



April, 2017

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## **BTC SIGNS TRANSFER AGREEMENT FOR STUDENTS**

*February 23, 2017 |  
Beloit Daily News*

JANESVILLE — Blackhawk Technical College and Madison Area Technical College (Madison College) have signed a transfer agreement that will help Blackhawk students pursue new career pathways, reduce college cost and reduce time in earning a degree.

The agreement, recently approved by the BTC Board of Trustees will make it possible for BTC students to pursue associate of arts or associate of science degrees in Madison College's liberal arts transfer program. Students can take general education courses in their first year at BTC and then transition to Madison to complete the degrees.

In addition to the Madison College agreement, the BTC board also amended its existing reciprocal agreement with Highland Community College so students will not have to pay out-of-district fees.

# Blackhawk nursing students ranked tops in Wisconsin

ROCK RIVER TIMES  
Mar 2, 2017

JANESVILLE – Blackhawk Technical College nursing students are the best in the state of Wisconsin, says the Janesville-based school.

According to the Wisconsin State Board of Nursing, BTC nursing students scored a 95.7 percent on the most recent National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

“I could not be more proud of our students and the nursing faculty,” said Dr. Doris Ellison, Associate Dean for Nursing. “This exam performance is a testimony to all the hard work our staff and students take on to be a part of a top program. It’s also evidence of BTC’s commitment to helping alleviate the nursing shortage.”

The NCLEX-RN exam is used by all state boards of nursing across the United States to help assess a student’s competency. Many state boards of nursing use NCLEX-RN pass rates as a way to approve a school’s ability to provide nursing education.

During the last three years, BTC has graduated an average of 34 nursing students per year. Based on the college’s graduate follow up survey respondents, 97 percent of the students were employed within six months of graduation. Employer responses from the same survey stated 100 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the student’s technical education.

BTC’s Nursing program is a four-semester course including classroom, skills lab and clinical experiences. Students have the option of completing the first two semesters, then taking an examination which could lead to a license as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Most students prefer to complete all four semesters allowing them to take the examination leading to a license as a Registered Nurse (RN). BTC’s nursing program also has in place 14 different transfer agreements for students who wish to continue their education and pursue a four-year degree.

In addition to being approved by the Wisconsin Board of Nursing, the Associate Degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc.

“Our students and graduates provide the foundation of the healthcare workforce,” said Nancy Lightfield, Dean of Health Sciences and Public Safety. “These results reaffirm the quality and strength of the program and the faculty.

For more information visit [blackhawk.edu/HealthSciences/Nursing.aspx](http://blackhawk.edu/HealthSciences/Nursing.aspx).

## UW-Stout to guarantee admission to CVTC transfers

CVTC NEWS BUREAU Mar 24, 2017



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Chippewa Falls Senior High School tech ed teacher Daniel Hietpas, left, and Stanley-Boyd High School tech ed teacher Jerry Lingen check the settings on a lathe at the CVTC machine Tooling Technics lab in this Aug. 2016 photo.

MENOMONIE — The University of Wisconsin-Stout and Chippewa Valley Technical College have reached an agreement in which CVTC liberal arts students seeking to transfer to the university will be guaranteed admission.

“CVTC’s guaranteed admission agreement with UW-Stout ensures a seamless transition for our liberal arts students to complete a baccalaureate degree,” said Julie Furst-Bowe, CVTC vice president of instruction and former vice chancellor at UW-Stout. “CVTC students will be able to apply for guaranteed admission to UW-Stout as early as their first year.”

The agreement is designed for students who maintain continuous full-time enrollment in CVTC and complete their associate degree or general education core credits, then wish to attend UW-Stout to complete a bachelor’s degree in a particular program. Students who complete their associate degree at CVTC will have all of their general education requirements at UW-Stout met, except any specifically required for their UW-Stout degree program not taken as part of their CVTC program.

“UW-Stout has always had a great working relationship with CVTC and its students. This agreement solidifies the relationship even more as well as providing more contact between the students and a transfer counselor at UW-Stout,” said Linda Young, UW-Stout associate director of Admissions for transfer and articulation. “The plan is for more UW-Stout presence at CVTC for one-on-one meetings with students to answer any questions they may have.”

While the agreement guarantees admission to UW-Stout to CVTC students who meet grade and other requirements, the students must still meet any requirements for admission to their desired program.

CVTC students will be encouraged to apply for guaranteed admission to UW-Stout as early as possible so they may work with both institutions to stay on track during their college career.

“This dual enrollment will give students access to advising experts at both campuses, ensuring accurate and efficient degree completion,” Furst-Bowe said.

The guaranteed admission agreement is effective at the start of the fall 2017 semesters.

## School districts partner with CVTC in Welding Academy

- CVTC NEWS BUREAU
- Feb 27, 2017

CADOTT — Cornell High School senior Garret Kralewski fired up an oxyacetylene torch and prepared to do some more cutting on a piece of metal when his instructor looked at the flame and gave him an important tip. “A little more oxygen, Garret,” said Chrystal Reidt, a Chippewa Valley Technical College Welding instructor.

Kralewski is one of a dozen students from Cornell, Cadott, Stanley-Boyd and Gilman high schools picking up basic instruction and finer points of welding during a Welding Academy held at Cadott High School through a cooperative agreement between CVTC and the partner school districts. But welding knowledge is not all the students are picking up.

“It’s saving me a few hundred dollars. It’s nine college credits,” Kralewski said. “And I’m planning on enrolling in CVTC’s Welding program.”

“This gives me nine credits, so it could get me out faster,” said Cadott student Jonathan Parquette, who is also planning to attend CVTC.

Besides credits, students are earning basic certificates in wire feed welding and an OSHA 10 certificate for safety, credentials that could lead to immediate employment.

“This helps prepare me for the future,” said Kevin Cota, a Gilman student. “I plan on going to North Dakota this summer to work on the pipeline. When I get there, they won’t have to teach me.”

“I’m thinking about getting a welding job to get a start, then going to school for an engineering degree,” said Stanley-Boyd, a student Eric Hoffstatter.

Whether it’s to prepare them for college or the workplace, preparing high school students for their future earlier is one of the ideas behind CVTC partnering with K-12 school districts to establish academies. The concept of offering high school students dual credit at their school and at CVTC is not a new one. CVTC has 153 dual credit agreements with 35 different schools, totaling 215 course sections this year.

In an academy, students are offered a cluster of courses in a particular subject, usually leading to an industry-recognized certificate. The Welding Academy enables the partner high schools to offer a higher level of technical education. With the help of grant funds, CVTC was able to provide equipment to add to what Cadott High School already had.

Reidt said the students, who were pre-selected by the schools based on their interest and their academic and attendance records, are doing very well with the college-level learning. "These are some of the better welders from the high schools," Reidt said.

The Welding Academy is taking the students' skills to the next level, beyond what they could have achieved in their high school classes.

"I'm definitely getting a lot more welding experience in school," Hoffstatter said. "We had one welding class at Stanley-Boyd. This is every day now."

"I'm learning how to slow down and be more patient with my welds," said Jacob Couillard of Gilman.

"This is more rigorous, and harder to pass," said Micah Raatz of Cornell. "I'm learning more about the difference between a good weld and a bad weld."

"I'm learning more about proper welding angles and setting up your welder," said Cole Redburn of Cadott.

The classes in the Welding Academy include Welding Safety and Orientation, Basic Wire Feed Welding, Print Reading for Welders and Industrial Skills.

"At school, we weren't getting print reading, which is something we are going over really heavily here," Hoffstatter said.

Reidt noted the class has a way of waking students up to the importance of their other academic subjects, something first year CVTC students often discover. Being a good welder takes math skills as well, which are covered in the Industrial Skills class.

"It's important that they pay attention to the other classes they have in high school, like math," Reidt said. "We will show them how to use it."

While most of the students plan to go on to CVTC's Welding program, they also see the benefit of having some early training that gives them employment opportunities. It is common for CVTC Welding students to be hired as part-time welders while they are going to school. The Academy students may have that opportunity sooner than others.

Reidt noted the way the CVTC program is structured, the Academy students may not be able to finish the program early, despite starting with nine credits on their transcripts. That is being worked on for a future year. However, the credits will allow them to take a lighter CVTC class schedule, freeing them up for work to help pay for college.

"We're already making plans for next year," Reidt said.

# LEADER-TELEGRAM

Serving Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and surrounding communities

## CVTC Manufacturing Show showcases opportunities, technology

### CVTC Manufacturing Show showcases opportunities, technology

posted: March 12, 2017 12:00a CST

by Chippewa Valley Technical College

Cole Hill knows what he wants to do in a future career.

"I want to build motors – V-8s probably," said the Colfax High School junior who spends time racing at the Red Cedar and Jim Falls tracks.

But just what does one study to prepare to build big engines? Hunter Sullivan of Chippewa Falls, a Chippewa Valley Technical College machine tooling technics student, had some ideas for him at CVTC's annual Manufacturing Show on March 2.

"He told me about their CNC (computerized numerical control) machines and the careers," said Hill, who thinks he will eventually enroll at CVTC but he is unsure which program he will choose. "I haven't looked at any other places."

Introducing people like Hill to careers in manufacturing is a big part of CVTC's Manufacturing Show, which attracted about 1,600 people to CVTC's Manufacturing Education Center. Wonders of modern manufacturing were displayed and demonstrated in CVTC programs, including automation engineering technology, industrial mechanical, machine tooling technics, welding/welding fabrication and manufacturing, nano and industrial engineering programs.

About 40 manufacturing companies were also represented, with display tables highlighting their products and job opportunities.

Sullivan, a 2015 Chippewa Falls Senior High School graduate, connected with Hill as another young man who likes to work with his hands. "I just like making things," Sullivan said. "I took shop classes in high school with manual lathes and I thought that was pretty cool. But what I learn here is way more than they teach you in high school."

Sullivan is already working in manufacturing, doing some part-time laser cutting work at Riverside Machine. "I'm not doing CNC work, but hopefully when I finish school they will keep me on as a machinist," he said.

Visitors to the Manufacturing Show were able to take part in hands-on activities, such as trying their hand at welding, building a tiny flashlight with the help of manufacturing engineering technologist students, or playing with projects like a billiards game made by automation engineering technology students.

"This is an opportunity to show off new technology," said CVTC dean of manufacturing Jeff Sullivan. "The Manufacturing Show brings together alumni and people in the area, and shows off student projects. Our manufacturing partners come in and show the things they're doing."

Images:



CVTC photo - Chippewa Valley Technical College machine tooling technics student Hunter Sullivan, left, of Chippewa Falls, explains the capabilities of a CNC machine to Colfax High School junior Cole Hill at the CVTC Manufacturing Show March 2.



## 'More opportunity'

Several area high schools sent bus loads of students to the event. They toured local manufacturing companies prior to the show. Other students came on their own, or with their parents.

Menomonie resident Tim Frank, a CVTC graduate, attended the event with his wife and son, Nathan.

"He's interested in coming here next year," Frank said of his son. "He's working at a machine shop in Menomonie after school now. He saw this show was available and asked to come."

"I really haven't decided what program to take," Nathan Frank said. "But it will probably be something in the machining area. It's making stuff. It's hands-on."

Dawn Schrankler and her husband brought their daughter, Kelsey, from Neillsville to the show. "We're trying to get her interested in more of a selection," said Schrankler. "She wants to be a veterinarian assistant, but we're trying to broaden her horizons and open her eyes to other areas."

Not all of the people attending the show to explore careers were high school students or even recent high school graduates. Some seeking to change careers found plenty of older CVTC students who have followed a similar path.

"This program is fantastic," said Casey Schellhorn, an student in CVTC's automation engineering technology program who graduated from River Falls High School in 2010. "I wanted more opportunity than I had working in food service. I was looking for something interesting and found this on the CVTC website."

Schellhorn was stationed where he could explain to visitors how to play a miniature billiards game and also the pneumatics, electronics and sensors that made the game work. Other students were at the event to explain what they do, what they are learning, and the exciting opportunities available to them in manufacturing careers.

# CVTC to allow high school grads to earn college degree

- CVTC NEW BUREAU
- Feb 28, 2017

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In what could be a sign of the future in secondary education in Wisconsin, Chippewa Valley Technical College is preparing to become the first college in the state to allow high school students to earn associate degrees. The first such program, in Business Management, is set to begin in the fall at River Falls High School.

