

# ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

## Large Crowd On Hand for Groundbreaking of Prairie Lakes Healthcare Center of Learning



### INSIDE

SUMMER 2019 NEWSLETTER

Food Pantry . . . . .	2
SkillsUSA . . . . .	3
Happenings . . . . .	4
Military Friendly Gold . . . . .	5
Otter Tail Donation . . . . .	6
LATI Car Club . . . . .	7

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It was an exciting day in April when Lake Area Tech students and administrators, elected officials, and construction personnel broke ground on the \$7.1 million Prairie Lakes Healthcare Center of Learning on the northwest end of campus. The new facility is scheduled to open by Fall 2020 and will house all of LATI's healthcare programs. The expansion will allow an additional 300 students to enroll in healthcare programs.

"The groundbreaking represents the beginning of our next step in expanding LATI," LATI President Mike Cartney said. "This particular building represents healthcare. If you look at healthcare, we have a need today in South Dakota for 900 nurses that we're not filling. That's just one of the nine occupations we have here for healthcare."

Healthcare programs housed in the new 24,000-foot facility include Community Healthcare Worker, Dental Assisting, Med/Fire Rescue,

*continued on page 2*



To receive the LATI friends and family newsletter electronically send your information to:  
**morgan.johnson@lakeareatech.edu**

Save  
the date

OCT 30

CAREER  
SEARCH EXPO



NOV 22

FESTIVAL  
OF TREES

**continued from page 1**  
**PRAIRIE LAKES GROUND BREAKING**

Medical Assisting, Medical Lab Tech, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant and Physical Therapist Assistant. Other programs including Business Associate, Computer Information Systems, Financial Services and General Education will gain additional space due to the evacuation of the healthcare programs from their current locations.

Prairie Lakes Healthcare System secured naming rights with a \$3.1 million donation toward the project in 2017. In addition, Lake Area Tech received a \$2 million grant from the South Dakota Health and Educational Facilities Authority after strong leadership efforts by former Governor Dennis Daugaard and the South Dakota Legislature.

Construction of the Prairie Lakes Healthcare Center of Learning is being completed by CO-OP Architecture of Sioux Falls and general contractor Mills Construction of Brookings.

## Spring Semester Donations Help Fill Lake Area Techs Student Pantry



Ag students help prepare Easy Skillet packages for the Student Food Pantry.

The Lake Area Technical Institute Student Food Pantry received a boost to its shelves this semester in the form of 90 pounds of ground beef and a variety of Easy Skillet meals. Donors include the Coteau Hills Cattlemen's Association, County Fair Food Store of Watertown, and the Lake Area Tech Ag Department.

Lake Area Tech opened the Student Food Pantry in 2017 in response to a growing number of students who could not afford to purchase food. The pantry began with a few items available for students. Shortly after opening, the Student Food Pantry received significant cash donation from the Watertown Elks Lodge #838 and the Watertown Optimist Club to assist in adequately filling the shelves.

"Even with financial aid, most students still need to work part-time or even full-time to pay rent and bills," Director of Student Services, Marketing, and Public Relations LuAnn Strait said. "Food is often not seen as important as a place to live, so a majority, if not all of their paychecks go to rent. Lake Area Tech staff and students have done many annual food drives over the years for the community pantries but realized that there was becoming a critical need on campus. With changes in financial aid availability, the cost to attend college, and the overall cost of living, it is financially difficult for many students. A lot of students do not receive financial help from home and end up having to make a choice between school and work."

Currently, the Student Food Pantry is located in the Leonard Timmerman Library on campus. Students are encouraged to stop by anytime during the library's regular hours. No appointment is necessary and no questions are asked.



Brad Thuringer, physical therapist assistant program instructor at Lake Area Tech will receive the American Physical Therapy Association's Societal Impact Award at a ceremony in June. The award honors his work with Shoes4Kids, a charitable foundation he founded that distributes shoes to children in need.

Learn more about Shoes4Kids at [www.apta.org/NEXT/Shoes4Kids/](http://www.apta.org/NEXT/Shoes4Kids/)

# John Knebel Memorial Scholarship Established at LATI

The family of John Knebel of Eden, SD, recently established a scholarship fund in his memory at Lake Area Technical Institute. The John Knebel Memorial Scholarship will support two \$250 scholarships annually to one student demonstrating financial need in the Agriculture program and the other to any LATI student demonstrating financial need.

