
Hunter Morriss (12)


Hayden Saucedo (10)


Melanie Leigh (12)

LEARNING THE MOTTO "COMMON SENSE"

Amidst the whirling of saw blades and whining of drills, sawdust falls slowly to the ground like a golden snow. Projects-in-progress peek out from corners and sit on tables. Around the room, Construction Tech students are hard at work.

Construction students learned practical life skills, including basic safety, power-tool usage and, most of all, "common sense."

"Common sense means to just not be stupid, and pay attention," sophomore Ahmad Alnourachi said. "It means putting safety first, especially when you're using tools."

This motto also carried over into the real world.

"Common sense just helps you get through life," junior Sydney Garcia said. "It keeps you safe and out of trouble. It's a really important skill for your whole life."

Photos by Hannah Williamson and Rachel Freeman


SPARKS FLY Unflinching among the spray of sparks, senior **Joshua Harrington** cuts a support for his project. A saw, when armed with the right blade, can cut either wood or metal, a convenient capability for welding class, in which both materials were used. "Cutting metal with a saw is pretty easy," Harrington said. "You pretty much just push the trigger, and then you have a piece for whatever creative project you want to build."
Photo by Hannah Williamson

Can we build it? Yes, we can.

Welding students build varying projects, learn skills

The saw on the table whines, while the welder in the corner crackles as sparks fly left and right. Unused tools are housed in a caged area in the back, where students enter and exit periodically. The air smells slightly singed, and everyone wears protective masks or safety glasses. Each student has a steadily progressing project, some in the earliest stages, others almost finished. And each project has a purpose and a story.

Welding classes allowed students to work with metal, opening up more opportunities for them to make more complicated and sturdy projects.

Though many identical projects, such as short, stout coffee tables, were built at the beginning of the year in order to teach students how to safely use tools, other project ideas were left up to the builder. These projects opened the door for creativity, and often became the favorites.

"My favorite project is the four-leaf clover I made out of horse shoes," senior Jessica Germaine said. "It's on my wall now. It's always exciting to see the outcome, and have something you can really use. Welding lets you work with your hands to create something that you can use, that will really last."

Other projects, too, served as décor, eventually leaving the shop to end up in more suburban settings, where they could serve their intended purpose.

"I made a bench out of wake boards," senior Blake Dickinson said. "I just made the frame and welded on the wake boards. It turned out really well. It's at my lake house now."

Some projects were not about creating something new, but repairing what was previously unusable.

"My friends and I restored an old tractor," senior Luke Riedmueller said. "It took a ton of time, but we had fun restoring it. We got to see all the parts, learn how it was put together and see how tractors work."

Still other projects were created to address future challenges. Senior Marley Raper's project held the door of metal-working open, even after he graduated high school.

"I made a forge going off plans I've seen at Pioneer Farms, where I take classes on old-fashioned black-smithing with my dad," Raper said. "I had to adapt them. It was hard at first, and failures led to new designs. I ended up gaining a lot of experience. The best part was the hope of continuing metal work after high school. If I have a forge, I can keep working with metal as a hobby, even if I don't have a welder or some of the tools we have at the school."

> "I like being able to create something with my own hands, to put work into it and work on it until it's done. You can see the progress and it gives you something to do."

Other students, too, looked forward to future welding projects.

"I want to build a trailer," senior Wesley Sherrill said. "I think it would be useful, and just good experience."

In addition to providing a creative outlet through various projects, students found that welding was a practical life skill.

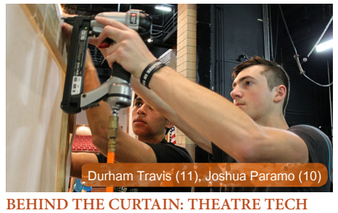
"Welding is useful and handy," Dickinson said. "You can make anything out of nothing if you know what you're doing, and it's not that hard to learn."

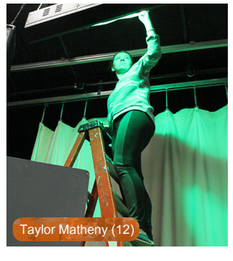
Besides being practical, many students enjoyed the opportunity for hands-on experience and the sense of purpose welding provided.

"I like being able to create something with my own hands, to put work into it and work on it until it's done," Sherrill said. "You can see the progress, and it gives you something to do."