The program is an extension of the popular dual credit high school academies CVTC has created with several cooperating high schools in the 11-county CVTC district. But for the academy beginning in River Falls, students can finish with an associate degree, which is generally a full two-year program at a post-secondary school.

The first such degrees could be issued as early as 2020 to students who are currently freshmen at River Falls, though most would be available to 2021 graduates. More such programs could begin at other schools in CVTC's district in the future. Though unique to Wisconsin, an associate degree program for high schools is not unknown in the nation.

"This initiative represents the first in the state of Wisconsin in which a technical college is partnering with a secondary school to provide the opportunity for a college degree upon high school graduation," said CVTC President Bruce Barker. "This model has been used successfully in other states, including our neighbors in Minnesota."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for our students," said River Falls High School Principal Kit Luedtke. "Being able to transfer an associate degree into a four-year university can enable students to complete a higher degree earlier. And we can have students becoming highly qualified for middle management positions in the area. We're very excited about that benefit as well."

Luedtke added that another major benefit is financial, with students earning associate degrees with little or no tuition costs.

## Dual credit

The concept for the associate degree program came out of conversations between Luedtke and Jedediah Watters, CVTC's K-12 relations coordinator. For years, River Falls has offered several classes for which students could receive dual high school and CVTC credit. The next level in a dual credit program is a dual credit academy, in which a series of classes in a subject are offered for dual credit, often leading to specific certificates or credentials.

“We were looking at different academies and programs they were interested in, and were focusing on what we could easily add to,” Watters said. “But they were also looking for something that could set River Falls apart.”

The school already had dual credit classes in Accounting and Principles of Marketing in the business area.

Watters developed a plan in which students could start with two classes in their freshman year, then add classes each year until completion of the credits needed for an associate degree. The existing dual credit classes would be utilized, along with some current advanced placement classes (a separate way for students to obtain college credits in high school). Some new dual credit classes would be added. In all classes, students would have to meet the same competencies as current CVTC students.

Luedtke said he was both excited and surprised to hear that such a plan was possible, but he quickly saw how it could work.

### **Online classes**

“We’re going to utilize classes taught by our instructors, some online classes, and with our campus only a mile and a half from the CVTC River Falls campus, we could have them take some classes at the college,” Luedtke said.

Students could work the online classes into their high school schedules, or take them in addition to their high school classes.

With the program taking shape, CVTC and high school staff started speaking to prospective students, currently in 8th grade, at a Jan. 23 college fair.

“We have 240 freshmen entering high school next school year, and 40 or 50 students and their families have expressed some or a great amount of interest in the program,” Luedtke said. “And we’ve had some current freshmen express interest in taking the freshman-level classes as sophomores so they can get in on the program.”

Luedtke noted that the program is not just for potential college business majors.

“We are hoping this also appeals to students who don’t plan to pursue a business career,” Luedtke said. “No matter what field they go into, there will be management opportunities.”

# Northeast Wisconsin sees growing need for more IT workers

by Brittany Ford, FOX 11 News  
Wednesday, March 15th 2017

GRAND CHUTE (WLUK) -- After working as a welder for years, 50-year-old Forest Peters says it was time for a change.

"I love tearing things apart, putting things together, I mean helping people is what I do," he explained.

Peters will soon be graduating from Fox Valley Technical College with an IT degree.

He already has a job working in the field, "It's more of a mind labor than it is a physical labor. You actually have to use your mind, more than your hands and body."

Doug Waterman is the Dean of Information Technologies at the College.

He says Fox Valley Tech recently expanded its IT department to keep up with changing industry, "IT isn't just one-stop shop anymore. It runs across all company aspects. You're not just working in one area."

Fox Valley Tech says there is a need for qualified IT technicians.

Here are the facts:

- In 2015 the college says on average, 28 full-time positions were posted in Northeast Wisconsin each month.
- That number climbed to 30 in 2016

There are several different jobs under the IT category.

Looking at numbers from 2012 through 2014, Fox Valley Tech says these were the top IT openings for Northeast Wisconsin companies:

1. Software Developer/Engineer
2. Computer Support Specialist
3. Systems Analyst
4. Network/Systems Administrator
5. Business Intelligence Analyst
6. Computer Programmer
7. Database Administrator
8. Network Engineer/Architect
9. Cyber/Information Security Engineer
10. Software QA Engineer/Tester

Waterman says in the next four years there will be more than 20,000 open IT jobs, which is why students like Peters are being hired before they even graduate.

"That's really what's happening, we're seeing our students getting the job in their 3rd or 4th semester," he explained.

It's a career Peters says is rewarding, "It's huge. If you're trying to get into the field, there is so much you can learn, you can never stop learning."

# Walker talks budget at Fox Valley Tech stop

USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 3:43 p.m. CT Feb 9, 2017



Photo: Medsirena BenniUSA  
USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

GREENVILLE - Despite concerns from some legislators, Gov. Scott Walker said his proposed budget will cover the state's transportation priorities without the need to raise taxes or implement a gas tax increase.

"There's no need (for a gas tax increase) at a time when we've had such a positive budget outlook because of reform dividends. There's no need to be raising taxes on anyone affected," Walker said Thursday at a stop at Fox Valley Technical College's Public Safety Training Center, one day after releasing his two-year, \$76.1 billion budget bill. "If anything, we should be finding new ways to lower the overall tax burden of the people of this state."

Walker was in town to take a tour of the FVTC facility, which opened last year to help law enforcement and firefighters train. He also was there to tout his budget proposal, which he introduced Wednesday night to lawmakers in Madison.

Walker stood behind a sign that said "reform dividend" to highlight that money saved from previous provisions can now be used like dividends to cover investments in the 2017-2019 budget, like a \$500 million increase to K-12 public schools if schools can verify they are in compliance with Act 10 reforms.

"We hope to continue to not just have a reform dividend now, but we hope that reform dividend continues to grow into the future," Walker told reporters.

Other Republicans like Speaker Robin Vos and Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) have asked Walker to consider increasing the gas tax, to prevent the costs of construction projects from increasing as they're pushed back farther and farther on the schedule.

Rep. Dave Murphy (R-Greenville) and Rep. Mike Rohrkaste (R-Neenah) attended Walker's stop in Greenville and said it's too soon to say whether his proposed budget would cover transportation priorities, or if a gas tax increase would be needed.

The two said they planned to look more into the budget, an audit released by the Department of Transportation last month, and see what's needed, if anything, before committing to an idea.

Ethan Jacquart, an organizer with Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG), said Walker's budget takes "important steps" to fix the state's roads. Jacquart said his group is happy to see Walker invest more in local roads, and scale back spending on large projects in the state's biggest city.

"Those mega projects (in Milwaukee) are probably the most costly projects and Milwaukee doesn't need more highways. It needs to fix their existing roads," Jacquart said.

On Thursday, Walker specifically noted the benefit in his budget for communities outside Milwaukee. His proposed budget doesn't include funding for construction on the Interstate 94 highway between the Marquette and Zoo interchanges in the Milwaukee area.

"Counties and local governments are seeing more money for local roads and bridge aids than they've seen anywhere from 15 to 20 years," Walker said. "The difference is that we're not pouring new dollars into big projects in Milwaukee ... We're redistributing that around the rest of the state."

#### **Increased funding for higher education proposed**

Walker has also called for continuing a tuition freeze in 2017 at University of Wisconsin System schools, and cutting tuition by 5 percent in 2018 for all resident undergraduate students. Technical colleges would also have resident tuition frozen. In turn, the proposed budget would add \$100 million in funding to the UW System and \$10 million for the state's technical college system.

Dr. Susan May, president and CEO of Fox Valley Technical College, also said FVTC needs to evaluate Walker's budget more.

"We're still at a point that we need to evaluate the impact and what it is (Walker) is intending," May told USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin.

But, as the college's revenues have often been cut or frozen in recent years, like tuition proposed in Walker's budget, May said she worries about the long-term impact of that loss in funding on the college and its programs.

*Madeleine Behr: 920-996-7226, or [mbehr@postcrescent.com](mailto:mbehr@postcrescent.com); on Twitter @madeleinebehr*

## A promising response to a new program

Dave Fidlin For The Journal Times Mar 22, 2017



Racine Unified School District

Horlick High School senior Jazmin Salazar fills out an application for the Gateway Promise Scholarship Program. The Gateway Promise program helps ensure qualifying students seeking an education to begin their own path to success through a Gateway Technical College degree.

A year ago, when the wraps were taken off Gateway Technical College's bold initiative aimed at providing free higher education to financially disadvantaged high school graduates, hopes were high.

Zina Haywood, Gateway's executive vice president and provost, admits there were the usual unknowns for the Gateway Promise, a pilot program launching this fall. But she said she is pleasantly surprised by the strong response from prospective students.

The college set a Feb. 1 deadline for graduating high school seniors interested in participating in the program. Haywood, who co-chairs what has become known as the Promise Initiative, said 693 high schoolers submitted applications.

In the months leading up to the deadline, Haywood said 1,048 students, including the 693 applicants, expressed interest in the program.

"I'm ecstatic," Haywood said of the response. "We are very happy with that number, and the support we've had from the community."

The number of students who will actually be admitted into Gateway through the Promise Initiative this fall remains in flux, though estimates hover between 150 and 200 persons.

One reason for the fluidity is funding. By design, the Gateway Promise offers free tuition and fees to graduating high schoolers that might not otherwise be able to attend college after earning their diplomas. The offer to qualifying students is capped at six semesters.



## National recognition

The program is modeled after former President Barack Obama's Promise Campaign, and Gateway received national recognition from the White House when the local program was first announced.

Gateway officials have said the goal is to create a \$3 million endowment to keep it running into perpetuity. By mid-February of this year, the college secured \$1.9 million of that goal.

Although a shortfall from that lofty objective still remains, Harwood said she is optimistic about Gateway Promise's longevity and its ability to serve a swath of students.

Several Racine area businesses and organizations have pledged financial support, including SC Johnson, which offered a combined \$700,000 donation. Chairman and CEO Fisk Johnson pledged more than half of that amount — \$400,000 — through a personal donation.

## Qualifying students

In the months ahead, Gateway officials will review the nearly 700 applicants who asked to attend the college this fall.

From the get-go, the college has set a number of pre-requisites for students entering through the program. While participants do not have to be at the top of their class, Gateway has set a grade-point average threshold. Students need to have attained at least a 2.0 from their freshmen through junior years of high school.

Additionally, qualifying applicants have to take the college entrance ACT exam and earn a minimum composite score of 16. Participants also need to enroll in Gateway immediately after graduating high school.

Lastly, students must either attend school or live in the Gateway district and have an expected family contribution of \$3,000 or lower as calculated by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

As for the strong response, Haywood credits Gateway's strong collaboration with private and parochial K-12 schools throughout the college's footprint. The partnerships, she said, helped spread the word about the Gateway Promise and its intention.

"(The Gateway Promise) has really been an expansion of the partnerships we already have in place," Haywood said.

# Lakeshore Technical College names new president

USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 4:44 p.m. CT March 20, 2017 | Updated 21 hours ago



*(Photo: Photo courtesy LTC)*

CLEVELAND - Lakeshore Technical College has announced Paul Carlsen, the current chief content officer for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), will become the next president of LTC.

The appointment culminates a national search process that began in November. Carlsen will succeed Michael Lanser, who will retire after serving 14 years as president.

Carlsen is expected to start the job in July.

In his current role as chief content officer, Carlsen provides direct leadership for workforce development, academics, WorkReady U (Louisiana's adult education provider network), enrollment management, student affairs, financial aid, online learning, policy development and institutional research in support of LCTCS colleges. In addition, he teaches American government as an adjunct instructor at River Parishes Community College in Gonzales, Louisiana.

Prior to working in higher education, Carlsen served as a statistical and research analyst with the South Carolina Department of Commerce, and as the chief workforce economist for Louisiana Economic Development (LED) FastStart. He earned his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Georgia, a master of public policy degree from the University of Denver and a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Colorado.

"We are very pleased that Dr. Carlsen will be joining us in July," Sharon Chappy, LTC board chair and chair of the LTC presidential search committee, said in a press release. "He will bring a breadth of knowledge, a passion for student success and a drive to continue to move LTC in the direction of high standing and distinction."

# Lakeland University, LTC address shortfall in tech ed teachers

3/21/17

**USA TODAY NETWORK - Wisconsin** Lakeland University and Lakeshore Technical College are partnering to address one of Wisconsin's most significant education challenges — the shortage of technology education teachers — in a move that Lakeland plans to take statewide.

