

# Education

## "THE REPORT CARD"

### EDUCATION: A LIFE LONG ENDEAVOR



Yvonne Atkinson

With the beginning of each new school year, one group of our students is confronted with a unique situation; these are our seniors. Although we have just begun this new year, in a very short period of time these young men and women will be leaving our high schools and going on to colleges, universities, trade and technical schools, community colleges, or to work in our community. We in the Clark County School District have had these students for 12 years, and provided opportunities for them to participate in any number of academic and vocational training programs. Yet, as I talk with young people from our community, I am many times shocked at their individual goals, aspirations, and dreams for the future. Students who have the ability to successfully complete advanced educational

programs in a university setting have selected to begin work and have no thought of ever attending a school past their high school years. Many of these students have a grade point average which will classify them as honor students and yet, their goals and future plans for life generally center around getting a job. Many of these same students are truly graduating because their future plans do not involve any additional educational training or advancement in their chosen career. Some of these young men and women are directed toward unrewarding careers. If these words seem harsh, they are in fact reality. What I would like to do is suggest to every parent and every one of our graduating seniors that they take the test that is outlined below. Please answer each of the questions with a true or false answer:

1. I have made plans to attend a college or university, and have obtained from the school of my choice the proper application forms.

2. I have investigated the possible scholarships, grants, and loans which could be used to fund my college or university education.
3. I plan to use my high school training to enter the military where I can receive educational training.
4. I plan to use my high school and vocational training to enter the job market after graduating from high school.
5. My future career plans will require that I attend a school in the future which will allow me to advance in my job or occupation.

If you, as a senior, have answered no to these questions, now is the time to begin serious planning for your life's career; where the time is short, it's never too late. I know graduating from school this year will be a special accomplishment, but not an end. You as a graduating senior will be working in the 21st century, and one out of every five jobs available to you during this time hasn't ever been invented today. Education must become a life long process, and we must start to think in terms of training and retraining as all of us near this new century. Jobs and job opportunities are changing drastically.

Seniors, the quick test that has been provided will demonstrate that your plans for your future career need to be developed and then reviewed as you continue through life. There are many individuals who can help you with this endeavor, so please don't leave school with the

idea that you have graduated and this is the end of your education. Talk with your teachers, your counselors, your parents, and people in our community to gain support for your plans. Consider your graduation next spring as a goal that you have achieved and a stepping stone to your future success and happiness. Be prepared to continue to study and to learn and be prepared to accept your role as an informed citizen in our community.

Now is a time to plan, a time to make your dreams a reality, and a time to set your sights at the highest level. There are people to help, but you must take the initiative.

In future weeks, I will offer comments on goal setting for our students in all grade levels and particularly those in our high schools, and provide you with some information about educational opportunities. Together, we can make the difference for the future of Clark County and our nation.

*I know graduating from school this year will be a special accomplishment, but not an end.*

## Lizzie R. Hatcher, Esq.

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## SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

### Education at the Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center

The first time I had an occasion to visit the Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center, oftentimes referred to as "Vo-Tech," it was a unique experience — I got lost! After I found the school, I discovered this educational facility is like no other in our state. If you have never been to this school site, it is located high above the Las Vegas Valley on a plateau and overlooks both the cities of Henderson and Las Vegas.

The school was the realization of men and women who dared to dream and plan for a new school concept. Ray L. Sturn, was instrumental in developing an executive committee composed of educators and lay citizens who planned a school that could meet the needs of southern Nevada youth for many decades. From 1963 to 1965, these committees worked to organize educational programs and suggest a design for a facility that would be a "lighthouse" for vocational education. The Center was completed on August 15, 1966, and Clayton Farnsworth became the first principal. Since this time, literally thousands of young men and women have attended this school and have received job preparation training which has allowed them to enter the work force and become productive citizens for our community. Schools across the nation have been modeled from this Clark County concept.

Today, the success of Vo-Tech continues through the leadership of Mario Monaco. Monaco is one of the dedicated professionals who has spoken out about the need for vocational training for our students. He has set a tone for his school which encourages parents and students to come by his office and discuss with him school operation and programs. As we sat and

talked about Vo-Tech, his comments always centered on the students and he repeated, "Students enroll here because they want to be here." That statement is an apt description of this year's total student enrollment of 1345 students, and certainly true for the 283 black students who have enrolled in one of the 15 different vocational programs.

#### Vocational Programs

Monaco stated that students and parents who always interested in the different types of vocational training programs available at Vo-Tech. The school provides programs for sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Sophomores concentrate on academic subjects, with an opportunity to enroll in course work related to their vocational choice. The juniors select a two-year vocational program, and seniors continue to meet all graduation requirements and complete their vocational training. This school provides an opportunity for students to earn a high school diploma and a vocational certificate at the same time. Every student is able to prepare for immediate employment or for college enrollment. For juniors who have made a career decision, there are 15 different programs to select from. These programs include: Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics, Auto Body, Auto Mechanics, Carpentry, Clerical, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Data Processing, Drafting, Electronics, Graphic Communications, Health Occupations, Refrigeration, Secretarial Science, and Telecommunications.

#### Enrollment

Any freshman in one of the District's comprehensive

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