

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CAREER BUILDERS OF LOUISIANA AND DOW LOUISIANA OPERATIONS
PARTNER TO AWARD \$22,500 IN PTEC SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Petro-chemical Industry continues to be the backbone of our state's economy. Now more than ever, with workforce development being among our state's greatest challenges, The Dow Chemical Company's commitment to investing in local people proves to be a sound approach to addressing a growing problem. Dow's Louisiana Operations facility in Plaquemine awarded five scholarships, at \$4,500 each, to graduating high school seniors and mid-career adults in West Baton Rouge, Iberville, and Assumption parishes interested in pursuing an associate degree in Process Technology (PTEC).

Terry Simmons, Executive Director of Career Builders of Louisiana said this year's pool of applicants were among the most qualified that he's seen over the past five years. Among those chosen were mid-career adults, Trevor Endres, Myron Harris, and Kevin Brown, and high school graduates Zachary Soileau, Brusly High School and Randol Richard, Brusly High School. *(pictured below respectfully)*



PTEC is the standardized curriculum for a two-year associate of applied science degree that prepares students to work as process technology operators in the Louisiana chemical and oil and gas refining industries. The program is available at the Baton Rouge Community College along with six other community and technical colleges throughout the state.

Simmons said scholarship programs are just one component of their holistic approach to filling the workforce pipeline. "Strategic alliances with good corporate citizens like Dow are one piece of the workforce development puzzle," said Simmons. "We also work to mobilize hard to reach segments of the population, enhance curriculum, create positive perceptions about working in local industries, and provide social, academic, and financial supports to residents pursuing post-secondary education."

It is estimated that half of all process technology operators are over age 50 and will retire soon. Because of the increasing number of retirements, the chemical industry needs twice the number of students currently enrolled in PTEC degree programs to meet future workforce needs.

The PTEC scholarship program is part of a partnership with Career Builders of Louisiana, workforce development consultants that create collaborative initiatives between government agencies, businesses, community based organizations, and educational systems. These partnerships ensure that residents receive the training, education and resources needed to develop the skills necessary for employment in an ever-changing work force.

“The men and women that work in our facilities drive our innovation and growth.” said Sharon Cole, Dow Louisiana Operations Site Leader. “It only makes sense for Dow to create new ways to improve the quality of the local workforce. After receiving their PTEC degree these scholarship recipients should be poised to step into an internship or maybe even long term employment with Dow,” said Cole.

Simmons agreed that the bigger picture won't be solved with one scholarship program, but he said it is part of a long term approach.

”We are looking at both immediate and long term solutions” said Simmons. “We have to take a multi-level approach to ensuring that local industry has a qualified, skilled workforce. Our local economies and our quality of life depend on it.”

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