

Culture. Communication. Connection.

THE CHRONICLER

The Official Quarterly Newsletter for StrataTech Education Group

FY22 | Q4 | DECEMBER 2022

Our CEO's Corner

Mary Kelly

This time of the year is always my favorite. A time to reflect on the past year, to celebrate accomplishments, to learn from our mistakes and to set personal and professional goals for the new year ahead. It is also a time to pause and reflect on what we are thankful for and to experience and share our gratitude. This year, I am so grateful for having the opportunity to **impact over 3700 lives of our graduates from TWS and RSI**. To date, collectively, **we have impacted over 47,000 lives**. I am grateful for having the opportunity to work with such a passionate, talented, and hard-working team who is dedicated to caring and supporting our students, every step of the way, and to make an impact on their lives, their families, and the communities and employers they serve.

Our ultimate goal is by the end of 2032, to have provided true life change to over 100,000 employed graduates nationwide, at over 25,000 different organizations.

With these incredibly impactful goals, our organization is in an exciting growth mode with dynamic organizational transformation. As a leader in skilled trades education with multiple offices and campus locations nationwide, it is mission critical that we focus on investing in our culture to achieve our goals. Our organizational goals include opening new locations, including Dallas, Texas (targeted for February 2023 pending all approvals) and new programs in 2023. Our geographic and program expansion will enable us to work towards our core focus on StrataTech Education Group serving as the premier educator for the **next generation of skilled trades professionals, for building knowledge, independence, and new futures.**

As an organization, we share in these beliefs:

- We believe in **diversity and inclusion**
- We believe in **equity and access to education**
- We believe in the **ability for everyone to succeed with the right support**
- We believe in the **critical need for the skilled trades** to help

America meet our growing infrastructure needs and, in meeting that need, facilitating true life change for our graduates

I am personally looking forward to contributing to enhancing our "People First Culture" and making a positive and life-changing impact on each other as colleagues, our students, employers, and the communities we serve nationwide.

With gratitude, appreciation, and excitement,

- Mary

Mary Kelly, President and CEO
StrataTech Education Group



120 North 44th Street | Phoenix, AZ 85034



Corporate Social Responsibility

At StrataTech, we are committed to corporate social responsibility across each of our campuses, and as we close out the fiscal year, we look back at the tremendous impact we have had on each other and the communities we serve.

The Refrigeration School, Inc. Donates \$100,000 in Scholarships to Fresh Start Women’s Foundation

As part of our commitment to expanding training opportunities to everyone in the skilled trades, we are excited to announce that we are providing [Fresh Start Women’s Foundation](#) with \$100,000 in scholarships. These scholarships will help women who are served by Fresh Start to train at The Refrigeration School in our training program. Graduates will be prepared with the skills they need to pursue entry-level job opportunities as HVAC/R technicians, welders, and electricians.

Fresh Start Women’s Foundation is a non-profit that supports women with work training, education, social services, and more. Their mission as a nonprofit is consistent with our mission as a school: helping people find new life paths for long-term success and personal fulfillment. [Read the full announcement.](#)



Supporting the Susan G Komen Foundation

The Refrigeration School, Tulsa Welding School, and Tulsa Welding School & Technology Center proudly supported Susan G. Komen in their mission of raising awareness of breast cancer and providing resources for breast cancer patients.

Breast cancer is a disease that can

affect people from all walks of life. We believe strongly in supporting the health and general wellness of not just our students, but of skilled trades workers in general. Sometimes it’s hard to remember that in the welding, HVAC/R



and electrical industries, taking care of the body is just as important as doing the job right. Susan G Komen’s mission is consistent with ours, which is one of the many reasons we’re so happy to partner with them.

To learn more about how **Susan G Komen supports breast cancer patients**, visit <https://www.komen.org/>.

Tulsa Welding School & Technology Center Volunteers at Local Food Bank

To help serve the needs of the Houston community, Tulsa Welding School & Technology Center volunteered at a local food bank and assembled bags of food for people who are homebound, live in homeless shelters, and who can’t afford food.

To continue our mission or serving our community’s needs, TWSTC plans to do these sorts of food drives more often.

Thank you to everyone who was involved in these initiatives. You helped make a difference. We look forward to continuing this momentum into the new fiscal year and making an even greater impact on our communities!

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct.15) celebrates the history, culture, and contributions of the American Latino community in the U.S.

At StrataTech, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by reflecting on the awesome accomplishments of some of our Hispanic graduates. One story in particular stands out to us: **RSI graduate John Nunez.**



John worked as a behavioral health technician for at-risk youth and at an adult recovery home for about 4 years until he decided he needed to do something to better his life. He wanted something new, something that let him work with his hands.