Lakeland has added a technology education (tech ed) bachelor's degree program in an effort to provide more applicants for a marketplace that has more demand than supply.

Lakeland becomes one of four state colleges and universities to offer a technology education teaching degree, and is the only institution in Northeastern Wisconsin.

"We are well aware of the shortage of tech ed teachers in Wisconsin, and the struggles school districts are having filling these important roles," Lakeland President David Black said in a press release. "Our goal is to partner with our friends in higher education to leverage our strengths and address this concern."

This spring, Black will meet with additional technical college leaders and present plans to expand the program across the state.

Degree-seeking students will enroll at Lakeland, where they will take the majority of their classes, including Lakeland's early childhood through adolescence (K-12) professional sequences courses. Students will also take 30 core technology credits at LTC, learning on state-of-the-art equipment.

Students will select one of eight emphasis areas: engineering, information and communication technology, electronics, architecture and construction, transportation, power and energy, biotechnology and environmental technologies.

Enrollment in the program, which has been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, is underway.

"The new technology education degree program expands on the great partnership LTC has with Lakeland," LTC President Michael Lanser said in a press release. "By leveraging the unique strengths of both institutions, we can provide a pipeline of quality tech ed instructors to our K-12 partners, as well as support a new career opportunity for students in northeastern Wisconsin."

For students interested in becoming teachers, tech ed jobs will be a growth area for several years. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of career and technical education teachers is projected to grow 9 percent through 2022.

Retirements and low enrollments in education programs that prepare STEM teachers are the main contributors to the problem.

Howards Grove School District Superintendent Chris Peterson said his district's recent tech ed teacher search was difficult, as it netted few candidates after a lengthy search. He said districts around the state will welcome a program that produces more qualified applicants.

"The biggest need in tech ed is teachers who can meet the needs of local employers," Peterson said. "Manufacturing is such an important part of the local economy, and who better to partner to prepare tech ed teachers than LTC and Lakeland?"

"The key is finding skilled teachers who will stay for five or 10 years and help us build a program," Peterson continued. "We need forward-thinking teachers who can design curriculum that will meet emerging needs, including jobs that haven't been created yet. We need teachers who will get young people excited about careers in tech ed."

Not only will graduates of Lakeland's program be licensed technology education teachers, they'll also be able to teach dual credit technology courses offered at the high school level.

"Increasingly, Wisconsin high schools are offering courses that allow students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously," Black said. "Parents and students are seeking out these options as ways to cut down on the cost of higher education and get ahead before graduating from high school. It's also a great way for high school students to test career paths."

There are several pathways students can take to enter into this program:

- Recent high school graduates who want to become teachers and understand there is a strong chance they'll be employed quickly after graduating.
- Current teachers looking for something different in their teaching career.
- Professionals working in a technical industry who are interested in a new career.

# Now hiring: Plants face skilled worker shortage

Manufacturing works to rebrand itself as appealing to the next generation of employees

March 8, 2017

*Crystal Lindell, Managing Editor*

FOOD ENGINEERING  
MAGAZINE

It's not a great time to be in the manufacturing jobs recruitment business. Factories are suffering from branding issues, high schools are pushing students toward four-year schools instead of technical colleges, and the new President is telling everyone the industry is dying.

US President Donald Trump specifically called out the manufacturing industry in his January inaugural address, claiming, "rusted out factories [are] scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation."

All of this makes it hard to entice the skilled workers the sector desperately needs.

"There are definitely a lot of jobs," says Pat Dean, director of recruiting for the last two years and currently the director of talent management for Advanced Technology Services. "One, manufacturing continues to grow. Two, we're seeing the generation that has worked in the factories are starting to retire, so that's what's really creating this skills gap. The number of open jobs is well going to outpace the number of people interested in those jobs."

In 2012, as the recession began to lift, Fluke—providing manufacturing, distribution and service of electronic test tools, biomedical equipment and networking solutions—surveyed its North American customer base on the skills gap.

At the time, 93 percent of respondents said it was very difficult to find entry-level workers with acceptable skills, and more than half said candidates lacked enough years of on-the-job experience to effectively perform in their positions.

Things that took a beating during the recession included:

- On-the-job mentoring
- Apprenticeships
- Specialization
- Going home on time

Fluke also cited a study posted in 2016 by the AED Foundation that indicates the North American skills gap has persisted even as the economy has recovered. In fact, US manufacturing may still be “foregoing 11 percent of earnings and 9 percent of revenue due to the skills gap and the inability to hire qualified workers.”

In the same study, 59 percent of Canadian executives surveyed struggled to find qualified candidates, 60 percent said they had lost customers as a result of the technician shortage, and 40 percent said the shortage increased costs and decreased productivity.

But companies are working to change that.

## **Branding the manufacturing industry**

Everyone seems to agree that it needs to start with better branding efforts.

“Recruiting people into manufacturing is a challenge,” says Arvind Rao, North America food and beverage industry commercial manager at Rockwell Automation. “Computer science engineers are going into more technical roles than coming into the manufacturing space.”

Peter Dettmer, who co-chairs the Automated Manufacturing Program at Madison Area Technical College, which is partnering with Rockwell in a training program, says employers are struggling to find qualified, entry-level people to work as technicians.

“One reason is that many younger people haven’t known about opportunities in manufacturing. And a lot of them haven’t been interested in hearing about them,” he explains.

And a lot of that stems from the old-school image people have about manufacturing.

“I think the stereotype over the years has been that factories are dark, dirty, dangerous places, and what we’re finding in a lot of the work that we do is that these plants are actually very highly mechanized, very technologically advanced places to work,” Dean says. “In the younger generations, that stereotype lingers, and it’s one of the reasons that they shy away from those types of jobs.”

It’s an image that starts before potential employees even graduate from high school.

“The greatest threat to North American manufacturing is not foreign competition; it’s the high school counselor,” says Brian Fortney, global business manager for workforce and training services at Rockwell Automation.

Indeed, one of the biggest problems seems to be that so many high schools push students toward a four-year degree, regardless of whether that’s the best fit for a student or not, simply because they think it’s “better.”

“We teach the next generation about manufacturing solely from history books,” Fortney says. “I remember watching ‘Transformers,’ and I got into a lot of these manufacturing spaces, and it’s a lot like ‘Transformers.’ It’s the future.”

Of course, high schools can’t take all the blame for the branding problems the sector faces.

“If you listen to the media, you almost get this feeling that manufacturing is dying or has been dead,” says Rao. “And, I think, T-shirt manufacturing maybe, but if you look at food, so much of our food gets made here. It’s not like our cereal gets made in China; a lot of our food still gets made here.”

And things like Trump’s inaugural comments paint a bleak picture of the manufacturing industry in the United States. While Fortney says he is neutral when it comes to politics, he did say that comments like that don’t paint an accurate picture of the sector.

“It’s very easy to make people aware of a problem that’s already solved. You can make something sound like a rusted out factory, and then you can go off on tour and promote what actually is in place right now, and all of a sudden, it looks like you solved the problem,” he explains. “You get credit for solving a problem that wasn’t a problem. From a political standpoint, there’s some cleverness to it.”

Rao says that the industry is indeed very strong.

“How cereal gets made,” he explains, “it’s a very technical field, but the industry doesn’t get credit for how technical it can be. People don’t know how cereal gets made; they just think it’s very non-technical.”

## **Partnering with colleges**

Of course, even if people do decide to go into manufacturing, there’s still the matter of training them for the high-skilled jobs that are in demand.

Many manufacturers have partnered with local colleges and universities, as well as with each other, to re-create the apprenticeship. This is exactly what the industry needs, says Leah Friberg, the education and industry relations manager for Fluke.

“Training is essential, training, training, training, because if you look at the national debate, this change has been going on for 10 years. Plants continue to become more automated, and the type of people they employ is going to be different,” she says. “And manufacturers are helping with that, either by building their own collective or by directly supporting [schools].”

For its part, Rockwell has partnered with colleges all over the world, including at the Madison Area Technical College in Madison, WI.

Dettmer, who joined Madison College five years ago as an instructor, says that, at the time, the college offered students some training with programmable logic controllers (PLCs) and other industrial technology classes. But manufacturing leaders in the Madison area wanted more comprehensive training to bridge their growing skills gap. So, Dettmer and others formed a steering committee to help identify those needs and chart a course for Madison College to meet them.

Starting in 2009, the committee helped the college secure workforce-initiative grants from the state and federal government to expand its industrial class offerings, and purchase and update equipment for hands-on instruction.

Dettmer also developed a new two-year associate's degree called automated manufacturing systems technology with Co-program Director Rick Jacobs.

“Our goal was to allow students—not only high school graduates, but people who needed retraining or who were underemployed or unemployed—to start from basically zero knowledge in manufacturing and learn everything necessary to have a successful career and good income upon graduation,” Dettmer explains.

So, Madison College contacted Rockwell Automation, requesting to become part of the company's Educational Support Program. The program provides accredited educational institutions and students with economical access to Rockwell Automation hardware, software and training tools.

“Rockwell Automation has long working relationships with four-year colleges, but this is the first time we've partnered this closely with a two-year technical college,” says Scott Feldmann, account manager at Rockwell Automation in the Madison area. “We recognized that by working with Madison College, we had an ideal opportunity to help train the workforce that's needed in this area. Education is part of our commitment to the community and our commitment to our customers.”

After successfully completing the automated manufacturing program at Madison College, students who want to acquire their maintainer certificate must take an additional class taught by Rockwell Automation instructors on-site and pass a test to demonstrate their mastery of the material.

“Having a certificate from a world-leading manufacturer really makes a difference for people who are searching for a job or advancement in their careers,” Dettmer says. “There are close to 1,000 job openings in our region relating to our career offerings. So, we expect that most of our students will have their pick of places to work upon graduation.”

Of course, even if companies can recruit the right people, and they have the right training, there's still another roadblock. Many new hires are taking over for people who have been in

the factory for decades, doing the same job and relying on information mostly stored in their heads.

“It’s definitely going to be an uphill battle,” says ATS’s Dean. “We have a lot of institutional, long-term knowledge that is sitting with people that are going to retire in the next five to 10 years, and we have to make sure they [the new hires] are ready to fill those shoes. We see it getting harder and harder every day, and we have to figure out new and innovative ways to deal with it.”

That’s where companies like Fluke come in. It works with the out-going generation to create a cloud-based system of information about their jobs that can then be used by new hires.

“It used to be the people who were doing this [factory] maintenance were doing it for a very long time, and they had been with this machine possibly since it was installed,” Friberg explains. “And it was in all their head. What MS does is, it measures things that are really intangible, like what noise does it make? And how much does it shake?”

Then, they use that information to train new hires. And they make the information more user friendly, so staff can use it without as much advanced training.

“An engineer just wants data, and they will make their own decisions,” Friberg says. “[But] they want tools now that offer more autofocus options to do more of the analytics for you, so that you get a result that you can act on yourself.”

Friberg says there’s a clear difference between how the two generations approach work, but that doesn’t mean one is better than the other.

“The older generation, they are almost like artisans. They take the job and the success of what they do very, very seriously,” she says. “[For millennials] what’s important to them is a little different. They are going to look a little bit more at outcomes. They’re a lot more interested in data, way more interested in that than the previous generation would have been. They still take their jobs very seriously, but it’s like the priorities are stacked differently.”

## **Staffing temp jobs**

When it comes down to it though, a lot of the industry still depends on temp workers, and here, technology is also changing the staffing landscape.

MS Companies is just one example of this. The company coordinates with potential temp employees via an app and alerts them of local jobs right on their cell phones.

Chris Reffett, vice president at MS Companies, says the company uses the service to reach workers on all points of the employment spectrum, from \$10 an hour to \$180 an hour.



“We don’t have a secret pool of really good workers that nobody else has,” he says. “But we do have the tools to make it more efficient and provide training, so we created a mobile, on-demand solution.”

And the app makes it incredibly easy for plant managers to send out an alert for workers.

“So, for example, a production manager comes into the plant and realizes ‘we just got a huge order from Kroger, I need to bring some people in,’” Reffett explains. “They can look right on their phone and put in a request immediately that starts that process and allows us to fill that with people who are prescreened, and we can start getting to work much more efficiently and provide the right person for the right job.”

And it makes sense for the changing workforce.