Brandon Weyer (11)


Lindsey Larson (11)


Durham Travis (11), Joshua Paramo (10)


Taylor Matheny (12)


Emily Barcenes (12)

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: THEATRE TECH

While actors received applause, the people behind the curtain were rarely acknowledged. In truth, these people made shows possible by designing, constructing and painting sets, designing, altering and controlling lighting, managing microphones and music, sewing and suppling costumes, and making sure scene changes ran smoothly. From Black Box productions like "Disney Showcase" to extravagant musicals like "Singin' in the Rain," technicians were an important component to any show. Technical Theatre I was primarily focused on learning the skills needed in higher classes, which involved more independent projects. Some students who gained admission into Technical Theatre IV were even able to lead teams of other students, taking on greater responsibility in the production of shows large and small.

Photos by Hannah Williamson

Top Tools

A survey of tech and construction students' favorite tools, 44 students surveyed

1 — Drill 43.2%

A drill, one of the most widely used tools in the school, was used to both pre-drill holes and screw pieces of wood together.

2 — Chop-Saw 25%

A chop-saw was a simple tool, used mostly for cutting 1"x4"s and 2"x4"s. Easy to use, it was an important tool for many building projects.

3 — Measuring Tape 20.5%

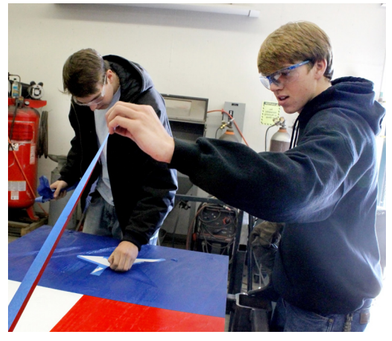
While not a power-tool, a measuring tape was nonetheless one of the most essential tools, allowing students to cut the correct-sized pieces for their projects.

4 — Screwdriver 6.8%

While drills often made screwdrivers unnecessary for many building projects, the screwdriver was used to repair construction equipment and get into places too small for a drill.

5 — Jigsaw 4.5%

Smaller and more agile than most saws, the jigsaw was primarily used to make oddly-shaped cuts, especially curved ones.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Pulling up the tape after spray-painting, seniors Janzen Ilseng and Jacob Ripp reveal the finished table-top of their TV table. Ilseng, Ripp and senior Blake Dickinson built the table as an independent project during their seventh period welding class. "We made a man-cave, and needed a TV table to complete it," Ilseng said. "I had a lot of fun working with Jacob and Blake, and the table turned out pretty well."
Photo by Hannah Williamson

DON'T LOOK AT THE LIGHT Wearing a welding helmet, senior Trey Denny uses a metal inert gas (MIG) welder to connect the supports for his coffee table. While the sparks were relatively harmless, the light from welding, called an "arc," could cause retina damage, so welders were required to wear the protective helmet. Still, Denny enjoyed the project. "The best part of a project is actually welding the metal together," Denny said. "It's fun, and you even get used to the sparks after a while."
Photo by Hannah Williamson

What did you like about making your birdhouse?

To become familiar with the workshop tools, students in construction teacher **AJ Jordan's** classes built birdhouses. After building identical houses based off of a standard model, students designed and built custom birdhouses.


Daniel Brown (10)
Built with James Gosney (11)
"It was cool to learn how to use all the tools and seeing the final product, because all the work had really paid off."


Morgan Williamson (12)
Built with Nicholas Ferguson (12)
"Making the cuts was exciting because after everything was cut, we could put the birdhouse together."


David Mintz (10)
Built with Wesley Schmidt (10)
"I liked putting all the pieces together, because when it was finished, I felt accomplished and could move on to the next project."

What is your favorite thing you've ever made?

"I made a sun-shaped plate in ceramics. It was the first ceramics piece I'd made." — *Valerie Vozza (11)*

"I made a train in my engineering class. We used 3D printer so we got to make the entire machine by ourselves." — *Julio Murcia (12)*

"As a kid, I built wooden ships with my dad. The kind you get from Hobby Lobby. I liked hitting things with hammers." — *Donovan Scandariato (9)*

"I made a flower arrangement for the first time. It ended up being pretty beautiful." — *Yaremi Mendoza (10)*

"I'm building a computer in one of my classes. I enjoy doing it because I really have a passion for it." — *Johnathon Parks (9)*

"I made a Rubik's cube for my engineering class. It turned out really cool, and we got to exchange cubes in class." — *Antonio Carreno (11)*

"For my APES up-cycling project, I used an old pickle and some stamps to make a candle holder." — *Emily Hines (12)*