John ended up enrolling in the Refrigeration Technologies program at RSI and loved the hands-on training. He was anxious when he first started the program, and sometimes he felt like he couldn't do what was being asked of him in class. But the hands-on training from his instructors helped him realize he CAN do this.

After graduating, he got hired at Goettl Air Conditioning as a service technician. He found this opportunity through one of RSI's career fairs.

John's advice to new HVAC students:

"Just go in with an open mind and apply yourself. Learn what the instructors are telling you and take as many notes as you can, because that's what helped me."

[Read John's full story.](#)

RSI and StrataTech Participate in Turkey Tuesday



Serving our communities is one of our top priorities at The Refrigeration School, Inc. and StrataTech. We are proud



sponsors of NBCTV12's Turkey Tuesday holiday food drive to support St. Vincent de Paul's holiday food drive. Happy Thanksgiving!
[Click here to watch the NBC segment.](#)

Partnering With Oklahoma Food Bank to Care for our Students

Student success is about more than just training



students and seeing that they graduate—it's also about caring for them as human beings. We'd like to thank the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma for their partnership in helping us provide 10 of our students with a Thanksgiving meal.

Innovation and Technology

Career Education Review Recognizes StrataTech, Tulsa Welding School, and RSI.

StrataTech We are excited to announce that three of our very own team members at StrataTech have been named to the Career Education Review's (CER) Top 20 People Changing Career Education!

This recognition highlights the forward-thinkers, innovators, and advocates making a positive impact in the private career school sector and leading change in career education. Mary Kelly, President and CEO at StrataTech Education Group, Chris Shuler, Director of Training and Student Services at Tulsa Welding School, and Alex Declair, Business Development Representative and Regional Training Manager at StrataTech, have been honored for the innovation and development of OcuWeld.

Ocuweld is first-of-its-kind, virtual reality training technology that is transforming welding education by bringing hands-on training into a virtual environment.

"StrataTech Education Group is honored to be named among those making an impact in career education for the innovation and development of OcuWeld - providing virtual reality (VR) training for welding," said Mary Kelly, president and CEO of StrataTech Education Group. "Addressing the need for equity and inclusion in education, we developed OcuWeld, using the power of virtual reality, to provide training to underserved areas. Without requiring access to the Internet or WIFI, we can reach our students where they are, eliminating technological and geographic barriers to education. In addition, the OcuWeld VR platform fosters heightened student engagement through gamification. Finally, by integrating the latest technology in technical education, we can help our students be better prepared for current and future workforce and employer demands. We'd also like to thank the team at ForgeFX for their help with the coding to bring OcuWeld to market."

GAMIFICATION IN EDUCATION

Here's to the Gamechangers! StrataTech Education Group congratulates all of the CECU Top 20 People Changing Career Education.

StrataTech Education is proud to be recognized for the development of **OcuWeld™** - Virtual Reality (VR) training - made by welders, for welders. As the first of its kind, students can practice welding skills learned in class - offline, anytime, anywhere. Providing equity in access to education in remote or underserved areas. Congratulations to the StrataTech Education OcuWeld team: **Mary Kelly** (President & CEO), **Chris Schuler** (Regional Director of Training and Student Services, TWS), and **Alex DeClair** (Client Solutions Business Manager, RSI). Thanks for their innovation and integration of gamified VR technologies like OcuWeld into enhancing training for the skilled trades.

Together, we can make an impact for our students and communities.



StrataTech.com/ocuweld

StrataTech Education Group
Parent company of Tulsa Welding School TWS.edu
and The Refrigeration School RSI.edu



Tulsa Welding School and RSI Launch Virtual Reality Labs at all locations



This October, as part of the National Open House Event, The Refrigeration School, Inc. and Tulsa Welding School campuses launched the first-of-its-kind Virtual Reality Labs for prospective students.

Each lab gave individuals the chance to try out our innovative virtual reality technology, OcuWeld and Interplay. OcuWeld simulates the experience of being a welder, while Interplay simulates the experience of being an HVAC/R technician or electrician. Neither simulator requires the user to use physical tools or be in a physical booth or classroom. [Read and watch the full story.](#)

A huge thank you to Fox 10 Phoenix for stopping by the campus to chat about the OcuWeld's capabilities and our welding training program! [Click here to watch the segment.](#)

B2B and Workforce Development

StrataTech Launches Solar Technician Course for Amazon Employees

The Refrigeration School, Inc. launched a new 10-week solar technician course for Amazon's hourly employees as part of Amazon's Career Choice program. This course provides hands-on training in photovoltaic (PV) science, the fundamentals of solar energy, and wiring and electrical issues. Full tuition provided by Amazon.

The solar technician course is the latest addition in StrataTech's ongoing partnership with Amazon in their Career Choice program.

