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to participate in further drug dealing, which became a daily routine for me. At 23 years old, I was arrested for the first time. I served 12 months in prison and was assigned to a year of parole. During this time, my actions became worse. A few months after I got off parole, I was supposed to be on state supervised county probation for an additional year. That did not end up happening as I immediately fled. I ended up turning myself in about a month later and was sentenced to another twelve to twenty-four months in prison.

After serving this sentence, I began to use heroin. In addition to using it, I began selling it, once again, relying only on what I had come to know during my life. I was arrested for the third time, and it changed my life. I was incarcerated and serving a five to ten-year prison sentence for possession with the intent to deliver and possession of a firearm. My first four years imprisoned was like my life on the streets. I did not care about anything and continued drug abuse. Then, one day, everything changed for

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was about half way into my education I was figuring out what I wanted to do in the electrical field. Close to graduation I accepted a position in the electrical construction field, and have been moving forward in my career.

It has been seventeen years since graduation and my achievements include: journeyman electrician, apprenticeship instructor, project coordinator/superintendent. I am employed at Steve

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Any questions I had were addressed and anything I wanted to see was demonstrated. The areas I enjoyed most in the program were the Pneumatic Controls, Residential HVAC Lab/Theory, and Intro to Refrigeration Lab/Theory. What I wanted to achieve after graduating was getting into a company that would allow me to continue growing and learning to do more with what I already learned. I work as a Boiler Technician for Excela Health. My job is to ensure proper function of the boilers, chillers, air handlers, and other equipment throughout the entire building. I started receiving my own special assignments and PM's within the first month of training. Shortly after, I started working shifts on my own and have learned much from my coworkers in other departments. A future goal of mine is to move into a HVAC Technician, allowing me to work primarily on Roof Top Units and Refrigeration Systems. My advice for current students would be to utilize your time speaking with your instructors; you can learn just as much from their real-life experiences as you can from a text book.

Joseph Ivan - Electrical Graduate

I decided to attend Triangle Tech because the college life wasn't for me. I enjoyed working with my hands and being in the working class. I selected the ME program because of my electrical interests and partial knowledge from working jobs relatable to the field prior. The program offers so many routes in which you can branch out to more things than just being stuck with one. My biggest obstacle during school was finding a mix of handling school and work at the same time. With Triangle Tech being 5 days a week 6.5 hours a day it's tough to find time when you are tired from school then going to work right after.

I really enjoyed the welcoming atmosphere. Teachers are very friendly and super helpful. Always willing to help you learn and understand more about your field no matter what. I enjoyed 3rd and 4th terms the best. The labs were more detailed and more complex. Focusing on more industrial atmosphere applications rather than

residential electrical work. Also the field trips to the companies were always fun too. Seeing the work that is actually being done in labs and getting a visual is very helpful. After graduation, I wanted to gain a steady job with good pay. I accomplished just that.

My advice to current and future students would be that this world we live in today is begging for working class trades. Study hard, ask questions and focus. The knowledge you will obtain will help drastically with 90% of the jobs Mary, the Career Advisor, helps you guys get. Having that paper and knowledge does put you a step ahead. Don't act like you know it all or think you can do it all when you get that job. Experience is a major key but getting into the door of a company is the first step and obtaining this degree and working with your Career Advdor basically gets you right in that door. I work on the fueling systems for the naval nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers. Did I start my career running? Yes and no. Like I stated before, having the degree got me in the door but every job has a specific job you need to learn. Having the basic knowledge allowed me to understand and learn faster. This allowed me to run with the job and continue to grow in my company faster.

“Triangle Tech gave me the help I needed to finish my schooling. I gained a wealth of knowledge and self-esteem in a field I did not know I could excel in. They helped me to keep my promise to my father. I am now a cabinet maker with a large millwork shop with the potential to one day run my own jobs. I was welcomed with open arms to Triangle Tech, and they truly made me feel like I was home. The support they gave me to succeed was insurmountable.”
