

March 6, 2017

“It takes a Village”

TCISD Celebrates the Opening of the Industrial Trades Center

Much research has been done over the years on where the saying “It takes a Village” originated? Two leading references reached the conclusion it was generated from an African tribe in Swahili while the other believed it came from a Native American Tribe and is homegrown here in the United States. Many folks may have been introduced to the phrase through a book written in 1996 by Hillary Rodham Clinton entitled “It takes a Village: And Other Lessons Children Teach Us”. Regardless of the origin of the phrase, the principle that wisdom, learning and understanding is passed down to younger generations from the older experienced elders has been with us throughout mankind. It is a responsibility of our society to educate our children and allows them to dream dreams and experience all that America has to offer. For the past thirty years or longer our school aged children were led to believe the American dream could only be realized if you obtained a four year college degree. This pathway has led countless young people down paths that they weren’t interested in or resulted in them failing to achieve the job satisfaction and salary they envisioned not to mention the baggage of student debt that can be overwhelming. This one path solution has also created a shortage in skilled craft workers needed to replenish the baby boomers who were retiring from these positions in great number. This alarming shortage of skilled workers can devastate an industry community that relies on the industrial base to provide good paying jobs that co-exist with safe efficient operations of these facilities. As a member of the Texas City Industrial Community for almost 30 years I couldn’t be more pleased to shout the praises of OUR VILLAGE LEADERS who began down a pathway to create a homegrown skilled workforce for today and the future to allow the Texas City-LaMarque area to thrive and create opportunities for generations to come.

When discussing the LEADERS of OUR VILLAGE who have stepped forward to make the Industrial Trade Center (ITC) a reality we must begin with the TCISD Board and leadership of the TCISD Superintendent and her team. This committed group stepped out by faith into a “Field of Dreams” reality to build it and they will come and have worked tirelessly to garner support from the Industrial community, City government, Chamber of Commerce, business community, educators and parents to cast a vision for an alternative career path for students of TCISD. Following the pathway of College of the Mainland (COM) and industry partners who created a world class Process Operator Technician (P-Tech) curriculum that supplies and support our industry with qualified Process Operator Technicians the ITC graduates will be well equipped to perform many of the skilled crafts needs of our local industry community. This opportunity created when the Texas Legislators approved House Bill 5 that provided a vehicle to re-introduce Vocational Training back into our secondary school systems was a game changer for students to start down a good paying career path to support our industry community that allows for safe efficient operations of these facilities. As President & CEO of the Safety Council of Texas City (SCTC), a non-profit organization that provides risk management services to our industrial community and the contractors they employ for over 27 years, I see the benefits that will be realized from graduates completing the ITC curriculum for years to come. I encourage you to attend the Open House of the ITC on March 9, 2017 and support the ITC now and in the future. Remember IT TAKES A VILLAGE and we all have a responsibility to make our Village the best it can be.

Sincerely,

R. Ronald Sokol, CSP

President & CEO

Safety Council of Texas City