[Read the full announcement.](#)

StrataTech Education Group Joins the Grow with Google Indigenous Career Readiness Program

StrataTech is proud to join the Grow with Google Career Readiness Program, an initiative by Google that provides Native students with training and career workshops to prepare them with digital skills. Joining this program not only helps Grow With Google's goal of training 10,000 Native students for career readiness by 2025, but it also helps our goal of expanding skilled trades training to as many people as possible, no matter their background. [Read the full announcement.](#)



We are so proud of our newest graduates of the Apartment Maintenance Pathway program. These amazing individuals took a chance to change their lives and learn new skills they can take with them anywhere. Who they were or



what they did before entering this program didn't matter. The past is the past, and as graduates of our program, they now

have a bright future with endless possibilities ahead of them.

The Apartment Maintenance Program is a 4-week hands-on training course that trains students in the fundamentals of apartment maintenance.

Univision, the largest Spanish language TV network in the United States, was present to show the graduation ceremony and talk about the program to its audience. Supporting the Hispanic community and providing career training opportunities for Hispanic people is one of our primary goals as a school, and we are grateful to Univision for their excellent coverage. [Click here to watch the segment.](#)



Tulsa Welding School & Technology Center Opens the Electrical Apprenticeship

At Tulsa Welding School & Technology Center, we have expanded our electrical students' opportunities for training and career advancement with the Electrical Apprenticeship. Students of the Electrical Applications program now have the option to sign up with the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation (TDLR) during enrollment. They earn hours as they attend the program, when they graduate, they will have 700 hours signed off by a Master Electrician, counting toward the 8,000 hours needed to become a journeyman electrician.

Setting our students up for lifetime success and fulfillment is our top priority as a school. The Electrical Apprenticeship makes the path to becoming a certified journeyman electrician more accessible to our electrical students with ambitious career aspirations.

Marketing Updates

Tulsa Welding School and The Refrigeration School, Inc. enjoy great results with National Open House Event

For our National Open House, hosted on Wednesday, October 12th and Saturday, October 15th, we choose a theme we believe is consistent with the experiences of our students and graduates: One Decision Could Change Your Life! Prospects toured all four campuses to learn about our training programs and what types of career opportunities awaited them in the skilled trades.

On Wednesday, across all campuses, there were a total of 29 enrollments, with Tulsa leading the charge coming in with 13 enrollments for the day. On Saturday, there were a total of 35 enrollments, with Houston taking the first place of 18 enrollments for the day.

Along with RSI, Houston and Tulsa also had career fairs along with their Open House events on Saturday and saw success with creating buzz on campus. Current students and prospects showed up and talked to current employers about career opportunities and information about their specific company.

Tulsa Welding School Jacksonville Joins the NAS Jacksonville Air Show



On October 22nd and 23rd, led by Regional Director of Admissions Montrez Lucas, our fantastic Admissions team participated in the NAS Jacksonville Air Show in Jacksonville, Florida, setting up a space to talk to event attendees about Tulsa Welding School and our skilled trades training programs.

Held at the NAS Jacksonville base, birthplace of the Blue Angels, the NAS Jacksonville Air Show is a



showcase of military and civilian demonstrations of aviation acrobatics. There are military aircraft displays, food and beverage booths, and kid zones for entire families to enjoy the day and festivities.



Tulsa Welding School Tulsa – Proud Sponsor of the Tulsa Oilers



This sponsorship provides us with a whole host of advertising opportunities: video board spots, ticket vouchers, social media and website promotions, and our logos on the dasher boards in the Oilers Ice Center.

We also have a big event scheduled for the center: Skilled Trades Night, presented by Tulsa Welding School, will be Friday, December 2nd. The

game is a tribute to skilled trades professionals everywhere. This will be a staff, faculty and student appreciation event. We can't wait to see an entire section with the TWS Tulsa Team!

TWS staff and faculty will be at the arena to talk about our skilled trades training programs and to demonstrate OcuWeld and Interplay. Along with a representative of the Tulsa Oilers, Campus President Shalisa Powell will be present to talk about Tulsa Welding School and our commitment to recognizing the country's skilled trades professionals.

In the News

CNN Looks to RSI & HVAC Expert David Heiman for National Story

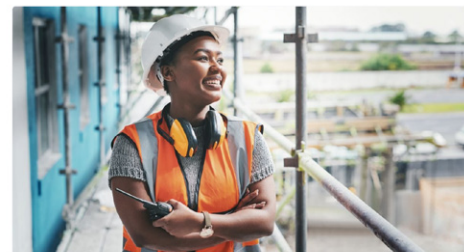


In August, CNN ran an article about what to do when things in your home break. It ran through common appliances susceptible to breakdowns: plumbing systems, smoke detectors, and HVAC systems.

