

Industrial Drive Trainer Carl Lee Tolbert Earns ATD Master Trainer Designation

Wayward Leaders founder completes ATD's eight-week program with a live, observed skills assessment; he teaches on-site VFD and technical sales courses

SIOUX FALLS, SD, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Carl Lee Tolbert, PhD, CMRP, founder of [Wayward Leaders LLC](#), has received the Master Trainer designation from the Association for Talent Development (ATD), the professional association for workplace learning and development. The designation followed ATD's eight-week Master Trainer Program, which ran from Aug. 3 to Sept. 25, 2026, and included a live, observed skills assessment in which each participant facilitated a session and was evaluated against the program's rubric.

“

A maintenance tech who has diagnosed a fault on a rig himself will recognize it at 2 a.m. on a real line. One who watched me do it on a slide probably won't.”

*Carl Lee Tolbert, PhD, CMRP,
Founder, Wayward Leaders
LLC*

Tolbert leads Wayward Leaders, which delivers on-site training in variable frequency drives (VFDs), the electronic

motor controllers that run pumps, fans, conveyors, and process equipment in plants and utilities. He has commissioned roughly 750 drives over more than 30 years in industrial automation and is the author of [Before the First Fault](#), a book on VFD installation and reliability. He also teaches in doctoral programs at three universities.

"I've commissioned about 750 drives, and most of what I know came from the ones that went wrong," Tolbert said. "For a long time I taught the way I was taught. I stood at the front of the room and told people what I knew. The ATD program pushed me toward building a class where the technicians work the problem with their own hands while I ask better questions. A maintenance tech who has diagnosed a fault on a rig himself will recognize it at 2 a.m. on a real line. One who watched me do it on a slide probably won't."

Wayward Leaders courses are taught at the client's own facility for groups of 8 to 16. The flagship course, *Before the First Fault: Intermediate and Advanced VFD Training*, runs two days with an optional third and includes 14 hands-on labs. Students wire and commission drives on trainers that come prewired on the power side, tune control loops against 4 simulated processes (heating, cooling, pressure, and flow), and diagnose failures from damage cards, printed packets

that each hold a trend, a parameter snapshot, and an operator's account of what happened. The core course carries 13.5 documented contact hours.

The company also offers VFD Basics for Water and Wastewater, a one-day course carrying 7.0 contact hours, and Becoming a Specialist: Technical Sales, a two-day course for industrial sales staff. Participants in each course complete a scored assessment before and after the class, and the client receives a competency report within 5 business days.

Course details are available at waywardleaders.com/training on the company's rebuilt website.

About Wayward Leaders

Wayward Leaders LLC is an industrial training company based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. It develops and delivers on-site courses in variable frequency drives, motor reliability, and technical sales for manufacturers, utilities, and industrial distributors, and builds custom training programs for industrial clients.

Carl Tolbert
Wayward Leaders LLC
+1 678-523-2050
carl@waywardleaders.com
Visit us on social media:
[LinkedIn](#)
[YouTube](#)



Carl Lee Tolbert, PhD, CMRP, founder of Wayward Leaders LLC and author of Before the First Fault

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/945609990>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.