

The New Professionals: Why a Texas Drone Academy Founder Says the Future Workforce May Not Need a Four-Year Degree

First Black Woman to Launch a Drone Academy in Texas Says Skills, Certifications, and Adaptability Are Reshaping Career Opportunities

DALLAS, TX, UNITED STATES, June 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- First Black Woman to Launch a Drone Academy in Texas Challenges the Four-Year Degree Narrative as Demand for FAA-Certified Drone Pilots Continues to Rise.

Drone Industry Educator Says Skills, Certifications, and Adaptability May Matter More Than Traditional Degrees for Many Emerging Careers

As employers across multiple industries increasingly prioritize practical skills and certifications over traditional credentials, one Texas entrepreneur is challenging a question that has shaped career decisions for generations:

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The future belongs to those willing to learn faster than the industry changes.”

Steffanie Rivers

most people realize.

Rivers believes the rapidly expanding drone economy is creating new pathways into high-



Steffanie Rivers, founder of TCB Drones Academy and the first Black woman to launch a drone academy in Texas, advocates for workforce development through FAA Part 107 drone certification and technical skills training.

Do we still need a four-year degree to build a successful career?

According to [Steffanie Rivers](#), founder of [TCB Drones Academy](#) and the first Black woman to launch a drone training academy in the State of Texas, the answer for many emerging industries may be changing faster than

demand industries where specialized training, FAA certifications, technical knowledge, and adaptability are becoming increasingly valuable assets.

"The future belongs to those willing to learn faster than the industry changes," said Rivers. "For decades, we told people there was only one path to professional success. Today, entire industries are being built around specialized skills, certifications, technology, and execution."

The commercial drone industry continues to create opportunities across public safety, infrastructure inspection, construction, agriculture, media production, healthcare logistics, disaster response, surveying, mapping, and environmental monitoring.

Yet Rivers says many Americans—particularly minorities and underserved communities—remain unaware of the opportunities being created.

"Many people have never been introduced to the drone industry as a legitimate career path," Rivers explained. "When they think about drones, they think about hobbies. What they don't see are the entrepreneurs, inspectors, public safety professionals, medical delivery operators, and business owners building careers in this space."

Through TCB Drones Academy, Rivers provides training designed to help students prepare for the Federal Aviation Administration's Part 107 Remote Pilot Certification, the credential required for most commercial drone operations in the United States.

Her mission extends beyond certification.

She is also focused on workforce development and increasing minority participation in aviation and emerging technology industries.

"Representation matters," said Rivers. "If young people never see someone who looks like them working in aviation, technology, or entrepreneurship, they often don't realize those opportunities are available to them. We want to change that."



Steffanie Rivers, founder of TCB Drones Academy, believes FAA drone certification, technical training, and adaptability are helping create the next generation of professionals in America's evolving workforce.

As conversations continue nationally regarding student debt, workforce shortages, artificial intelligence, automation, and the future of education, Rivers believes the workforce of tomorrow will require a different mindset than previous generations.

"The most valuable skill today is adaptability," she said. "Technology is evolving too quickly for people to rely solely on what they learned years ago. The professionals who continue learning will create the greatest opportunities for themselves."

Rivers' growing influence within the drone industry has positioned her as a leading voice on workforce development, career readiness, entrepreneurship, and the future of aviation.

Her message is simple:

The future workforce may not be built the same way as the past workforce.

And for thousands of Americans searching for new career opportunities, the next professional pathway may already be taking off.

About Steffanie Rivers

Steffanie Rivers is the founder of TCB Drones Academy and is recognized as the first Black woman to launch a drone training academy in the State of Texas. She is an entrepreneur, drone educator, and advocate for workforce development, helping aspiring drone pilots prepare for [FAA Part 107 certification](#) while promoting greater participation in aviation, technology, and entrepreneurship.

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