John graduated from Roslyn High School in 1986 and then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. Following discharge, he enrolled in the Agriculture program at Lake Area Tech and thoroughly enjoyed his time there learning and making friends. He then pursued his passion for animals and ranching back home with his father. John was also very active in his community,

sharing his time and talents in various roles and community efforts. John was involved in the Marshall County Conservation district for 18 years and served on the South Dakota Association of Conservation District State Board. John passed away on August 22, 2018, the result of a farm accident. He was 50 years old.

Eligible students can apply for the John Knebel Memorial Scholarship by completing the online LATI Foundation Scholarship Application at [www.lakeareatech.edu/foundation/current-scholarships/](http://www.lakeareatech.edu/foundation/current-scholarships/).

Gifts to the John Knebel Memorial Scholarship fund may be hand delivered or mailed to the Lake Area Tech Foundation Office at 1201 Arrow Ave Watertown, SD 57201. Online gifts can be submitted securely at <http://www.lakeareatech.edu/foundation/index.html> and all gifts are tax deductible.

**For more information about the John Knebel Memorial Scholarship fund at Lake Area Technical Institute, please contact the Foundation Office at 605-882-5284: Tracy Hlavacek (Ext. 268) or Morgan Johnson (Ext. 308).**

# LATI Students Place at State SkillsUSA Competition

Students from the Lake Area Technical Institute SkillsUSA Chapter recently competed in the South Dakota State Leadership and Skills Conference competition held on the campus of Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls, SD, and at Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown for the Criminal Justice and Computer Programming portions of the competition. Congratulations to the following Lake Area Tech students who placed in their respective categories:

**FIRST PLACE:** Joseph Scholberg (Ortonville, MN) Automotive Service Technology; Joshua Ramse (Watertown, SD) Computer Programming; Mitchell Halling (Watertown, SD) Internetworking; Raechel Seidel (Lemmon, SD) Pin & T-Shirt Design and Job Interview; Morgan Johnson (Madison, SD), Raechel Seidel (Lemmon, SD) Kaitlyn Reimer (Lemmon, SD) and Blake Murphy (Goodwin, SD) Quiz Bowl; Eric Mohr (Renner, SD) Welding Sculpture and Andrew Byrd (Watertown, SD) Criminal Justice

**SECOND PLACE:** Andrew Crocker (Watertown, SD) Automotive Refinishing Technology; Jacob Heyd (LaMoure, ND) Collision Repair Technology; Mostafa Farahani (Watertown, SD) Computer Programming; Austin Simpson (Colorado Springs, CO) Diesel Equipment Technology; Noah Fullmer (Aberdeen, SD) Information Technology Services; Joseph Polzin (Herman, MN) Internetworking; Morgan Johnson (Madison, SD) Job Interview; Kristoffer Severtson (Kenneth, MN), Grayden Thompson (Alden, MN) and Taylor Hanson (Clear Lake, SD) Welding Fabrication;

Grigory Little (Watertown, SD) Welding Sculpture and Tanner Schiferl (Fordyce, NE) Criminal Justice

**THIRD PLACE:** Tyler Witchey (Webster, SD) Computer Programming; Garrett Salonen (Gregory, SD) Diesel Equipment Technology; Steven Wallert (Clear Lake, SD) Information Technology Services; Ryen Lindner (Watertown, SD) Internetworking; Caleb Kost (Aberdeen, SD), Jesse Michel (Dell Rapids, SD), Logan Arends (Watertown, SD) and Ethan Howard (Huron, SD) Teamworks; Kaleb Bossuyt (Marshall, MN) Welding; Taylor Hanson (Clear Lake, SD) Welding Sculpture and Austin Kurkowski (Watertown, SD) Criminal Justice

All first place recipients are eligible to advance to the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference this summer in Louisville, KY, where more than 6,500 career and technical education students will compete. SkillsUSA is a national organization that serves trade, industrial, technical, and health occupations students in high schools and postsecondary technical institutes.

# APTA Honors Lake Area Techs Thuringer with National Societal Impact Award

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) will present the distinguished Societal Impact Award to Lake Area Technical Institute's Brad Thuringer, Physical Therapist Assistant program instructor, at the annual APTA conference in June. The award honors his community service efforts with Shoes4Kids, a charitable foundation Thuringer founded that distributes shoes to children in need. Annually, the foundation targets communities in which the APTA Annual Conference is held. Since 2006, Thuringer has solicited contributions that have provided more than 15,000 pairs of new shoes and socks to children.

He is the first physical therapist assistant to earn the award.