“There’s a staffing company on every street, so our owner leader, Pete Butler, saw the change with the millennials and the gig economy and how we use technology to communicate and saw this trend coming years ago,” Reffett says. “The way people actually do communicate today is not by a phone call or even email. How many unanswered emails do you have today? With this emerging workforce, we are really embracing this millennial gig culture and also allowing our customers to be able to flex their labor.”

It’s a process that seems almost tailor-made for the food industry, which is constantly dealing with seasonal fluctuations in demand.

The manufacturing industry is no doubt going to be around for years to come. Whether or not it has the right staff, though, will depend on how willing companies are to embrace change.

“It’s so much change, but it’s all super interesting,” Friberg says. “And it was the way it was for a long time, and it’s interesting that so many people are contributing to figuring out what this means, so it will just keep on evolving.”

## Mid-State Technical College Selects Dr. Shelly Mondeik as Sixth President



Dr. Shelly Mondeik, (Courtesy: Mid-State)

The Mid-State Technical College District Board is delighted to announce the selection of Dr. Shelly Mondeik as the college's sixth president.

Mondeik will join the college on June 1. She was selected from a pool of more than thirty candidates from across the United States. The college began the presidential search last fall after Dr. Sue Budjac announced she will retire in summer, 2017.

In announcing the selection, District Board Chairperson Betty Bruski Mallek noted that Mondeik is the quintessential technical college leader.

"Shelly Mondeik is herself a Wisconsin technical college graduate. She started her career in the private sector. She went on to teach at the technical college level and to move up through leadership to become a highly regarded vice president at neighboring Northcentral Technical College," said Mallek. "Shelly Mondeik is a central Wisconsin person through and through and is a proven leader in the Wisconsin Technical College System."

Mondeik has served since 2010 as Vice President for Learning and Chief Academic Officer at Northcentral Technical College, headquartered in Wausau. She holds leadership positions at the national, state and regional level including chairing the board of the Community College Consortium for Agriculture Advancement, serving on the advisory board of the Medical College of Wisconsin, and leading the Wisconsin Technical College System's statewide "credit for prior learning" initiative to better recognize the work and life experience Wisconsinites bring to college.

The Mid-State Board was impressed with Mondeik's strong track record of building community relationships and partnerships. She is president-elect of the Merrill Chamber of Commerce and chairs the Workforce Hub Steering Committee of the Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce.

"Shelly has earned a reputation as a leader who works tirelessly to ensure her college meets business, industry and community needs," said Mallek. "She also has great experience working with public officials at the local, state and national level."

The Mid-State Board also noted Mondeik's commitment to balance continued progress on important college initiatives with new energy and new ideas. "We were looking for a leader who will maintain momentum on our strategic plan and culture of accountability while leading us to exciting new accomplishments," Mallek said.

Mondeik earned a doctorate in educational leadership at Madison's Edgewood College. She earned master's and bachelor's degrees in career and technical education at UW-Stout, and an associate degree at Northcentral.

The District Board shaped the presidential search profile based in part on a series of seven forums it conducted in September 2016 with community leaders and college faculty and staff in Wisconsin Rapids, Marshfield, Stevens Point and Adams. Don Stevens + Associates of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, assisted the college with the search.

## Mid-State unveils new mobile lab

February 23, 2017  
For Hub City Times



Mid-State Technical College's mobile MIKE lab provides an interactive manufacturing experience. (Submitted photo)

**WISCONSIN RAPIDS** — A new mobile manufacturing lab from Mid-State Technical College has debuted at the college's locations and soon will make appearances around the area. The lab, known as the MIKE — for Manufacturing, Innovation, Knowledge, Experience — was funded in part by a \$150,000 grant from the Wisconsin Technical College System. The MIKE is a refurbished 2002 Freightliner coach outfitted with the latest technology and equipment to deliver its manufacturing lesson.

Participants may design a part or object at one of several computer workstations equipped with AutoCAD design software. Next, they can make a prototype using the rapid-prototyping 3D printer or vertical machining center. Their part is then subjected to the computerized inspection arm, a laser scanner for making a digitized 3D image of the prototype, and a thermal forming machine to make a mold out of the machined or printed part.

"When it comes to choosing a career, people tend to think of manufacturing as a dirty, greasy, and often secondary option," said Al Javoroski, dean of technical and industrial programs at Mid-State. "The MIKE lets people experience firsthand how high-tech

manufacturing today combines innovation, design, and quality build. The resulting product may solve a complex problem, launch into outer space, or even save a life.”

A number of Mid-State manufacturing programs are represented, but what is demonstrated inside the MIKE is more about the future of manufacturing in central Wisconsin. By inviting area schools, local businesses, and communities to explore the MIKE, Mid-State aims to make the next generation aware of the possibilities and eager to pursue the variety of innovative career options in those industries.

“The full potential of manufacturing involves designers and technicians, but there is so much more,” Javoroski said. “New industries and employers will also need accountants, marketers, sales reps, and business managers in order to be successful. The MIKE is about the opportunity for all in central Wisconsin if we can open people’s minds to the possibilities and invest in the education these new industries demand.”

Mid-State debuted the MIKE with special red-carpet events at its four locations from Jan. 30 to Feb. 2. The MIKE will be available for scheduled visits at other locations this spring, including area middle and high schools for hands-on exploration and local businesses for incumbent worker training.

# New option means nursing degrees faster

Sari Lesk, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 2:39 p.m. CT March 15, 2017

STEVENS POINT - Nursing students will be able to earn college degrees faster with a new agreement between two local institutions.

Mid-State Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point will sign an agreement Thursday that gives students an easier path to earning both an associate degree from MSTC and a bachelor's degree from UWSP in nursing.

The agreement, called the Partnership Program, will allow students to start their classes at either school by taking general studies courses to meet MSTC's associate degree requirements. Students who start at the technical college can gain admission to UWSP's nursing program as early as their third semester of MSTC's program. Students who start at UWSP can participate in a competitive application process to enter MSTC's program each semester.

"(It provides) an efficient and affordable path to becoming a registered nurse in central Wisconsin," the release states.

When students complete the program, they will have both the associate and bachelor's degree in nursing and their license as a registered nurse in Wisconsin.

"These processes will allow more nursing students to enter the workforce sooner, and increase the number of BSN-prepared nurses in our community," the release states.

The technical college offers nursing courses at its Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield campuses and will start offering the courses in Stevens Point this fall.

The two schools will formalize the arrangement at 3:30 p.m. Thursday during a ceremony at MSTC's campus in Stevens Point.

## Beaver of Mid-State named Board Member of the Year

Mid-State Technical College Board of Directors member Robert "Bob" Beaver has been named 2017 Board Member of the Year by the Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association. District Boards Association president Ramona Mathews presented Beaver with the award at the January 16 Boards Association

meeting held in Madison.

The Board Member of the Year award recognizes a district board member who has made an outstanding contribution to technical and vocational education through participation as a trustee on the local, state, regional and national levels, as well as overall service through

other contributions.

On the Board at Mid-State Technical College since 1990, Beaver spent over half of his 26 years of service in an officer role, including three years as chair and six years each as vice president and treasurer. His exceptional leadership has also garnered many local and state awards from students, peers and

communities.

Among Beaver's highlighted accomplishments were leading Mid-State's efforts to connect businesses with college staff in partnership with the Workforce Development Board, allowing the College to tailor its curricula to the needs of area employers. Beaver also implemented the first distance learning option for many K-12 schools in central Wisconsin, creat-

ing transcribed credit opportunities for thousands of area high school students as well as the adoption of telepresence technology at Mid-State. Beaver has also been instrumental in promoting Mid-State dual-credit programs, resulting in significant savings for high school students.

"For many years, Bob has been a crucial driver of Mid-State's ability to help students access and

afford a college degree as well as tailor offerings to meet business needs in our district" said Mid-State president Dr. Sue Budjac. "We are proud of his accomplishments and incredibly pleased to see the Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association recognize his legacy of service to Wisconsin's technical college mission."



**Board Member of the Year Award** was presented at the Boards Association meeting pictured from left to right: Sue Budjac, Mid-State Technical College president; Robert Beaver, Mid-State Technical College Board Member of the Year; Ramona Mathews, District Boards Association president and Chippewa Valley Technical College Board of Directors member; Betty Bruski Mallek, Mid-State Technical College Board of Directors chair; Rick Merdan, Mid-State Technical College Board of Directors member. — SUBMITTED PHOTO

# \$2.3 million grant to double MATC nursing program

Brianne Carlson, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Jan. 26, 2017



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(Photo: Mike De Sisti, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)

Milwaukee Area Technical College will double enrollment in the college's registered nursing program over the next three years and address the nursing shortage in Wisconsin under a \$2.3 million grant from United Health Foundation, the organizations announced Thursday.

The three-year grant will help MATC increase the enrollment of the nursing program by 100 students beginning in fall 2017. The program currently enrolls 350 students.

The grant also will allow MATC to hire 16 new nursing instructors, support the recruitment of low-income students, assist students with placement services after graduation and allow the college to graduate an additional 100 students by the third year.

"I think it's going to make the program a lot more robust, and I just think that students will be a lot more successful," MATC President Vicki Martin said. "This will get a lot more students who are interested into the pipeline."

MATC also will match the United Health Foundation grant to hire an associate dean for the nursing program in the School of Health Sciences and expand tutors, teaching assistants and other services for students.

Nancy Vrabec, dean of the MATC School of Health Sciences, said the goal is to maintain the outcomes of the nursing program, such as the 96% pass rate for students who take the NCLEX-RN licensure exam, while increasing the number of faculty and students.

"We're really looking to keep the quality of the program and provide more graduate nurses for our community and the hospitals in our communities," Vrabec said.

A 2014 research brief from the Wisconsin Public Policy Forum said by 2020 the state will need to grow the registered nurse workforce by 24%.

"It's helping people live healthier lives and giving back to the community so we can take care of our children, our seniors and our family members," Dustin Hinton, president and CEO of UnitedHealthcare of Wisconsin, said of the partnership between United Health Foundation and MATC. "There's a nursing shortage and we want to be a part of the community fix to help with that."

In addition to the grant from United Health Foundation, MATC's partnerships with Aurora Health Care, Ascension Health, Children's Hospital and Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin will allow the college to add 36 additional clinical training sites for students.



# Moraine Park Technical College receives donation for its new energy education center

Ben Rueter | Beaver Dam Daily Citizen 16 hrs ago



Contributed

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Shown here presenting and accepting an Alliant Energy donation to MPTC are, from left, Julie Bauer, executive director, Alliant Energy Foundation; Tony Bartels, business manager and financial secretary, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 965; Dana Knebel, MPTC's director of college advancement; Bonnie Baerwald, MPTC president; Wayne Reschke, Alliant senior vice president, human resources; Brian Bartels, Alliant manager, customer operations; Traci Hohn, Alliant labor relations manager; Brady Kuphal, electrical power distribution program student; and Becky Johnson, regional director.

Moraine Park Technical College is setting the stage to develop a new gas utility technician program in Beaver Dam's campus alongside a \$2.3 million energy education center.

According to a news release from MPTC, Alliant Energy has become a contributor to the project by donating \$80,000. The release states that MPTC's goal is to begin construction on its energy education center in April 2018 and graduate the first class of gas utility technicians in 2019.

"Alliant Energy has been a business partner with Moraine Park Technical College for many years," Bonnie Baerwald, MPTC president said. "This donation demonstrates their strategic vision for not only their company, but also their industry. With this generous gift, the college will be able to build a state-of-the-art training center for gas utility technicians at our Beaver Dam campus—training young men and women in a profession that provides family-sustaining wages."

MPTC believes that that wages for gas utility technicians will be above that of typical entry-level positions, with projected graduates earning an estimated average of \$54,000 per year.

"Being a 21st-century company means we need highly skilled workers heading into the future," Wayne Reschke, Alliant Energy senior vice president for human resources said in the statement. "Investing in Moraine Park Technical College's natural gas program and its students helps build a talent pipeline for our company and industry."

The gas utility technician program is expected to act as a critical pipeline for skilled workers to companies in natural gas, propane, and gas utilities over the next decade. Moraine Park aims for graduates to gain the skills to maintain and operate natural gas and propane systems for both residential and commercial customers.

"It's a rewarding career with many avenues for growth," Reschke said. "Natural gas is a growing part of our company's energy mix and focus. Men and women who graduate from this program will provide innovative solutions and a vital service to their communities."

According to Baerwald, Alliant's support in making the project a reality should not only help the lives of future graduates, but have a profound impact on communities as well.

