

West Side Tech students combine interests for future

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

Karen Goldsmith had a fascination with taking items apart and putting them back together ever since she was a child. She also liked fabrics. The next step was to find a way to combine both interests.

Welcome to West Side Vocational-Technical School.

Now a freshman student at the West Side school, Goldsmith, of Box 96, RD 6, Dallas, is taking upholstery courses for three hours a day along with a full load of other classes such as biology, algebra, history, english and gym. And at the ripe old age of 14, she already has her sights set on the future.

"Someday I would like to save up enough money to start my own business," Goldsmith explained. "But first I would like to work in a small factory to get experience."

If that sounds like one student with her head on straight and her priorities in order, you're right. And there are plenty more just like her at Tech who are receiving specialized training in theory and practice in 15 areas of study, including Data Processing, Electronics and Marketing to name a few.

The school also offers a Cooperative Education Capstone Program that provides jobs for eligible students, with pay, beginning with the fourth marking period of their junior year. The program allows students to attend classes in the morning and work in the afternoon.

"We have more jobs than

people to fill them," said Tech principal Thomas Feeney. "And businesses always come back to us to use more of our kids because they do such a good job."

"But we don't send a student out until he or she is ready. We won't send them into a situation they are not prepared for. They also have to meet certain quali-

fications to be eligible for the program," Feeney continued.

"They have to maintain a C-average, have a good attendance and a good disciplinary record."

Cindy Meade, 17, a senior from RD 2, Box 93, Harveys Lake, is one of the Tech students who is in the program, working at CEC Associates, a

medical group on Pierce Street, Kingston, since last June. Meade is responsible for filing charts and other duties and, although she says the transition from the classroom to the work place was a little confusing at the outset, she has made the adjustment.

"At first it was a little difficult because sometimes you would be in class thinking about the things you would have to do for work that day," noted Meade, who works at the office from 1 to 5 p.m.. "But you get use to it pretty quick."

Meade's supervisor, Karen Stesney, who was in the Tech's co-op program seven years ago, says, "Cindy works very well with the other staff members. You don't have to tell her what to do."

Stesney says the company also employs two other Tech students and is pleased with the work they are doing.

But providing services to area businesses are not the only ways these students benefit from their training. In many cases the school or the individual student does, too.

"Take the upholstery class for example," Feeney explained. "A student may bring in an item from home that

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Busy at work

Kevin Hunter, of Harveys Lake, is shown busy at work with one of his projects in his electrical class at West Side Vo-Tech School. Although only a 10th grade student, Hunter has already put his talents to work at home where he says he has hooked up a water heater and put in receptacles.

Dallas Post/John Hoinski



On the job

Cindy Meade, of Harveys Lake, works at the files at CEC Associates on Pierce Street, Kingston. A student at West Side Tech, Cindy works part-time at the doctors' office and is in charge of the files.

Dallas Post/Jane Renn


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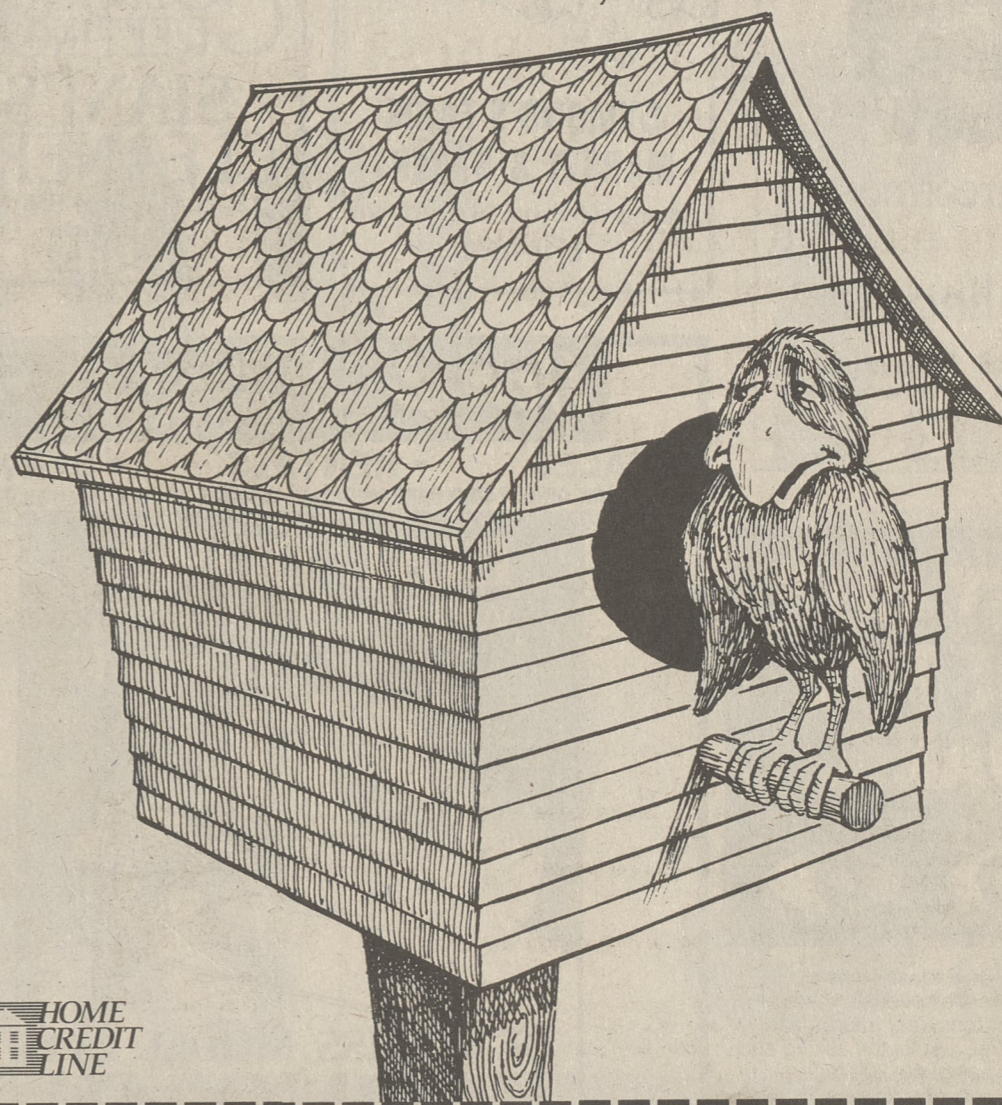
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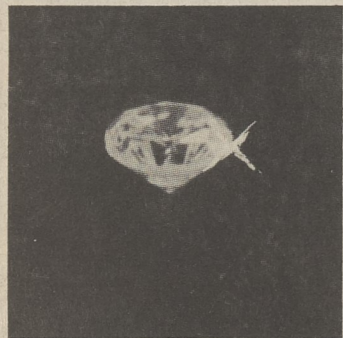
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