The APTA Societal Impact Award recognizes leaders within APTA's member community who demonstrate commitment and dedication to addressing issues related to societal welfare. This award specifically recognizes individuals who exemplify the compassionate nature of the physical therapy profession by exhibiting a distinguished commitment toward philanthropic initiatives, raising public awareness on key societal issues, and demonstrating how physical therapy can be applied to address these issues.

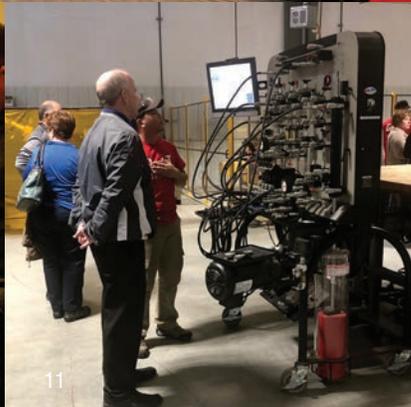
Thuringer earned his Physical Therapist Assistant A.A.S. degree at Lake Area Technical Institute and also holds an Associate of Arts Degree in Education from Presentation College in Aberdeen, South Dakota. In 2010, he was awarded the F.A. Davis Award for Outstanding Physical Therapist Assistant Educator by the APTA and in 2015 the APTA named Thuringer the Outstanding Physical Therapist Assistant of the Year. He will be recognized during the APTA Honors and Awards Ceremony and Reception in June during the NEXT Conference and Exposition in Chicago, Illinois.

# LATI HAPPENINGS

1. Watertown School District Superintendent Dr. Jeff Danielsen read to our Educare kids this semester for National Dr. Seuss day! Thanks to all of our readers that day!
2. Many students, staff, and faculty rolled up their sleeves this spring and helped fill sandbags for those in need. Pictured here are Human Services Technician students who dedicated many hours. Thanks to all who helped!
3. Governor Kristi Noem joined us for her first Governor's Luncheon at Lake Area Tech this spring. We thank her for all of her support of technical education and scholarships at LATI!
4. We recently celebrated our retiring Lake Area Tech staff and faculty: Cindy Ward/37 years of service, Food Services Manager; Alison Albertson/27 years of service, Medical Lab Tech Program Supervisor; Shawn Venjohn/18 years of service, Cosmetology Program Supervisor; Steve Parkhurst/17 years of service, Automotive Tech instructor; and Roger Solum/10 years of service, Energy Programs instructor. We are all very grateful for your combined 109 years of service to Lake Area Tech. Pictured with the retirees are LATI President Mike Cartney, Watertown School District Superintendent Dr. Jeff Danielsen, and Watertown School District Board President Stuart Stein
5. (and 12) The 52 annual Lake Area Tech graduation took place Friday, May 10 and featured Gov. Kristi Noem as our commencement speaker. Congratulations to all of our 823 graduates! We wish you all the best!

6. The Men and Women in Science event draws eighth grade students from the area who learn all about exciting careers in science while completing hands-on activities! Thanks to all of our speakers!
7. It was a busy day during the annual Robot Games! Our Robotics and Electronic Systems Technology students had fun competing and also hosting a record number of local students who visited campus to take in the games.
8. Our Business Expo is always a great opportunity for our students to connect with area and regional business and industries. The networking at this event can lead to internships or careers! Thanks to all of the businesses that took part this semester!
9. Marlene Seeklander and Carrie Jordanger of our Financial Aid Office were recognized at the annual spring conference for SDASFAA. Carrie was recognized for 20 years of service and Marlene was recognized for 35 years of service to the financial aid profession. Marlene also received the 2018 Outstanding Service Award. Congratulations to you both!
10. At our Foundation's Student for Half a Day event, members of the community and business leaders spend the morning learning about our programs through hands-on activities. Thanks to all who participated!
11. The Chamber After 4 event featuring The Lab was a hit! Thanks to all who came to see our Robotics/Electronics program highlights including robots, cobots, the mobile lab and the self-guided vehicle! The Rob/EST students and faculty did a great job!
13. Several students in our Physical Therapist Assistant program participated in the Beacon Center's Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event this spring. Thank you for supporting community efforts!





## Lake Area Tech Earns 2019-2020 Military Friendly Gold-Level School Designation

Lake Area Technical Institute once again earned the 2019-2020 Military Friendly® School designation at the gold level status. This is the 10th consecutive year LATI has received the Military Friendly® School award and the fourth year in a row it has received added-level status. Each year, the list of Military Friendly® Schools is provided to service members and their families, helping them select the best college, university, or trade school to receive the education and training needed to pursue a civilian career. This year, 766 schools across the country were named to the list as Designated, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Top 10 status schools.