"Alliant Energy knows that an investment in workforce training creates a stronger tomorrow for the energy industries and the communities they serve. We are thankful for their gift and their continuing partnership," Baerwald said.

According to Moraine Park's 2015 graduate follow-up report, 60 percent of its graduates are employed within the 10-county Moraine Park district (including Washington, Dodge, Fond du Lac, and Green Lake counties), and 97 percent are employed within the state of Wisconsin.

The vision for this new Moraine Park program was developed in conjunction with the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Wisconsin Energy Workforce Consortium and gas industry professionals.

# Nicolet receives \$27K WEDC grant to expand entrepreneurial training

*Program will provide mentorship and support in six northern counties*



*Jamie Taylor/River News*

Nicolet Area Technical College in Rhinelander was one of 11 organizations to receive a grant on Jan. 24 from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation intended to help develop or expand innovative programs aimed at advancing the climate for entrepreneurship in Wisconsin.

Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch and WEDC Secretary and CEO Mark Hogan were on hand for a brief ceremony at the college to formally announce the grant, which is part of WEDC's new Entrepreneurship Support pilot program and will help fund activities such as the promotion of entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial education, mentorship and training; and business development and financial services.

*From left, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation secretary and CEO Mark Hogan, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch and Sandy Bishop, dean of economic and workforce development at Nicolet College listen Tuesday as Sandy Kinney, Nicolet executive director of communication and college and community initiatives, announces that the college had received a \$27,000 WEDC grant.*

Sandy Kinney, Nicolet's executive director of communication and college and community initiatives, introduced each speaker. Kinney said the grant will help the college and its economic development partners foster a stronger entrepreneurial spirit in the region.

She noted that Kleefisch is no stranger to Nicolet College, having visited numerous times during her term in office "as she works to create a talent pipeline across our state." Kleefisch has been a "jobs ambassador" and advocate for workforce training, she added.

Kleefisch said Wisconsin has an unfair poor reputation for not fostering business start-ups.

"I say a poor reputation for its startup culture because I don't think the national publications pay as much attention to Wisconsin's startup community as perhaps they should," Kleefisch said. "We, in Wisconsin, do take risks; it's just normally the risks we take tend to be the ones that we can insure. That's not a bad thing, it shows that we're willing to step out on a limb, but quite often, when we step out there, we step out there prepared."

She said the state can boast a small business survival rate "that is the best in the upper Midwest."

"That's pretty extraordinary, but how do we convince more of those entrepreneurs, those innovators, those inventors, those folks walking around Wisconsin with a big white bulb above their heads to take that light bulb and turn it around into an actual business? I do know that here at Nicolet College, you do know how to convince those people to take that bulb down and parlay that into a business," Kleefisch said.

She said startups are important because they not only employ entrepreneurs but eventually others in the community and contribute to the local economic climate.

"Not just in the large city centers of the state, but all across Wisconsin," she said. "That idea is really exciting. And that idea is what this announcement is all about."

She said Nicolet's pilot program in entrepreneurship has proven itself successful enough to receive \$27,000 of the \$500,000 that WEDC is awarding in 11 grants so it can take the next step, one that can hopefully be replicated in other parts of the state.

Kleefisch pointed out that one of the areas the Nicolet's program will focus on is helping those people with intellectual or cognitive disabilities take part in start-ups of their own.

"Congratulations, this is a community that contributes to the vibrant economic development fabric of Wisconsin," she said. "This is a community that will employ people in our great state. I'm excited to see what Nicolet can do with this \$27,000 in this wonderful entrepreneurial community."

Hogan also sang the praises of the Nicolet pilot program.

"This was a competitive process, as WEDC reviewed 32 applications covering some extremely worthwhile projects throughout the state," he said.

Hogan said the emphasis in the program was to have local groups identify local needs.

"That's important to identify solutions for entrepreneurs and their needs in their respective communities," he said. "I learned pretty early on in this role that economic development, including assisting startups and with early stage companies, is most effective when it is led at a local or regional level," he said. "The innovative work you started in 2010 and then expanded in 2013 in fostering entrepreneurial development in Vilas County, played a key part in you receiving this award. Your application was further enhanced with your goal of establishing a regional entrepreneurial resource network to leverage the success you have had over the last six-plus years, and also expanding this program to include neighboring counties."

He said Nicolet College, in partnership with the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation, understands the needs of entrepreneurs in this area.

"Equally important is that you are creating a best practices program that can be used in other regions of our state," Hogan said. "You should be proud of your efforts in laying the groundwork for supporting future entrepreneurs through this innovative program. We look forward to following your progress and your successes."

He also noted that all one has to do is look around the state's business community to find surnames on some of its biggest industries that started out small and grew over time.

"Clearly, Wisconsin has a long history of entrepreneurs being a critical part of Wisconsin's economy," Hogan said, adding that since WEDC was established in 2011, it has had a strong track record of promoting entrepreneurs in Wisconsin with innovative loan and grant programs tailored to the needs of early stage companies.

"We also realize that one size does not fit all, and WEDC unique structure as a public/private organization, gives us the flexibility to create new programs like the Fab Lab program, or modify existing ones, to meet the ever-changing needs of business, and in this case, Wisconsin's entrepreneurial communities," he said.

Sandy Bishop, dean of economic and workforce development at Nicolet, shared a few details on how the grant money will be used.

"Nicolet has been working for the past several years, primarily in Vilas County due to the collaborations we've established with the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation, and with the support of the David Juday Scholarship Program and the Juday family," Bishop said.

She said the goal of the program the grant will support is to take what they have been able to do in Vilas County and expand it into Forest, Oneida, Lincoln, Langlade and Iron counties.

"In 2013, we started picking up steam by delivering a technique called an entrepreneurial development program twice a year with the support of the Juday family," Bishop said. "To date, since 2013, more than 50 individuals have completed the 10-week entrepreneurial program called NET, Nicolet Entrepreneurial Training program, and out of those graduates, 26 have either started a new business or expanded their existing business. I don't know of any other regional economic development entity that can claim those kind of numbers in that amount of time. But that just shows you the type of support we get from Vilas County."

Of the four parts to the grant, strategic economic development is the most important as Nicolet will seek to draw a partnership of county economic development corporations and local business groups into a coalition to help spur entrepreneurial development, she added. Tapping into the local grassroots groups in each community will also be key.

"We know at Nicolet that without the high level economic partnerships we have developed that have come to the table and helped us be successful (we wouldn't be where we are). So our goal is to develop those high level partnerships throughout the region," Bishop said.

Another key will be to expand the classes piloted in Vilas County, in addition to providing advanced training for those who have completed it in areas of accounting, marketing, etc.

The program will also work with disabled individuals.

"We have a very successful program called Jumpstart, and I have been sharing some of our successes with Rebecca, and she is very familiar with them and has met several of them over the past several years," Bishop said.

"It's not a program for people who need help, but to tap into a viable source of new business ideas and business development," she added. "We see a market there that has yet to be tapped."

After the presentation, Kleefisch said all of the grants being awarded will one day translate into more jobs.

"The cool thing about entrepreneurship is we know that entrepreneurs, by nature, start small," she said. "They're inventors, they are innovators, and small businesses create between 60 and 80 percent of new jobs nationwide. Imagine if you had all of these jobs explosions all over the Northwoods. And it starts with a grant like the one we gave today."

Bishop said the grant money will be used as seed money to help firmly establish the necessary partnerships throughout the area that will hopefully allow Nicolet to expand its entrepreneur training program to the other five counties after the success they have had in Vilas County.

# Nicolet selected for U.S. Department of Education financial aid experiment

*Multi-year study focuses on reducing student loan debt*



**Jessica Leighty**  
Of The Lakeland Times

Nicolet College has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in a national experiment which focuses on reducing student loan debt.

According to Jill Price, Nicolet College's director of financial aid, the goal of the study is to keep students aware of their escalating debt as they're progressing through their academic program.

"You'd be surprised how many don't realize how it's mounted," Price said. "They ask, 'How much do I have out there? How much am I going to repay?'"

Not only will this study keep students in the loop about their debt amount, it will also help them decide whether they need the full amount of a loan offered or if they need a loan at all.

"We'll get the students to ask, 'Do we really need those loans?'" Price said. "'Do I really need those additional amounts or even if I do, do I need the whole amount offered?'"

At present, undergraduate students are required to do loan counseling when taking out their first loan or exit counseling when they leave school.

"So depending on how long students are in school, that could be several years," Price said.

With this study, students receiving federal financial aid will be randomly selected and placed in one of two groups.

The first group, known as the control group, will receive financial aid in the same manner students are experiencing now. They will go through an entrance or exit counseling session with no additional interviews required while in school.

The second group, known as the experimental group, will be required to receive some form of additional counseling regarding their loans while in school.

"We don't want to overburden them," Price said. "So the first year we may say you only have to do one or two where you meet with us or however we deem appropriate. Then the U.S. Department of Education is going to look at those groups down the road and say, 'It really did work or it didn't work.'"

Additional counseling could include face-to-face sessions with the school's financial aid department or online tools through the school or U.S. Department of Education. A combination of such tools could also be required.

Nicolet College is one of 51 schools in the nation participating in this study and currently the only school selected in Wisconsin.

The program will be implemented by the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year and students randomly selected for the study will be required to participate.

# NTC Named a 2017 Best Online College in America

Kelsi Seubert

Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: 715.803.1509

Email: [seubert@ntc.edu](mailto:seubert@ntc.edu)

January 31, 2017

(WAUSAU, Wis.) – Northcentral Technical College (NTC) has been named a 2017 Best Online College in America by BestColleges.com for the third year in a row. NTC ranked fourth in the nation for accredited schools offering online associate degrees in the 2017 analysis.

“The Best Online Colleges ranking is intended to inform and guide prospective students toward institutions that provide a quality education and a meaningful learning experience at an affordable cost. As online higher education demand grows and more schools bring programs online, it’s important and necessary to hold institutions to a standard of excellence that students can depend upon when making their college choice,” said Stephanie Snider, General Manager of BestColleges.com.

Using data collected from the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) and the institutions themselves, BestColleges.com included admissions, enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and cost of attendance to rank the top schools accordingly. All institutions included in the ranking are not-for-profit and offer at least six accredited, 100 percent online degree options.

“NTC is proud to be recognized for our commitment to online educational opportunities,” said President Lori Weyers. “Whether you are a student in our innovative Virtual College or someone taking advantage of one of our many online courses or programs, we are dedicated to ensuring a flexible, engaging and quality student experience that mirrors the outstanding education you receive when you’re on campus.”

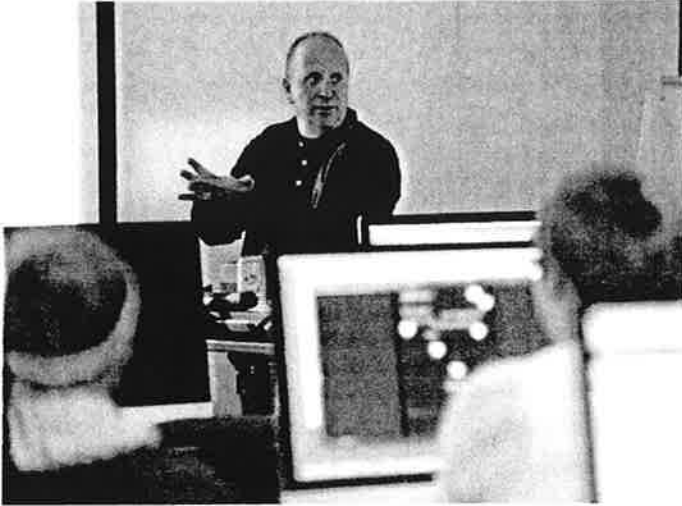
NTC’s Virtual College offers 47 associate degree and technical diploma programs, including programs in Video Production, Medical Coding, IT, Supervisory Management and more. Learners can also take advantage of the more than 20 short-term, certificate options offered through Virtual College.

“Virtual College is our most flexible option – classes begin weekly and students can complete their coursework on their own schedule,” said Brad Gast, Dean of Continuing Education & Virtual College. “Once students begin with us, we remain committed to their success with dedicated advisors to guide them through the program.”

# New NWTC program reduces college costs

Shelby Le Duc , USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 5:21 p.m. CT Jan. 24, 2017 | Updated 19 hours ago

GREEN BAY - Northeast Wisconsin Technical College is on a mission to change the conversation on college costs.



