

## **Powers a Model Employee at Magbee Contractors Supply**

If your floors don't squeak, you may have Matt Powers to thank.

Matt works as a designer for Magbee Contractors Supply in Winder, GA. He designs the floor systems for new homes. Matt uses his four years of both construction and drafting classes at Apalachee High School to make sure the flooring system your building contractor installs is rock solid – and doesn't squeak. Matt said that the combination of construction and drafting gave him a unique view of how things fit together.

Matt is glad he could put his training to use. "I knocked around for awhile in some odd jobs. Painter, pizza joint, grocery store – that kind of thing. Then Dr. Pam McGee, the Youth Apprenticeship Program Coordinator for Barrow County Schools, helped me get an interview with Magbee. I love the work I do here," Matt said with a big smile.

Dr. McGee said that finding an exact fit like Matt and Magbee is what makes her job worthwhile. "We only place students in the Youth Apprenticeship Program who have good attendance, the right aptitude, know what they want to do, and have a solid recommendation from their teachers. When I found out about the job at Magbee, I knew Matt had the right skills and attitude. But he was the one that had to go 'sell himself' in the interview. Well, he did," McGee said happily.

Matt's immediate supervisor, Bill Mauldin, remembers that interview quite well. Mauldin said, "Matt was kind of quiet, but I could tell he's the kind of guy who'll do whatever it takes to get the job done. A real go-getter. And that's the way he's turned out. He learns fast and always has a cheerful attitude. In fact, Matt has worked out so well, we've patterned our hiring and training practices after our experience with Matt. He's become sort of our model for the kind of employee we're looking for. We couldn't do without him!"

What does a 'flooring systems designer' do? "I take a set of residential home drawings and calculate the loads from the roof right down to the ground. Then I design the exact package of components to make the floors structurally sound. All the floor components are cut here in what we call our 'outside yard.' The components are then shipped to the jobsite for installation by the contractor. My favorite part of the job is going out to the jobsite and inspecting the installed floor to make sure it's right. Each job is mine from design to approved installation. I get to know the contractors pretty well," Matt explained. He uses an engineering software package and AutoCAD to do his designs.

Asked what he likes about Magbee as a place to work, Matt said, "The team I work on is always supportive. I have freedom and authority on my projects, but I am a team member first. The company had record breaking sales last year. I'm proud my team had a big hand in the success."

Matt uses his skills off the job, too. "My friends and family know about my construction education, so they're always asking me to help with all kinds of projects. I just finished up a 20' by 40' building for a friend. For his race car."



Flooring systems designer (and a big Tennessee fan!) Matt Powers prepares the layout of the floor support members for a new home. The floor system components will be cut to the exact size at the Magbee Contractors Supply "outside yard" in Winder, GA. Matt will go to the new home and inspect the installed flooring system to ensure structural soundness. He will soon be learning a new software package that integrates engineering and AutoCAD functionality.

Race car? "Yep. That's another team I'm on. We have a dirt track race car that we run almost every Saturday. It's a lot of work, but it's exciting. My uncle does the engine work, we all work on the car, and my friend I built the building for is the owner and driver. Because I have such a good job, I'm even able to put some money into the car. An engine can cost \$30,000 or more," Matt said, eyebrows shooting up for emphasis.

An exciting job, making a good living and working on a race car team might be enough for some who haven't even turned 19 yet. Not Matt Powers. "I want to progress in my job, to learn all I can. In about five or six years, I'm going to build my own home. My family – parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brother, and sister – all live in one private area near here. I want to build there," Matt said.

It's a safe bet that the floors in Matt's home won't squeak.