

# Spotlight on Student Success

## Andrew Schulte

### Turning a Dream into Reality

Andrew Schulte, 2010 graduate of LHS and West Shore's Auto Technology and Pre-Engineering programs, is fueling his passion for cars in his position with Nissan's Vehicle Engineering Quality Department near Phoenix, Arizona. He credits the West Shore programs and teachers for giving him a "head start" on his industry peers, and a teacher/mentor relationship that has helped shape him into the person he is today. After LHS/West Shore, Andrew attended and graduated from Universal Technical Institute, a leading training institute for technicians in the transportation industry. Mike Szittai, Andrew's teacher while at WSCTD, credits Andrew's success to "his passion for the trade, his cooperative attitude, and his 'success smile.'"

Andrew grew up loving cars and found himself naturally gravitating to anything about cars in his free time. Andrew says, "Because I was encouraged to identify my passion and then find a way to make a living involving that passion, I saw the Automotive Technology course at West Shore an obvious must for me. However, still being so young, I was not certain whether I wanted to move my life in the hands-on direction or to the engineering side of the automotive field so I took the Pre-Engineering program as well. This gave me a taste of the type of environment that would be involved in each side of the automotive industry. Taking the engineering courses alongside Auto Tech courses saved me a huge amount of time and money after high school because coming out of high school, it was clear to me that being an engineer would not be the most enjoyable for me."

**Hands-on Learning:** Andrew says he "loved how the West Shore courses didn't just give you book material to learn. You actually get to do things and get your hands on things revolving around your field of study. The engineering projects and use of CAD programs were great opportunities to get experience with programs and design knowledge that are hard to come by outside of school. In Auto Tech, the hands on activities (rebuilding an engine, performing real maintenance and repair on real cars) made HUGE impacts on how I retained knowledge and provided experiences I could look back while at UTI and say 'hey I remember learning that!'"

**Mentorship:** Andrew can't say enough about the role Mr. Szittai played in shaping his personal and professional life. He credits him for going beyond the textbook, teaching valuable life lessons and character. "I saw not only that I changed for the better, but also every other student in my class was in some way bettered as a result of Mr. Szittai's teaching style."

**Andrew's advice to current students:** "Choose a WSCTD program based on what really sounds the most enjoyable to you. Then as you go through the course picture yourself after high school in the field you are studying. Treat the courses more as a 'preview' than a class."

In his spare time, Andrew has been making a name for himself in motorsports as a pro-am drifter – think of *Fast & Furious*. He's been working on his Nissan 240SX, which has been getting noticed on the drift courses.



Mr. Szittai, Andrew, and Robert Anderton at the 2010 Ford/AAA Skills Competition where the duo placed 7th in the state.

Read more about Andrew's story in [UTI's REQ publication](#)

View a clip of Andrew [drifting](#)