FACAA Apprenticeship is Becoming FTS

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Florida Training Services, Inc. (FTS) is excited to announce a significant milestone in its mission to enhance apprenticeship education and workforce development. The Florida Air Conditioning Apprenticeship Association (FACAA) is a reputable apprenticeship training organization recognized for its dedication to excellence in HVAC apprenticeship education. As of July 1, 2025, FACAA has become a part of FTS. This strategic partnership aims to combine our resources, expertise, and networks, creating a more robust platform for aspiring apprentices. One of the most important factors in our industry is the technician. As such we must invest in every aspect of building the next generation. Over the past 38 years FACAA has been training apprentices in our little slice of paradise! FACAA Apprenticeship program started around 1987 when the leadership at North Tech Education asked Ed Cook, owner of Cooks Air Conditioning and an HVAC Instructor at North Tech to start an apprenticeship training program. With help from Gil Hataway, Dave Stewart, Rick Alford, Maury Jacobson, Abe Schwartz, Jim Ewing and other members of PBACCA a program was created. John Cook became director during the 90's and as the enrollment continued to grow Ken Cook and Steve Sparks joined in the administration of the program and continue doing so today. Fortunately, so many great administrative people, instructors and mentors have been part of FACAA which has allowed for the best possible graduating classes over the years. One of those administrators is Rhonda Hutchison, for the past 10 years she has been working behind the scenes as a valued office manager coordinating with the different agencies and the state of Florida; due to her attention to detail and commitment to the apprentices this program runs like a well-oiled machine. The program was moved to Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth Campus in 2005. The program is respected as one of the industry leaders in providing HVAC training and has provided training for several thousand apprentices, many who are now leaders in our industry.

I first met Steve Sparks when he was my 3rd year instructor in the late 1990's. I did my best to challenge him with questions, which I still do today. He has been a mentor and a friend to me since then. After graduating from the program, I became an instructor. This year I will start my 25th class. However, this year it will be with a new organization at the helm. FTS has been providing registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training in construction trades across southeast Florida since 2004. FTS manages and sponsors apprentice and pre-apprentice programs in Indian River, Saint Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach Counties. Currently, FTS offers apprenticeships in various trades, including carpentry, electrical, HVAC, and plumbing. Steve will remain with FTS as an advisor to help navigate the transition, recruit new apprentices, and provide guidance. FTS strives to continue growing apprenticeships in Florida.



The HVAC program will remain unchanged, a 4-year program with the same breakout; 1st year providing instruction on the fundamentals, 2nd year focuses on the electrical aspect of our trade, 3rd year discusses HVAC design standards and 4th year will focus on the larger commercial side of our trade. On September 15th we will start the new school year with classes located at Chuck Shaw (West Palm Beach), North Technical Education Center (Riviera Beach) and the Delray Full-Service Center (Delray Beach).