

MISSION & VISION

To prepare our students for employment as a gunsmith; by providing them with a broad-based educational experience, which includes a balanced curriculum and practical hands-on education in the use of gunsmithing hand tools, gunsmithing machine tools, firearms repair, stock making, and customizing firearms.

HISTORY & HERITAGE



From the beginning and even before, guns shaped the foundation of the United States. Without guns America would not have gained independence and without gunsmiths that independence would not have blossomed. Trinidad State's Gunsmithing Program, unique in its own way, fills the minds of aspiring gunsmiths with the skills needed to preserve that part of the American story. From wood to metal, from fit to finish, from old to awesome, Trinidad State students are taught to refurbish, repair and beautify.



THE INTERSECTION OF HERITAGE AND SKILL

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The gunsmithing department at Trinidad State opened in January of 1947 with support from Parker Otto (P.O.) Ackley, a renowned gunsmith, columnist, instructor, and innovator of new firearms technologies. He taught gunsmithing classes at Trinidad State from 1947 to 1951. At the same time, he pioneered breakthroughs and did research on new guns. The classes that Ackley first offered were

further developed into a multi-year gunsmithing program, the first college gunsmithing degree offered in the United States. Today the college has a two-year full-time degree program and a summer part-time certificate program in partnership with the NRA.

Because of its reputation and high standards, only 17 students are admitted each semester. Those students then proceed through the two-year program together. The resulting degree is an Associate of Applied Science in Gunsmithing. The program is immersive and requires a serious commitment. Students learn machining, TiG welding, stockmaking, finishing and more. Each graduate comes away from the program with at least two guns, a black powder pistol and a sporterized Mauser rifle. Projects are critically graded and student attention to detail is a must. Electives may include classes like Custom Revolversmithing, Bolt Action Accuracy and Alternative Metal Finishes.



Six months before she graduated from Trinidad State, Ainsley Ridgeway was featured on the cover of Women & Guns Magazine (November-December 2016 edition). Ainsley now operates AKR Arms in Bayard, Nebraska where she does repair and custom gunsmithing. Trinidad State's gunsmithing program has been featured in recent years in GunHunter and Shooting Illustrated as well as on NRA All Access and Predator Nation. Trinidad State is America's Premier Gunsmithing School.

A TWO YEAR "CLASSIC" EDUCATION

Our gunsmithing program provides a "classic" education in the craft, based on a combination of classroom theory, and hand and machine tool skills aimed at custom gun production and gun repair. Graduating students have built, using a range of files and machine tools a muzzle loading pistol, a custom Mauser-action rifle, wooden stocks from a blank, done advanced barrel fitting and chambering, completed repairs on a wide range of shotguns, pistols, bolt, lever, and semi-automatic long guns and have learned bluing and other popular finish techniques. In summary, they can do basic firearms design, make parts from scratch and execute the creation of a custom firearm. This gives them the basics to enter the trade. Today Trinidad graduates fill the ranks of the custom gun world and firearms industry.



Trinidad State is home of the only NRA Certified Training Center in the country. This partnership was launched in 2015 and has the approval of the Department of Education and the Higher Learning Commission. This allows students to use federal financial aid, the GI Bill, and Vocational Rehabilitation benefits to help pay for firearms safety training.



Classes include Range Safety Officer, Basic Pistol Shooting, Shotgun Shooting and Personal Protection. All are taught by NRA certified instructors and use NRA curriculum.



HOW TO APPLY

- Free application (trinidadstate.edu)
 - High school transcript
 - Placement test
 - Immunization records
 - 1,000 word essay
 - Copy of birth certificate and driver's license
 - Letters of recommendation
 - Interview via Skype or telephone
 - Deadline to apply for January start is the last Friday in September
 - Deadline to apply for August start is the last Friday in February
- Scholarships available: trinidadstate.edu/scholarships/

