



Terri's Tidbits: Fort Vancouver High School 6S

While brainstorming with Tracey Scharmann (Vancouver School District) and Paul Manosky (Welding Teacher) last October, we discussed what we could do this year for the Fort Vancouver High School welding class in the “flipped internship” program. One suggestion was to solicit the help of the NWHPEC (NorthWest High Performance Enterprise Consortium) to help teach 6S to all the welding students. “6S” is a foundational Lean Principle (Sort, Set, Shine, Standardize, Sustain, and Safety) where the students would learn how to organize a work space for efficiency and effectiveness by identifying and storing the items used, maintaining the area and items, and sustaining the new order.

We contacted Jennifer Ayers (Executive Director of NWHPEC) regarding our opportunity she jumped in whole-heartedly. We felt that Lean skills could provide a valuable skill set to have in the work force and the applied knowledge could give these students a boost in the job market. Our team created a game plan and started enlisting volunteers from NWHPEC with a good turnout. Silicon Forest Electronics had quite a few people volunteer from which we elected to take on five volunteers who have had previous 6S training.

On February 4th, 6S training began in all four welding classes. Two of the classes were beginner classes were shown the value of Lean and 6S with lots of hands-on training. The advanced classes received Lean training as well, and were fundamental in the 6S project in the welding shop - this was their project. During the report-out, the students that worked on each section of the shop explained to visitors what their space looked like “before and after”. You could see and hear the pride of making a difference not only for their class but for classes for years to come! They pointed out the labels they placed, defined what goes there, the extra space they now had to work, and the ease of finding material.

It was great for students to hear from people within industry how important this simple task is. It was great for the school to show the community, and it was great for the community to have the next generation of employees - already familiar with Lean...!

This collaborative project was a success and everyone came away with something positive. Special thanks to the Vancouver School District, NWHPEC and our Silicon Forest Electronics volunteers (Crystal Cuellar, Terri Polette, Steve Downing, Calvin Rabe & Frank Nichols) who participated on the project!

Contributed by:

Terri Polette

Quality & Training Manager
Silicon Forest Electronics
terri@si-forest.com