What's a homeowner to do when their HVAC system breaks on a hot summer day? David Heiman, Senior Director of Training at RSI, shared some wisdom about the causes of HVAC system malfunctions and how often they require maintenance to continue running. [Read the full article.](#)

Mary Kelly Challenges Industry for More Inclusive Language in the Skilled Trades

Inclusivity, equity, and diversity in the skilled trades are some of our paramount goals at StrataTech. We believe that empowering the country with skilled labor of the future can happen only if we give everyone, no matter their background, a chance to become a skilled tradesperson.



PeopleImages via Getty Images

That means making sure everyone feels included.

In her newest article on construction and building industry news site Construction Dive, our CEO Mary Kelly stresses the importance of using more inclusive language in skilled trades industries. Using terms like "trades professional" instead of "tradesman" would be a great start. Mary also highlighted how female graduates like Celia Reyes and Brenda Hay are making a positive impact on the industry and demonstrating how the skilled trades are not just for men.

[Click here](#) to read Mary's thoughts about the importance of gender inclusivity in the skilled trades.

The Refrigeration School, Inc. Donates \$40,000 in scholarships to the Boys & Girls Club of the Valley.

RSI began a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of the Valley to introduce kids to the career opportunities that an education in the skilled trades can open to them at an early age. We're excited to take our partnership with them to the next level: We are donating \$40,000 in scholarships to the club! These scholarships will go toward club members who want to begin training for career opportunities in HVAC/R, welding and electrical. [Watch the full news segment.](#)



Graduates Making an Impact!

Jabari Montague



Tulsa Welding School

Jabari was always curious about welding. College? He didn't want to spend 4 years at a university spending a bunch of money.

His friend told him about Tulsa Welding School, and that's when the light bulb went off. Jabari trained at Tulsa Welding School for 7 months and loved every minute of it. After graduation, he

got a job as a welder at W International.

Jabari now lives in beautiful Charleston, South Carolina, right by the beach. Now that he's in the field and welding, it's obvious to Jabari just how important welders are to creating things: building bridges, buildings, and submarines, just to name a few.

Welding is everywhere, and it's for everyone. Jabari credits his friends and family for pushing him to get where he is. He's extremely proud to be a graduate of Tulsa Welding School. [Watch Jabari's Day in the Life video.](#)

Allie Espinoza

Tulsa Welding School

At 17, Allie got her start welding on trucks and knew right away that's what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. She even started her own welding company at a young age.



Allie got to learn and figure out new things at Tulsa Welding School. After graduating, she went to a job fair at TWS and got hired for a new job at W International across the country. Since she started working, Allie has been able to help support her husband, daughter, and two pit bulls. She recommends TWS to

anyone who wants to work hard and work with their hands.

Is welding a good career for women? Allie thinks so! At Tulsa Welding School, we believe the skilled trades are for everyone, and Allie represents our commitment to that belief. [Watch Allie's Day in the Life video.](#)

Adrian Belmontes

The Refrigeration School, Inc.

Adrian Belmontes, a military Veteran, was in the Airborne Infantry for 13 years. Toward the end of his military career, he worked in an office, and it was, in his own words, the worst year of his life.

He was looking for a different purpose, a way to continue serving, so he enrolled in the Electro-Mechanical Technologies program at The Refrigeration School, Inc. During this 9-month hands-on training program, he learned the fundamentals of HVAC/R, electrical, and solar. After graduating, Adrian accepted a job at [Cool Runnings International, Inc.](#), a company that specializes in international refrigeration installation and cold storage solutions. He works there as a junior technician.

He especially values his relationships with his coworkers—he's forged relationships with them similar to how he forged relationships in the Army.

[Read Adrian's story.](#)





OPEN HOUSE

NEW YEAR! NEW YOU!

LOCATION: 4210 E WASHINGTON ST,
PHOENIX, AZ

Near Sky Harbor airport - just off 44th street and Washington - right across from Washington St. Valley Metro Rail.

RSVP

WED, JAN 4TH ▶ ANYTIME BETWEEN **3-7PM**
SAT, JAN 7TH ▶ ANYTIME BETWEEN **9AM-1PM**



OPEN HOUSE

NEW YEAR! NEW YOU!

TULSA, OK 2545 E. 11TH ST.
TULSA, OK 74104

Located near the 412, 244 and 64 expressways, near Broken Arrow and within driving distance from Oklahoma City, Norman and Tuttle

JACKSONVILLE, FL 3500 SOUTHSIDE BLVD.
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32216

Located near Beach Blvd (Highway 90), close to Orange Park, Atlantic Beach and Neptune Beach.

HOUSTON, TX 243A GREENS RD.
HOUSTON, TX 77060

Situated just East of I-45 and just North of Beltway 8/Sam Houston Parkway.

WED, JAN 11TH ▶ ANYTIME BETWEEN **3-7PM**

SAT, JAN 14TH ▶ ANYTIME BETWEEN **9AM-1PM**

RSVP