

Local companies host Manufacturing Day students

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(CLARE) - Sixty-three local high school students got a glimpse at their potential future careers Friday, and two local manufacturers got a glimpse of their potential future work force.

The students, from Gratiot-Isabella’s Career and Technical Education program, took part in Manufacturing Day, touring two local companies and learning all about the ins and outs of local manufacturing. The students, who study in GICTE’s Machine Trades and Mechatronics classes, came away with a new appreciation of the potential careers available in the field.

Local Manufacturing Day sites were Aircraft Precision Products and Anchor Danly; both are located in the Ithaca Industrial Park.

“Our goal was to show these students that Aircraft and other local manufacturing companies offer viable careers in a variety of fields,” said APP President Bill Henderson. “Manufacturing jobs consist of not just machining or welding, but also can include engineering, maintenance, information technology, quality and finance.”

“I saw a lot of what I was hoping to see,” said Mt. Pleasant High School Junior Dallas McDonald, who can only be described as a machining enthusiast. “What I liked the most about it was seeing how many different parts they can make, and all the different machines they use to make them. I want to go into any type of job where I’m using machines to make parts, and this interested me a lot.”

Doug Bush, GIRESD Associate Superintendent for Career and Technical Education, says the growing need for skilled trades workers continues to drive the need for student exposure to industry.

“There is a concern about the supply and pipeline of skilled trades employees to meet the demand they are beginning to have – and it’s expected to get worse over the next five to ten years,” Bush said. “This provides the students a real-world context for their skilled trades curriculum. It’s important that students are able to see the opportunities that these business have for employees – particularly opportunities for advancement and specialization.”



Aircraft Precision President Bill Henderson gives CTE Machine Trades students an inside look at the company.



Anchor Danly Plant Manager Rich Overla shows students around the company's facilities.

Henderson said events like Manufacturing Day provide benefits for all involved.

“Outreach to education, particularly technical education, is always in the best interest of employers,” he said. “These students represent the workforce of the next generation, and it is to our advantage to show them what to expect in the workplace.”

Bush said GIRESD is appreciative for the support the program receives in the community.

“Aircraft Precision Products has been a tremendous supporter of CTE education and developing interest in the skill trades,” Bush said. “Anchor Danly has also been very open to hosting our student groups. Both companies participate in our annual Open House and Career Expo, and we are fortunate to have such supportive businesses in our community.”