

Engineering Firm Develops EST Programs

There has been an explosion in the development of communications, fire, security, entertainment, and building control technologies. Consumer demand for electronic systems that provide security and life safety, improve communications networking and control, and automate lighting and energy appliances has increased dramatically and so has the need for qualified electronic systems technicians (EST) to install these devices.



M.C. Dean, Inc. is one of the nation's premier electrical and electronic systems integrators and has recently developed two new EST programs. The first of these is a four-year apprenticeship program approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and is similar to the firm's electrical apprenticeship program, now in its 55th year.

The second is an in-house, NCCER-accredited program that offers coursework in a traditional classroom setting or online, allowing employees at any of M.C. Dean, Inc.'s 17 U.S. and overseas offices to participate. The firm's education department, in consultation with its management and human resources personnel, develops the course content and structure. This ensures that the curriculum incorporates current industry trends and technologies and is consistent with the firm's policies.

M.C. Dean, Inc.'s program is one of the first of its kind for the booming security industry and is aimed at supporting the growth of the firm's Security and Electronic Systems (SES) Division. The program addresses both industry and company needs, according to Rhett L. Wade, PSP, general manager of M.C. Dean, Inc.'s SES Division.

"The electronic security industry has long been in need of formal education and trade-specific standards

against which technicians are trained," said Wade. "As a result, installation quality varies widely from firm to firm. As M.C. Dean, Inc.'s SES practice has grown, it's been my goal to not only hire qualified technicians, but to formalize the standards that are used to judge whether or not someone is qualified. The logical extension of that is developing a training program that we can use to 'grow' technicians and formalize standards for quality and consistency across our workforce. Clearly defined, documented standards also provide management with a tool for promotion and career advancement, and give the employee an understanding of what is required to be successful and to move up in the company, improving the morale and retention."



M.C. Dean, Inc. designs, builds, operates, and maintains complex security, power, telecommunications,

automation/control, and other electrical and electronic systems for the Department of Defense, federal, state, and local government clients, as well as institutions and Fortune 1000 corporations. A long-term supporter of education, apprenticeship, and workforce development, the firm operates one of the mid-Atlantic's largest and oldest electrical apprenticeship programs. CEO William H. Dean also serves on the District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council and is an appointee to the Virginia Governor's Council on Workforce Development. Headquartered in Dulles, Va., M.C. Dean, Inc. employs 2,500 technical, professional, and support staff. ♦

M.C. Dean, Inc. has been an NCCER Accredited Training Sponsor since February 2005 and was an early contributor to NCCER's endowment fund. Additional details regarding M.C. Dean, Inc. are available at www.mcdean.com.

