

### A Better Economic Future by Design



JTED Precision Manufacturing instructor Cesar Gutierrez helps up to 300 Desert View High School students a year build career opportunities and dispel stereotypes about Tucson’s Southside.

“Many students on the Southside have limited resources and as a result small choices on what to do with their lives,” said Gutierrez. “I was one of those students, so I understand.” He is determined to open a much larger world to his students.

Until last year, Ernesto Moreno was one of those students too. His life changed the day he showed up to his history class and found Mr. Gutierrez filling in for his teacher. He was fascinated by the design programs on Mr. Gutierrez’ laptop, and was encouraged to sign up for his JTED Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes.

Moreno landed an engineering internship at Abrams Airborne Manufacturing while enrolled in Mr. Gutierrez’ program, and used the skills he learned to redesign a bolt that had troubled engineers. The company is putting Moreno’s design into production. Moreno says he’s not sure where he’d be without JTED, but now he’s certain he’ll be a mechanical engineer.

“JTED is important because many people think students from the Southside are not smart and all we do is drugs and gangs, but that is not true,” said Moreno. “We are hard workers. I saw my father struggle to make ends meet growing up and I want more. Thanks to Mr. Gutierrez and Abrams, that reality is coming true for me.”

Gutierrez worked in the industry before becoming a teacher in Phoenix. He’s in his fourth year of teaching at Desert View, and during that time, the program has evolved into a hybrid program consisting of drafting, precision manufacturing, and design. “Our students have to be able to speak manufacturing language, design, HR, sales, logistics, etc., and they do,” said Gutierrez. “They learn and they succeed. We get kids jobs.”

Sunnyside District CTE Director, Kathy Prather, said “Mr. Gutierrez has the ability to stretch students’ imaginations and dreams.” Representatives from South Korea have studied the program as a model CTE program. “Our kids leave this program with both the technical skills and the employability skills employers need.” She said, “To not embrace a program like JTED is to put our economic future at risk.”

*Contributing writer: Natalie Luna Rose*