

# History of

# Maxwell High School of Technology

Maxwell High School of Technology offers career and technical education programs to students throughout Gwinnett County. While Gwinnett's career and technical education program, formerly called vocational education, has a long history it also has a long-standing tradition of excellence. The history of programs at the Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Oakland and the Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Parkview is combined at the Maxwell facility. Maxwell has built on this tradition of excellence to offer students experiences that will benefit them as they go to college or head into the workplace.

## GVEC at Oakland...

The first vocational school program in Gwinnett County was housed in the upper wing of Central Gwinnett-Lawrenceville High School from 1966 until 1972. In 1973, the vocational education program moved to its present location at 990 McElvaney Lane in Lawrenceville. When the school was constructed, the site was the central location for all the high schools in the county; therefore, the school was named the Career Education Center.

In 1983, the original name was changed to the Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Oakland. Because of the opening of a second vocational education school program at Parkview in 1976, the 19-classroom Vocational Education Center at Oakland had changed from servicing all the county high schools to servicing students from Berkmar, Central Gwinnett, Norcross, North Gwinnett, Duluth and Dacula high schools. A few programs unique to the center at Oakland continued to draw students from all high schools. These unique programs included horticulture, data processing, heating and air conditioning, graphic arts, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Supportive Training, Rehabilitative Instruction Vocational Education (STRIVE). The other programs offered include cosmetology, drafting, medical services, computer technology, electronics, construction, child care, auto body and metals.

From the time the vocational program began in 1966 until 1983, Howard Maxwell was the principal. Others who have been at the vocational center at Oakland since

## FAST FACTS

**Address:** 990 McElvaney Lane  
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

The following have served as principals of Maxwell HS of Technology and related vocational programs/centers:

*The following have served as principals of the Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Oakland:*

1966–83                      Howard Maxwell

1983–93                      Roger Sartor

*The following have been principals of Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Parkview:*

1976–79                      Roger Sartor

1979–83                      Morris Friedman

1983–93                      Roy Rucks

*The following have been principals of Maxwell HS of Technology:*

1993–2003                      Roy Rucks

2003–2011                      Donna Powers

2011–Present                      Dr. Jeff Hall

**School Colors:** Navy and Teal

**School Mascot:** N/A

it opened through their retirements are Billy Smith, administrative assistant and counselor; David Spencer, auto body instructor; Jan Erb, drafting instructor; David Goodroe, electronics instructor; Buford Deal, graphics arts instructor, and Adrienne Williams, medical services instructor. Roger Sartor became principal in 1983.

During the years that the vocational center at Oakland has been in existence, job placement was as high as 90 percent and never lower than 60 percent. In addition to being a pilot program for combining ESOL with vocational class offerings, the Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Oakland offered courses for applied English and applied math credit during the 1989-90 school year.

*David Goodroe, Historian*

## GVEC at Parkview

The Gwinnett Vocational Education Center at Parkview opened in 1976 as a part of the Parkview High

School complex. Since the center was so closely tied to Parkview at that time, the center was known as Parkview Vocational Center. Students from South Gwinnett and Parkview high schools shared the facilities.

Seven vocational programs were offered to students that first year. Auto body, transportation, construction, cosmetology, drafting, electronics and metals were selected as the original course offerings. A principal and a part-time secretary completed the staff for the 1976–77 school term. During the second year of operation, a Diversified Cooperative Training (DCT) program was added. A vocational counselor was added to the staff the third year (1978–79).

An addition to the building was completed for the school year 1982–83. Four new programs were added: child care; hotel, restaurant and tourism (HRT); health occupations, and marketing. As new high schools were built in the area, the student population the center served was increased. The name also was changed to appeal to the more varied student body. Five schools were served: Parkview, South Gwinnett, Brookwood, Shiloh, and Meadowcreek high schools. The HRT program was phased out during the school year 1987–88, and the health occupations program was no longer offered after 1988–89.

Under the leadership of Principal Roy Rucks, the

development of the vocational curriculum became widely recognized. The school was selected for two pilot programs that involved curriculum. In 1987, Ohio State University chose the center as one of six pilot schools in the nation to develop strategies for delivering basic skills to vocational students. In 1988, the Southern Regional Education Board selected the center for a similar study involving basic skills. Only two sites in the state of Georgia were selected for this research.

A 1990 bond referendum proposed that the two existing high school vocational education centers be combined into a single comprehensive career center serving all high schools in the system.

*Virginia McIntosh, Historian*

#### Maxwell HS of Technology

In 1993, the Vocational Education Center at Parkview joined the Gwinnett Vocational Center at Oakland. The school's name was changed to the Maxwell High School of Technology, in recognition of GVEC at Oakland's first principal Howard Maxwell. Roy Rucks was the first principal of the current Maxwell High School of Technology.

The county has experienced tremendous growth, resulting in additional high schools. Maxwell now serves students from all 19 Gwinnett County high schools.



Current programs consist of three periods per day in the areas of Aircraft Flight Operations, Architecture, Drawing and Design, Auto Collision Repair, Automotive Services, Construction, Cosmetology, Early Childhood Education, Electronics/Robotics, Graphic Communication and Design, Healthcare Science, Law and Justice, and Welding.

Donna Powers became the principal of Maxwell in 2003 following the retirement of Mr. Rucks.