Over the holidays, the tech school started its trial Promise Scholarship — essentially a tuition-free program available exclusively to NWTC district high school seniors who are graduating in 2017 and planning to attend NWTC.

Crystal Harrison, director of the NWTC Foundation, said the scholarship program is aimed at assisting low-income families as well as those who earn too much — at least on paper — to be completely covered by Pell grants.

The scholarship is designed to fill a financial aid gap of up to \$3,000 for students who qualify for federal aid but would still have out-of-pocket tuition costs after federal student aid, grants and other scholarships.

Qualifying students also must live in the NWTC district, have a high school grade point average of at least 2.0, and enroll immediately after high school in a degree or diploma program that is financial aid eligible.

The scholarship program is supported by the NWTC Foundation through private funds, donations and community partnerships.

"We are committed to covering the need and that means there's no cap (on the number of students who can receive the scholarship)," Harrison said. "Whoever's eligible will get it." She projects that hundreds of students could qualify for the funding.

Those who apply and meet the criteria will receive the scholarship money for up to three years. Harrison said the scholarship program provides higher education opportunities for those who otherwise might not have any and helps keep students on track by encouraging them to immediately continue their education rather than take time off to work and save money.

Students interested in applying for the scholarship must complete the free application for federal student aid online by March 1 and submit the scholarship application by April 1.

Andrew Mertig, a student recruitment specialist at NWTC, said he's seeing more and more prospective students and parents concerned about the high cost of college and the ramifications of student loan debt. He said many students now decide on a school based solely on cost.

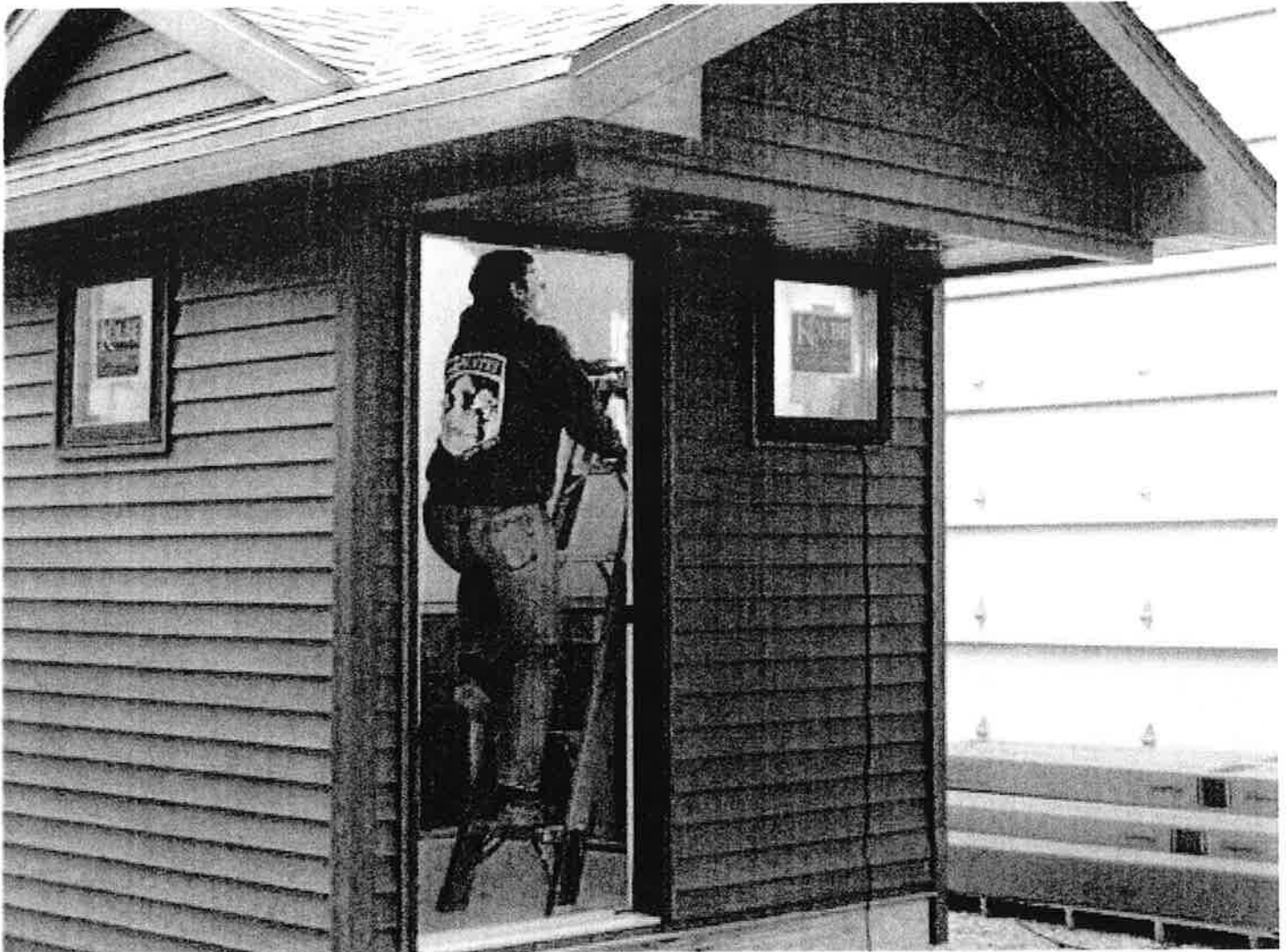
He encourages students to think of education as an investment. In many cases, he said, a two-year tech school is the smartest option.

The average cost of one year's tuition at NWTC is \$5,000. He said the affordable price tag, hands-on learning and a high student success rate already make the transition from high school into college smooth, but the new tuition-free program makes college even more accessible.

Visit the NWTC website for more information on how to apply for the Promise Scholarship.

# Students build elaborate playhouse for charity

Shelby Le Duc, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin  
March 6, 2017



## Buy Photo

(Photo: Sarah Kloeping/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)

GREEN BAY - Building a strong foundation is both a literal and figurative goal for some local carpentry students.

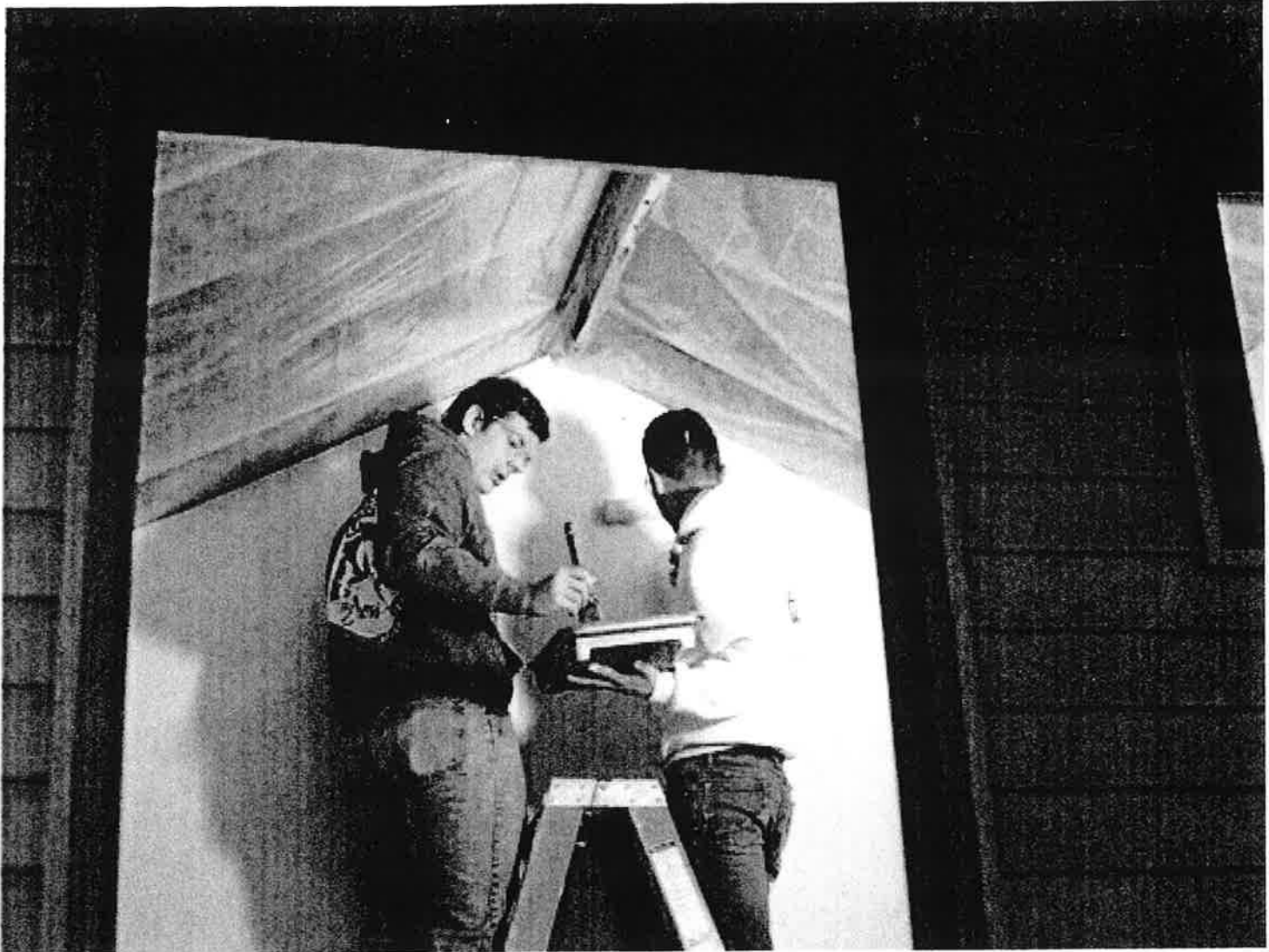
Jeff Schlag's carpentry students at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College have spent the past several months building a playhouse that will be auctioned off next month to benefit Court Appointed Special Advocates of Brown County — a program in which volunteers advocate on behalf of abused and neglected children in the court system.

The Brown County Home Builders Association commissioned Schlag and his 13 students at the beginning of the fall semester to construct the playhouse for the fundraiser. Schlag made the project part of the course's curriculum.

"They (BCHBA) gave me some set plans, and I asked if I could embellish on them a little," Schlag said. "... they said the sky's the limit, and we pretty much did that."

The result is no ordinary playhouse.





#### Buy Photo

NWTC carpentry students Matthew Kaczmarek and Antonio Vargas paint a playhouse that will be sold at auction to benefit CASA of Brown County. (Photo: Sarah Kloepping/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)

The 8-foot-by-8-foot house includes a porch, a loft and windows. When it's finished, it will have a faux fireplace with a mantle, a ceiling fan, LED lighting and a flat-screen television. The structure is fully wired, thanks to help from students in the college's electrical engineering technology program.

"So, it's kind of a like a playhouse/man cave," carpentry student Matthew Kaczmarek said.

By nature, Schlag said, carpentry students are hands-on learners, so projects like the playhouse make sense as far as coursework goes. That the students are able to at the same time give back to the community is a priceless perk, he said.

Student Devin Ziegler said he's always enjoyed community service work and regularly volunteers at his church. This time around, he's especially excited to see how his education and the craft he plans to make a career of will be put to good use and helping those in need.

Schlag's classes are not strangers to helping nonprofit organizations. Last year, his students built cabins for Camp Daniel — a summer camp in Marinette County that provides safe and fun camping experiences for people with disabilities. They're doing the same this year, which means the students are simultaneously working on seven buildings total.

The work schedule has been rigorous. In the end, each student will log about 400 hours of work on the projects. Schlag said the playhouse could raise between \$6,000 and \$8,000.

Kristin Jacobs, executive director of CASA, said the proceeds would be used to help train volunteers and cover other expenses.

"In a live auction you want to have exciting, interesting offerings," she said. "This playhouse, locally crafted by students, is wonderful. I'm sure that our supporters in attendance will be just as impressed with the skills and generosity of these students and the instructor as I am."

The class is on track to finish building the playhouse by mid-April, just in time for the April 28 auction.

Ziegler said he is surprised how quickly he and his classmates were able to do some of the project's more difficult aspects, such as the siding. To him, that's proof that they came together, took the work seriously and applied what they had learned in class.

When the day comes to take the final product from its current home in the Building and Construction Trades facility at NWTC to auction, Schlag and his students are in agreement they'll experience a gratifying feeling like no other.

