

Introduction to Manufacturing Class: A win for students, business, post-secondary and community

What began as an idea to teach students and their parents about the manufacturing industry in the Hanover area almost 10 years ago has evolved into a well-established course with students and businesses waiting to be a part of it. The Introduction to Manufacturing class is offered in four school districts, South Western, Hanover Public, Conewago Valley and Spring Grove; and is a collaboration among the school districts, the representatives of manufacturing industries in the community, the Hanover Chamber of Commerce and Harrisburg Area Community College. Participating companies for the 2012-13 school year include: UTZ Quality Foods, Ring Container, Aquaphoenix Scientific Inc., Sheppard Company Inc., Leonhardt Manufacturing, Ox Paper Tube & Core Inc., Elsner Engineering Works Inc., Snyder's-Lance Inc., SKF USA Inc., and McClarin Plastics. The interest and excitement continues to grow.

Designed for high school seniors, the course covers the various aspects of today's manufacturing environment. The goal of the course is to have students learn that manufacturing industries are not dirty, sweaty environments, but highly productive inviting environments in which there are a variety of opportunities. Participating manufacturers provide an onsite meeting location, a tour of the facility and speakers to discuss their jobs. Topics covered include the role of management, sales, operations, finance, the impact of the production worker on the success of the company and significance of the continuous improvement of workers. Necessary skills such as blueprint reading, math measurement and communications are presented. This course provides students with an excel-

lent opportunity to explore a rewarding career in manufacturing. The course is taught by an instructor from Harrisburg Area Community College, Gettysburg campus, and if the student pays the required fee they can even receive college credit for successful completion.

"The students' evaluations of this program are always positive," said Lisa Dennis, South Western High School career counselor. "This program has been a definite asset in helping to meet our goals of preparing students for college and careers."

Tips for implementation

- **Determine the career needs in the community** through the local Chamber of Commerce. Let the Chamber representatives know this opportunity is a win-win situation. It is good for the students, it is good for the community and the businesses.

- **Set up a committee of area school districts** to work together on the project. Be prepared to spend significant time setting this up. Cooperation of many people is essential, but the results are worth it. It is inexpensive and definitely helps high school seniors make the transition from school to the workplace or college.

- **Make contact with a local community college.** The college can provide the instructor and the districts then do not have to worry about certification requirements. It is a win for the college, as the students get a taste of what college is like without leaving home. **b**



Students learn about the various aspects of the manufacturing industry.

For more information, contact Lisa Dennis, career counselor, South Western High School, at (717) 632-2500, ext. 21913, or email lisa_dennis@swsd.k12.pa.us.