“Our staff is committed to help our student veterans make a seamless transition from military life to life as a successful student,” Lake Area Tech President Mike Cartney said. “Earning the gold-level Military Friendly® School Award is a reflection of the efforts our veteran services staff put forth every day and is a noble honor for our institution.”

Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey completed by the school. Student survey data was also taken into consideration for the designation. The 2019-2020 Military Friendly® Schools list will be published in the May issue of G.I. Jobs® magazine. The list can also be found at [www.militaryfriendly.com](http://www.militaryfriendly.com). Founded in 2001, VIQTORY is a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) that connects the military community to civilian employment, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities through its G.I. Jobs®, Military Spouse, and Military Friendly® brands.

# Otter Tail Donation to Benefit Student Scholarships

Representatives with the Lake Area Technical Institute Foundation announce the receipt of a significant donation by Otter Tail Power Company. Otter Tail officials recently presented a gift of \$30,000 to the Lake Area Tech Foundation in support of three major focuses: student scholarships in the Energy, Robotics, and Welding programs; endowment investment; and 'I'm IN' Capital Campaign support.

"We are overwhelmed by Otter Tail's generous donation to the Foundation," said Tracy Hlavacek, LATI Foundation Executive Director. "Otter Tail is a strong supporter of our technical programs and this gift will enhance future Foundation efforts as well as student success through scholarships."

In addition to the recent donation, Otter Tail's long-standing relationship with Lake Area Tech includes participation on the Foundation Board of Directors and involvement as an LATI Impact Partner.

Otter Tail is an investor-owned electric utility that provides electricity for residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.



On hand for the Otter Tail Power Company check presentation were (from left): LATI Director of Support Operations Shane Ortmeier; LATI Director of Student Services LuAnn Strait; LATI Foundation Executive Director Tracy Hlavacek; Otter Tail Vice-President of Energy Supply, Brad Tollerson; LATI Energy Instructor Roger Solum; Otter Tail Big Stone Plant Manager Adam Koplin; LATI President Mike Cartney; LATI Vice-President Diane Stiles; and LATI Director of Outreach Shane Swenson.

## Alumni Access

### NEW GRADUATES:

Login, or username will remain the same – initials + Student ID # (see transcript for ID#). The password will change back to the default password of INITIALS + last 4 digits of your Social Security number. Example: Password for James Bond 123-45-6789 is JB6789. It is recommended to change your password after initial login.

Lake Area Tech Alum you now have access to your unofficial transcripts, alumni information and MORE!

**Follow this link get started:**  
<https://my.lakeareatech.edu/ics>

### CURRENT ALUMNI:

If you graduated prior to 2017, please contact Don Armstrong at 605-882-5284 or [don.armstrong@lakeareatech.edu](mailto:don.armstrong@lakeareatech.edu) to receive your username.

## Lake Area Techs Robotics/Electronics Program Earns Top Spot at ATEA National Conference



Accepting the 2019 ATEA Outstanding Technical Program award were (left-right): Brooks Jacobsen, program supervisor and instructor; Tim Moes, instructor; Mathew Weinzirl, instructor; Bob Poor, instructor; and Dr. Bryan Albrecht, ATEA Board of Trustees President.

activities, and organizational activity. Accepting the award at the conference were Brooks Jacobsen, LATI Robotics/Electronic Systems Technology department supervisor, and instructors Tim Moes, Bob Poor, and Mathew Weinzirl.

"In addition to our high graduation, placement, and retention rates, we are very proud to be the only two-year, post-secondary program in the nation to be provided COBOT (collaborative robots) and Autonomous Vehicle technology training by the National Institute of Standards and Technology," Jacobsen said. "The high level of hands-on education and exposure to advanced technology our students receive provides outstanding job opportunities in the robotics and electronics fields after graduation."

The program has a 100 percent job placement rate and an articulation agreement with South Dakota State University that allows students seamless transfer into a Bachelor of Science degree program in Electronics Engineering Technology or Manufacturing Engineering Technology. The program also has a partnership with South Dakota Manufacturing & Technology Solutions that has allowed it to obtain advanced, high tech equipment. Graduates work in vast sectors including transportation, agriculture, mining, space exploration, weaponry, healthcare, laboratory research, and the mass production of consumer and industrial goods. Lake Area Tech Electronics/Robotics graduates at entry level are averaging \$26.88 an hour, according to the latest placement report of 2018 graduates.