Each student will sign their name on either the top or bottom of the door frames of the playhouse and the cabins to leave their permanent mark on a project that's become special. Although they'll be covered by a piece of metal, Schlag said, the students will always know their names are there.

A majority of the supplies used in building the playhouse and the cabins were either donated or sold at a discount by businesses like Kolbe Windows and Doors, Wisconsin Building Supply, ABC Supply and H.J. Martin & Son.

CASA's auction is April 28 at the Jet Air hangar at Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport. For information on tickets or sponsor the event, visit [CASA's website](#).

# Fennimore college nabs \$1.2 million grant for technology programs

Telegraph Herald Feb 3, 2017

FENNIMORE, Wis. — Southwest Wisconsin Technical College has been awarded \$1.2 million to help prepare students for jobs in advanced manufacturing, information technology and broadband.

The money will be used over four years to offer certifications in fiber-optic cabling, broadband technologies and advanced networking, according to a press release.

“It’s really exciting,” college President Jason Wood said. “We’ve been working with local industries that need to hire people in those technical fields, and this will be an excellent opportunity to provide the training that is needed to give people jobs.”

School officials were notified they received the grant last year, but they didn’t announce it until Thursday morning.

The funds are a portion of a \$5 million U.S. Department of Labor TechHire Partnership Grant. Other colleges receiving funding are Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College.

The colleges partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, area employers and industry representatives in order to apply for the grant, according to the press release.

The Fennimore school will use the money to “focus on education and training in broadband, automation and technology,” according to the release.

The fields have been identified as priorities for the college’s five-county district.

Southwest Tech will offer new fiber-optic technician and premise-cabling technician certifications. Other certifications and credentials will be expanded into more programs and offered for open enrollment.

The grant is aimed at offering high-tech certifications to people early in their careers. School officials will target people aged 17 to 29 for the expanded offerings, according to Craig Woodhouse, project manager for the grant.

Woodhouse said there is a shortage of workers with these technical skills. He noted the need for telecommunication specialists as rural broadband expands and broadband technology increasingly becomes embedded in automated industrial facilities.

“We’ve got a demographic shift going on and as experienced technicians are leaving the workforce,” Woodhouse said. “The pipeline is just not built up yet to replace those skilled workers. So it’s to upscale the existing workers, but the automation piece will help mitigate that shortage in some situations.”

Wood said the grant also provides for tuition assistance. About half a dozen employers have partnered with the school, allowing it to leverage another \$300,000 in resources.

Students who go through programs connected with the grant will receive preferred-hire status with employer partners, Wood said.

# Southwest Tech students get hands-on experience

TELEGRAPH HERALD

BY ALLIE HINGA allie.hinga@thmedia.com Feb 27, 2017

FENNIMORE, Wis. — Brent Rider worked together with his classmates recently to hang drywall in a duplex rising adjacent to Southwest Wisconsin Technical College.

He and five other students are split into groups of three to work on the walls of what will soon be a mechanical room and living area. When the duplex is finished, it will be able to house eight students.

“It’s pretty cool,” said Rider, 19, of Rewey. “It’s not every day that you get to build a house with people.”

Students in Southwest Tech’s building trades- carpentry program are spending this school year constructing the student-housing duplex, the third such building to be completed by pupils in the program.

The project not only offers participants real-world experience that hopefully will help them land jobs but also helps campus officials meet the demand for student housing.

“I think it’s great to teach the students the hands-on process of construction,” said instructor Jim Broihahn. “A lot of the students need that. It helps the community out, and it helps the students.”

Southwest Tech students in the program started work on the duplex in August and are on track to finish by the end of the school year, Broihahn said. Though some work, such as rough end plumbing and electrical work, the foundation and the floor, are done before class begins, the students complete the rest of the project, including framing; installing windows, insulation, cabinets, doors and siding; and hanging drywall.

“This is our lab, a living lab,” Broihahn said.

Rider said he enjoyed the project so far and the chance to get to know his fellow students. Before starting in the program, the only construction experience he had was helping build a deck. He said he thought the project would help him after he finishes school.

“It’ll really help me get a job because you already basically have a job now building a house,” he said.

Travis Louis, 21, of Blue River, likewise said he thought the experience would help him find employment. He also wants to eventually start his own business in the construction field and figures the skills he is learning now will serve him there.

Louis said he previously tried attending four-year colleges, but they hadn’t been a good fit for him. He said he enjoyed the hands-on nature of his program at Southwest Tech.

“Pretty much everything here, we’re learning on the job site,” he said.

The duplexes — along with one more scheduled to be built next school year — allow more people to live in student housing, according to Holly Clendenen, executive director of Southwest Wisconsin Technical College Foundation Inc. and SWTC Real Estate Foundation Inc. The real estate foundation pays for construction costs of the duplexes and owns the student housing buildings serving Southwest Tech.

“Having housing that’s adjacent to campus allows students to not have to do a 45-minute, 60-minute commute five days a week,” she said.

Southwest Tech has room for 112 people to live in student housing this school year, and the duplexes have been popular choices, particularly among returning students, said Stephanie Brown, resident life and student resources coordinator.

In addition to the benefits the project offers to the college, the program also draws in students who might not want to spend their college experience sitting in a classroom, Brown said.

“I think it’s nice for them to get a sense of pride,” she said. “These will always be here.”

# WCTC awarded \$139,968 grant to create internships

Lake Country  
March 2, 2017

Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) is the recipient of a two-year \$139,968 Career Ready Internship Grant from Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates.

The college expects to use the grant to create 63 paid internships in the 2017-18 school year, according to a news release.

WCTC is one of 16 two-year institutions in Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio and Wisconsin that received a combined \$2.1 million to create more than 1,000 internships through the program. The new internships will be created exclusively for students with financial need.

The college plans to collaborate with businesses and nonprofit organizations to provide the greatest number of current and future students with educational opportunities they might not otherwise have, according to a news release.

“WCTC student interns are in demand because they are highly skilled and ready to work on Day 1,” WCTC President Kaylen Betzig said. “We look forward to expanding our partnerships with area employers and giving even more students the opportunity to gain valuable workplace experience.”

# WCTC receives \$188,000 donation to purchase manufacturing technology

Lake Country 2:56 p.m. CT Feb. 7, 2017

Waukesha County Technical College announced Feb. 3 that it received a donation of \$188,000 to the WCTC Foundation to purchase an automated manufacturing cell for the college's Automation Systems Technology (AST)/Robotics program.

The donation was made by the Lutz Family Foundation. Walter (Terry) Lutz is the past president and owner of Hartford-based Signicast Investment Castings. Lutz has hired many WCTC graduates throughout his career with Signicast. He made the donation to provide current students with better technology, and to support the country's manufacturing sector.

"I believe that for the United States to be great, it's got to be a producer. It's got to make stuff, and manufacturing is a big part of that," Lutz said.

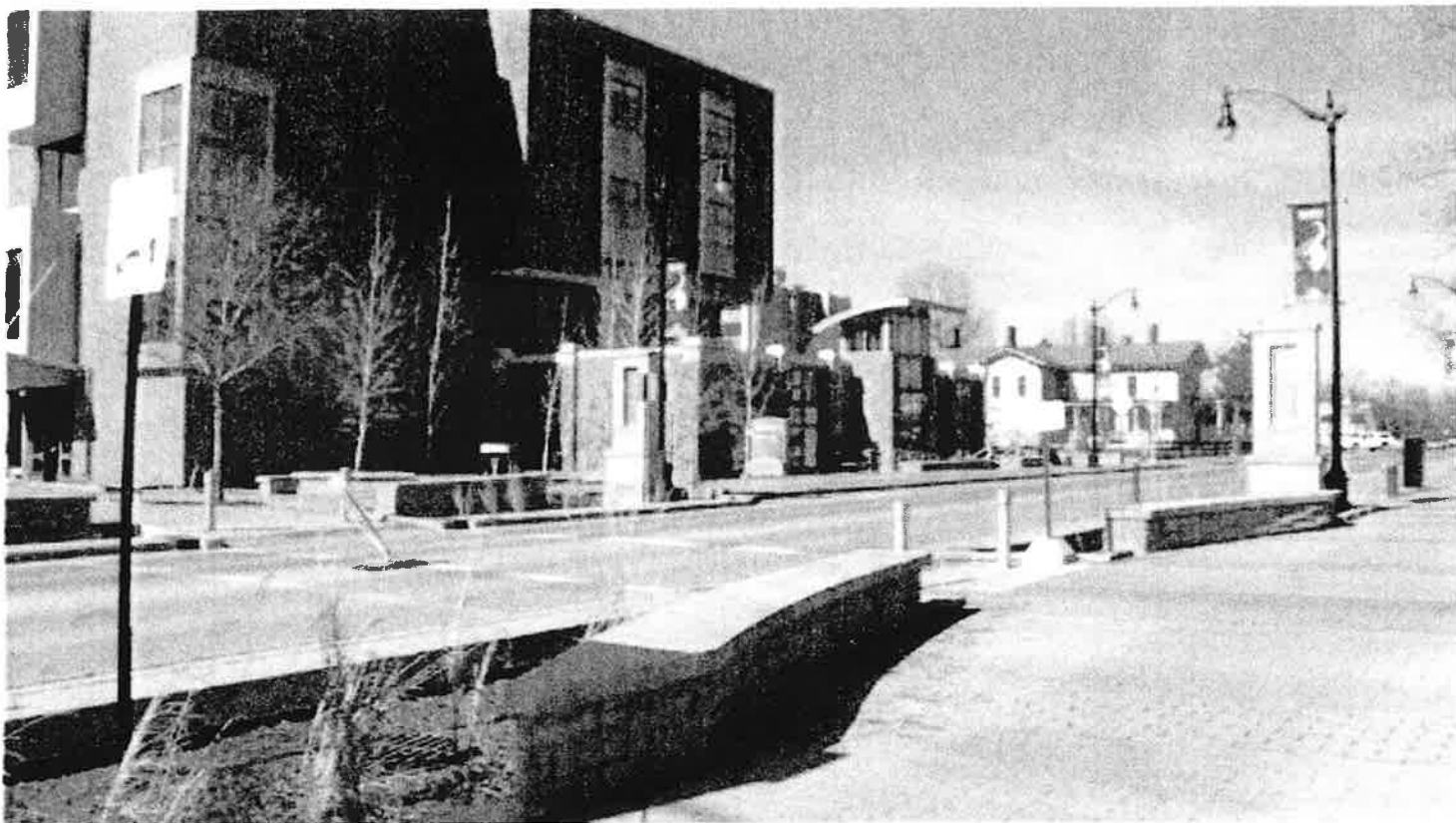
The new FANUC automated manufacturing cell will be located in the college's Integrated Manufacturing Center, which opened last April. Nearly 200 students are enrolled in WCTC's AST/Robotics associate degree program.



## YouthBuild program combines education with construction

2/21/17

WEAU.COM



By Erin O'Brien | Posted: Tue 6:08 PM, Feb 21, 2017

**LA CROSSE, Wis. (WEAU)** -- A new program in La Crosse will combine a high school education with building a house.

The YouthBuild program plans to target at-risk youth in a unique way to help them get back on track, but it will also help the community.

High school dropouts and credit deficient students can get paid to earn a GED through Western Technical College's YouthBuild program.

Participants will spend some time in the classroom to work on the degree, and the rest of the time, they'll work together to build a house in La Crosse.

"We're going to serve somewhere between 60 and 80 young people who may not be connected to the community in as positive a way as we wish," said Chad Dull, Dean of Learner Support and Transition. "And not only are they going to connect with our community and our college and our partner agencies, they're going to build something that when they're done they can point at and say, 'I did that.'"

A case manager will also help the students face challenges along the way.

"Aside from just being credit deficient or a dropout from school, they may have an incarcerated parent," said Greg Stanton, Case Manager for the program. "They may be a migrant youth, they may be in foster care or just about to age out of foster care. So any of those, they may be a part of juvenile justice services here in La Crosse."

Program organizers say the first house will be built on either Farnam or Clinton Street in La Crosse, in neighborhoods that the city has already started to revitalize.

For that reason, Western Technical College says the city will also benefit from the program.

"If you're a participant who's graduated from the program it's our mission to create some steady employment for you, to give you a post secondary education degree, so there's obvious benefits to that," said Quinn Walraven, Resource Development Specialist at Western. "But there's also the neighborhood revitalization portion that we're really contributing to, the service learning components that that students will be engaged in, leadership opportunities."

