunity your staff and students gave us. The experience shed light on possible career choices. We also found your staff, teachers and students were very generous, informative and helpful.

Overall, it was a very positive outcome. We enjoyed visiting CFI and hope to see you soon!

Thank you, James Machowski, Nancy Hernandez, Jessica Ziegler & Ishia Perez

## Pasco Community Awareness Fair



Mrs. Cusumano, MA Instructor with MA volunteers perform health screenings

## CFI-Orlando Great American Teach-in



University High School: Richard Milaschewski, NCT, MA, General Ed Instructor & Martha Dees, MA Instructor

Olympia High School: Gwen Miller, DMS Instructor | Timber Creek High School: Cynthia Miller, X-Ray Instructor

Jones High School: Marilyn Hagerty, Externship Coordinator | Oak Ridge High School: Vanessa Grinin, DA Instructor

Cypress Creek: Kristina Pein, Health Education Coordinator | Edgewater High School: Colleen Lane, DMS Clinical Site Coordinator

West Orange High School: Ellie Perez, DA Instructor | Winter Park: Cheryl St. Eprit, NCT Instructor & Dan Nally, MA Cardio Instructor

## CFI *TRULY* IS THE SCHOOL WITH A HEART *By Maureen Robinson, MA CVT Graduate*



**M**y name is Maureen Robinson and as a graduating Medical Assistant student I would like to share with you all, the impact that CFI has personally made in my life.

On April 30, 2009 I got into my Toyota Camry and left the campus. I traveled my regular route up North toward New Port Richey as I did so many other times before to pick up my daughter from school. Only this time, I never made it! On my way driving home I was hit by a driver that was driving an H2 Hummer.

I was air lifted to Bayfront Medical Center with life threatening injuries. My tomorrow was not promised or guaranteed. Hours later, barely able to move or speak, a nurse assisted me in calling a classmate and friend Stacy Stillwell to inform them of what had happened.

The news of the accident traveled very fast. As I lay in critical care not being able to breathe very well, a visitor snuck in to be by my bedside. It was Kelli Miller, the current president of the Honor Society at that time. She was in tears with words of encouragement, pleading with me to hang on and give it my best fight. I told her everything that I needed to say just in case I didn't pull through.

I spent a month at Bayfront and I was confined to a wheel chair and my future was very uncertain. Throughout my time at Bayfront, fellow students like Jason Ibro and some others that I did not know very well, and some that I had absolutely no memory of, would visit me on a regular basis to lift my spirits and offer encouragement to myself and my family.

One night I was so down, I was ready to give up on everything. In my mind my career and my life was over. I spoke with Mrs. Cusumano. Her words to me in a very firm, but caring voice were, **"Don't you give up! Even if you are confined to a wheel chair for the rest of your life, you can still work in the medical field; your life is not over!"** She told me that I could still perform my front office skills and to keep fighting and not to give up!

At that very moment I decided to live and fight harder than I ever did to overcome this difficult challenge, and to finish what I started no matter how long or how difficult it would be. Through determination

and faith, months later I got another miracle. I was able to get out of my wheel chair and get upgraded to a walker and a cane.

My next goal was returning to finish my mission. On August 7, 2009, I walked back into a classroom with nine of the most wonderful compassionate people I had ever met. They accepted me as I was, never judging me in any way. With my traumatic brain injury more problems quickly rose. My memory wasn't functioning and I could not remember the basics of the heart, the very organ that I had studied for months.

I told Mr. Spankowski and he was in disbelief. At first he thought I was joking around, but quickly realized that I wasn't. Together we will figure this out he said, even if we have to start from the beginning. Mr. S would tutor me and during class, my new classmates would assist him in re-educating me and pulling the information forward. We soon discovered that the information was all there it just needed to be retrieved, like finding a specific file on your computer. By Mock Office I was ready and caught up.

The first day of externship was no walk in the park; it was so hard on me physically, mentally and emotionally. I called the school that afternoon and this wonderful voice on the end, Ms. Sarah, was very comforting and encouraging. I also spoke with Mr. Coleman who also encouraged me to hang in there and call anytime. Within weeks things were getting better. To my fellow graduates, in your chosen profession you may never hear the words "thank you" or at times feel that you make a difference in someone's life, but without realizing it you will every single day.

**CFI is truly the school with a heart!** Along with my family, who I would like to personally thank, and everyone for the endless prayers, support and encouragement, "You all have assisted me in making the impossible become possible and a distant dream become reality." This particular mission is finally complete! Thank you.

*"At that very moment I decided to live and fight harder than I ever did to overcome this difficult challenge, and to finish what I started no matter how long or how difficult it would be."*

## WEAR JEANS FOR RELIEF!



Back Row: David Smith, MAX, Ashley Bonner, MAX. Front Row: Cynthia Miller, MA Instructor, Martha Dees, MA Instructor, Karin Voner, MAC, Tricia Wetzel, MAX, Myah Roper, MAX, Blanca Garcia, MAC, Rosemary Radzik, MAC, Melissa Rosa, MAC, Sher-Ami Jamason, MAC, Heather Eggerichs, MAC.

**T**he students at Central Florida Institute of Orlando wanted to do something to help with the disastrous earthquake that devastated Haiti and Chile back in January. So the National Technical Honors Society decided to collect \$2 in exchange to wear jeans for a day, and then donate the money they collected.

"We think we have hard economic times, but the images on TV from this disaster make you realize there are many people less fortunate than ourselves," said Melissa Rosa, a MAC student who donated and participated in the jean day.

The students, faculty and staff rallied together and collected \$165 that will be donated to the Haiti and Chile disaster fund at the American Red Cross. Over 75 people around the campus participated.

"Two dollars can feed five people in Haiti and that's merely a snack for me. I feel like my \$2 can go further over there, and they need it more than I do," said Sher-Ami Jamason, a MAC student who donated.

Many people decided to donate more than the \$2 that was asked. Some students that donated money didn't even wear jeans, as they now feel more comfortable in their scrubs.

"I donated because it feels good to know you're helping people in need and it makes me thank God every day for what I have," said Blanca Garcia, a MAC student who participated.

Although many people enjoyed wearing their jeans, everyone agreed, it was never about the jeans; it was all about the cause!