**For more information, please visit [www.ateaonline.org/ATEA-Award-Winners-2019](http://www.ateaonline.org/ATEA-Award-Winners-2019)**

# Lake Area Tech Car Club Raises Funds for Operation Black Hills Cabin

Students in Lake Area Technical Institute's Automotive Technology, High Performance Engine Machining, and Custom Paint & Fab programs ended the year on a high note by hosting the 14th annual Car Show for a Cause on April 27. The Car Show featured a variety of entries and was open to the public. A total of \$3,000 was raised for Operation Black Hills Cabin!

For more information on LATI's Automotive Technology, Custom Paint & Fabrication or High Performance Engine Machining programs, visit [www.lakeareatech.edu](http://www.lakeareatech.edu).

## Category winners at the Car Show:

1. **PEOPLE'S CHOICE:** Jerry Whitney – 1957 GMC 100
2. **HIGH PERFORMANCE CHOICE:** Aron Nickelson – 1968 Chevy Chevelle
3. **AUTOMOTIVE CHOICE:** Jason Aldren – 2010 Chevy Camaro
4. **CUSTOM PAINT AND FAB:** Miron Fist III – 1968 Dodge Dart GTS
5. **BEST OF SHOW:** Dennis Bremmon – 1963 Plymouth Belvedere



Automotive Tech, Custom Paint & Fab, and High Performance Engine Machining students presented a check for \$3000 to Brad Johnson representing Operation Black Hills Cabin. Located near Custer, SD, Operation Black Hills Cabin offers a week-long respite to qualifying combat-wounded veterans (and their families) from the Iraq/Afghanistan campaigns at little or no expense to them, except transportation. Johnson told the students their contribution would help fund several families' time at the cabin.



## ThinkBIG

The Caterpillar ThinkBIG Global Conference was hosted by Lake Area Tech and the LATI Diesel program in May. The staff and instructors spent a week reviewing and updating ThinkBIG curriculum that is used by 20 schools worldwide. Lake Area Tech thanks the conference leaders for selecting us to be this year's conference site!



People's  
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High  
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Automotive  
Choice



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Paint &  
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Show



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# SET YOUR SIGHTS ON A GREAT CAREER.

### AGRICULTURE

- Agri-Aviation Option
- Agri-Business Option
- Agri-Production Option
- Commodity Merchandising Option
- Dairy Option
- Livestock Production & Management Option
- Precision Technology Option
- General Science Dual Degree

### AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Automotive Gas or Light Duty Diesel Options

### AVIATION

- Aviation Maintenance Technology
- Professional Fixed Wing Pilot

### BUILDING TRADES TECHNOLOGY

### BUSINESS ASSOCIATE

- Entrepreneurship Option
- Human Resource Associate Option
- Marketing & Management Option
- Photography/Media Option

### COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- Graphic Design & Digital Communications Specialist Option
- Networking & Cyber Security Specialist Option
- Programming Specialist Option

### COSMETOLOGY

### CUSTOM PAINT & FABRICATION

### DENTAL ASSISTING – CERTIFIED

### DIESEL TECHNOLOGY

- Ag/Industrial Tractor or Truck Option
- CAT ThinkBIG
- CNH Forging the Future

### ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY

### ENERGY OPERATIONS

### ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

### ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

- Agri-Financial Services Option
- Business Accounting Option
- Consumer Financial Services Option

### HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

### HIGH PERFORMANCE ENGINE MACHINING

### HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICIAN

- Child Development Option
- Developmental Disabilities Option
- Mental Health/Activity Technician Option
- Youth Offender Option

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

### MED/FIRE RESCUE

- Emergency Medical Specialist Option
- Paramedic Diploma

### MEDICAL ASSISTING

### MEDICAL LAB TECHNICIAN

### NURSING – LPN

### NURSING – RN

### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

### PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

### PRECISION MACHINING

### ROBOTICS

### WELDING TECHNOLOGY

## E-Degrees (Online Hybrid Programs)

### AGRICULTURE

- Agri-Business Option
- Commodity Merchandising
- Livestock Production & Management Option

### BUSINESS ASSOCIATE

- Entrepreneurship Option
- Human Resource Option
- Marketing & Management Option
- Photography/Media Option

### COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### DENTAL ASSISTING – CERTIFIED

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (CERT. ONLY)

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

### LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

### MEDICAL LAB TECHNICIAN

### PRACTICAL NURSING

### PRECISION MACHINING

### ROBOTICS

\* Indicates these programs are unique to Lake Area Tech in SD.