The program is set to start in March and it's still accepting applicants through Western's website.

# Kind hosts Western Technical College officials in Washington

## Congressman lays out Higher Education Action Plan

Posted: Feb 15, 2017 09:42 PM CST Updated: Feb 15, 2017 09:42 PM CST

WKBT NEWS 8000

LA CROSSE, Wis. (WKBT) - Representatives from an area college spent Wednesday in the nation's capital, learning more about a plan to make higher education more affordable.

Wisconsin Representative Ron Kind's Higher Education Action Plan would work to make more internships and apprenticeships available for high school students, make sure higher education is affordable for everyone, and work with technical colleges to make sure they match student skills with jobs that are available.

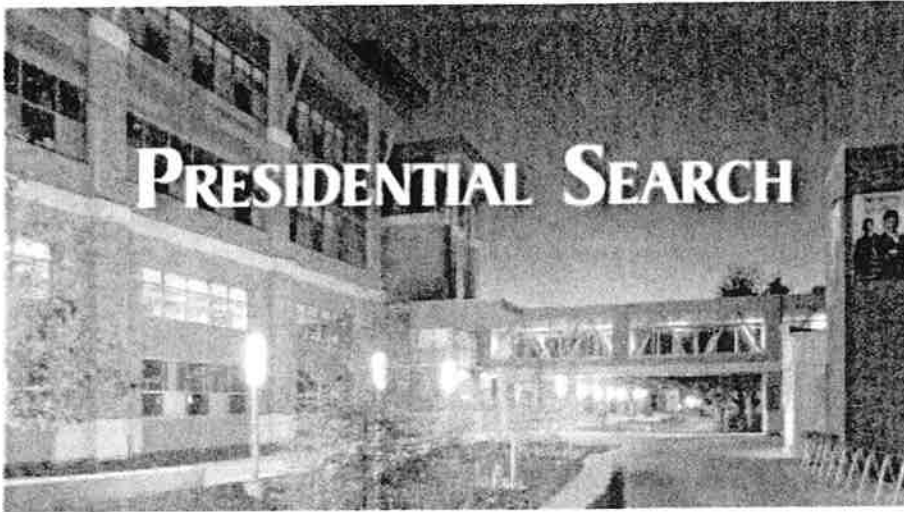
Kind says technical colleges can play a big role in growing the economy and have the opportunity to turn peoples' lives around.

"We just have to keep thinking creatively to make sure our students are developing the skills and receiving the education they need to be full participants of the global economy," said Rep. Kind.

The congressman says he will work to implement many of the points of his plan into the Higher Education Act, which Congress is expected to re-authorize later this year.

## Western Announces Three Finalists in Presidential Search

*western.edu*



LA CROSSE, Wis., March 10, 2017 – The search for the next president of Western Technical College is down to three finalists.

The Presidential Search Advisory Committee – made up of District Board members, staff, faculty, and members of the community – reviewed 35 applicants, conducted first-round interviews, and ultimately selected three to come on campus during the next two weeks.

The finalists are Rick Pearce, vice president for Learning and Student Success at Heartland Community College in Normal, Ill.; Roger Stanford, vice president of Academic Affairs at Western Technical College; and Rebekah Woods, provost of Jackson College in Jackson, Mich.

Their visits will include interviews with the search committee; forums with faculty and staff; and tours of the La Crosse campus and two regional locations. The committee will consider input from the forums and hopes to make a recommendation to the full Western District Board in April. The Board will make the final decision.

Western District Board Chair and chair of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee, Dennis Treu, said he was pleased with the quality of the candidates.

“After an extensive national search, we’re extremely impressed with the applicants,” said Treu. “Western has a great reputation, and we are fortunate to have high-caliber, experienced leaders who are interested in the important role of advancing our mission.”

The Presidential Search Committee began its work in November, following the announcement by Western President Lee Rasch that he would retire on June 30, 2017 after 28 years in the role.

# Polaris donates two new engines to WITC

By [New Richmond News](#) on Jan 10, 2017 at 5:00 a.m.

WITC-New Richmond's Power Sports program recently received two brand new Indian Scout motorcycle engines to use as teaching tools from Polaris in Osceola. According to WITC Instructor Dave Brown, the engines offer an excellent opportunity to show others what they'll learn in his program. It also aids in classroom demonstrations and discussions.

"I plan to partially disassemble one of the engines allowing learners to see the internal parts and how they work. These engines, along with other equipment, will be great for class use here at WITC, as well as demonstrating them to area high schools in their mechanics classes," said Dave Brown, program instructor. "That way they can see exactly what it is they'll learn in the program."

"The engines were left over from our cold test setup," says Eric Christensen, Polaris, who was key in seeing that WITC received the Indian engines. "They were used to do correlation between the cold test and hot Dyno testing, so they only have about one hour of run time on them."

Brown says, "The students are excited to get to the mechanics of these engines. We're grateful to Polaris for donating these motorcycle engines, as we plan to use them for a lot of hands-on learning."

Outdoor Power Products Technician (Power Sports for short) is a one academic year, financial aid-eligible program, available only at the New Richmond WITC campus. The technical diploma prepares students to pursue careers as a motorcycle, marine and outdoor power products technician, small engine business owner, industrial equipment technician, parts person and many other related pursuits. They learn to troubleshoot and repair all types of engines, from ATVs to motorcycles to outboard motors.

# High School Students Get First-Hand Look at Medical Jobs

March 14, 2017 by [William Seay](http://www.fox21online.com/author/williamseay/) (<http://www.fox21online.com/author/williamseay/>)

SUPERIOR, Wis. —

A technical college in Superior is hoping to inspire high school students to get a job in the medical field.

High school students from all around northern Wisconsin visit the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Superior to get a crash course in what it takes to work a job in the medical field.

Medical Discovery Day is an opportunity for these students to meet and talk to current students and instructors about medical jobs like being a nurse, an EMT, a medical assistant, and more.

The insight they're gaining comes from a lot of hands-on demonstrations about what they'd learn here at WITC.

Those here say getting to try things first hand and talking directly to instructors and current students can leave a lasting impression.

"We're really hands on," said Career Specialist Kayti Stolp. "So students are going to come here and they're actually going to get to do what it is they'd be doing."

Jordan Olsen, a junior at Northwestern High School in Maple, WI, says he is interested in going into neuroscience, specifically to study and treat mental health.

"There's been a lot of mental illness within my family," Olsen said. "I want to work toward curing that so I can contribute to society."

"[These students get to come] in and [are] really getting a feel for it," Stolp said. "Doing these hands-on activities with our students, with our staff, really gives them a good idea when they're starting to make those decisions about post-secondary."

Medical Discovery Day is made possible through a grant with Northwestern Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program (CEP).

"We're excited," Olsen said. "A lot of us want to go into the medical field. We kind of decided that already. We're very interested and eager to learn."

# WITC High School Career Day offers hands-on experiences

SARA M. CHASE schase@ashlanddailypress.net Feb 7, 2017



Sara M. Chase/Staff Photo

Marine Repair Technician Student Richard Nefis talks to a group of area students during the annual Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College's High School Career Day.

A visit to the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Ashland campus allowed area students to take a look at what their future could hold during WITC's annual High School Career day.

A record-setting 403 students from 12 local high schools were scheduled to attend. However, due to a bout of winter weather – which kept Mercer away – attendance numbers were instead at 355 students.

Attending schools included Ashland, Bayfield, Drummond, Mellen, South Shore, Washburn, Butternut, Chequamegon, Hurley and Luther L. Wright (Ironwood).

WITC Career Specialist Dan Miller explained that each student was able to choose to participate in two 40-minute, hands-on career sessions of his or her choice.

"It's just a great way for them to experience what we have going on here at the college," Miller said.

Career sessions included Accounting, Business Management & Financial Services; Administrative Professional, Office Support Specialist, Medical Administrative Professional & Health Office Professional; Broadband Technologies; Criminal Justice Studies; Early Childhood Education; Emergency Medical Technician & Fire Training; Human Resource Management & Management and Leadership; Human Services Associate & Gerontology-Aging Services Professional; IT-Network Specialist & IT Systems Administration Specialist; Machine Tool Operation; Marine Repair Technician; Medical Assistant; Nursing; Nursing Assistant; and Occupational Therapy Assistant and Welding.

Based on the feedback they got, Miller said the students really enjoy the hands on activities.

"That's good to hear nowadays, especially with the skills gap," Miller said.

WITC-Ashland Marketing and Public Relations Associate Melissa Kramolis highlighted a couple of the programs featured in the career sessions.

"One of the program sessions being offered this year at career day is Human Services Associate and that is a new program for this fall on the Ashland Campus," Kramolis said.

The Marine Repair Technician program was another standout.

"It's unique in Wisconsin and one of only a few programs of its kind in the country," said Kramolis.

"It's a three-semester program," said WITC Marine Repair Technician Instructor Tim Edwards.

Edwards said they have almost 100 percent job placement for their Marine Repair Technician graduates.

"We probably have like six dealers calling us for every graduate we have and usually they're all employed before they leave the program," Edwards said, noting that the average starting pay is about \$15 an hour but it can be significantly more in other areas of the country. "It's a great program. I mean if it would have been here when I graduated high school, it would have saved me years of having to do this on my own to go through all the training I had to go through."

"This is one of the favorite career day activities, they get to go and run a big outboard motors and do things that normally they'd never get to do otherwise."

WITC Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director Mari Jo Ulrich also had some fun hands-on activities for students interested in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.

"I tried to identify different areas that OT practitioners work," Ulrich said, referencing to a station where she had students try and complete a maze by looking at it through a mirror. "This one was trying to simulate what it would be like to have a stroke. It flips kind of the persons visual field, so it gives them the experience of what it might be like if they had had a stroke and were having some difficulties with performing things."

Ulrich explained that her program is a profession that helps people with their daily occupations to live their fullest life.

"We take a look at the whole person so it's a holistic approach of their physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing so it's neat to be able to work with a variety of ages, settings and diagnoses," she said.

Ulrich acknowledged that it can be a hard profession to understand.

"Our profession is 100 years old this year," she said. "When people nowadays hear occupation, they think of jobs, but 100 years ago occupation meant everything people did everyday, so the things you did from the time you got up to the time you went to bed."

According to Ulrich, it's been a flip in how we view that term now.

"It's been a big education piece to help people understand what occupational therapy really means," she said.

WITC Instructors Sharon Duthie and Cathy Pocernich presented students with information regarding the Administrative Professional, Office Support Specialist, Medical Administrative Professional and Health Office Professional programs. Duthie said the programs are very technology based.

"They learn the latest technology when they're here and it teaches them how to be technology savvy and it also teaches them how to be a team player in the workforce," she said. "I often hear from employers ... 'We hire students on their technology skills and we fire them on their personality skills.'"

It's certainly true, Duthie said, noting that things are changing all the time and they are constantly changing with them while also teaching their students how to be professional in the workplace.

"It's all inclusive so someone could walk into the office feeling confident that they've got all those skills to be a good employee," said Duthie, adding that the college also offers potential future students the opportunity to come and shadow for a day to come and experience the courses hands on.

WITC Instructor Tina Hagstrom said that the high school career day is also a great experience for her nursing students.

"It really gives them a chance to showcase off the skills they've already learned and teach back, and that's really the best way to demonstrate their learning," Hagstrom said. "We really love career day. It's a great time to get everyone engaged and teaching about the profession of nursing. I look forward to it every year, that's for sure."

"I feel very fortunate to teach in our ADN (Associate Degree Nursing) program. We have turned out very strong competent nurses and we continue to do so and our board passing rates. Career Day is a great way to get high school students engaged and look at careers that can benefit not only them but their communities as well."

Students interested in Machine Tool Operation walked away with bronze or copper key chains they engraved with their phone numbers. Getting to take home a memento from their visit makes it worth their while, WITC Machine Tool Operation Instructor Carl Anderson said.

“They can get a feel for what they can expect to achieve or accomplish within a short period of time,” he said pointing out that it’s only a one-year course. “We prepare students to go into industry and to make the parts to make the machines to make pretty much everything that we’re accustomed to.

“The exposure that they get when they start machining, they can go into engineering after that, they can go into programming, so there are many different avenues that one can get out of the nine-month foundational course.”

Another perk of career day, Anderson said, is that it gives students the opportunity to see the machines used in the program

“It’s not the dangerous, dirty trade that it was 50 years ago,” he said. “It’s evolved just like a lot of different things.”