



For Immediate Release
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MANUFACTURING PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL PREPARES WARE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Ware, MA August 20, 2021 – The Manufacturing Partnership Council is a local effort which works diligently to make students aware of the numerous local manufacturing jobs and their career growth opportunities, familiarize students with all the aspects of manufacturing in the region, and provide hands-on skill development during their high school years. Established in 2018, this collaboration includes Ware Public Schools, several local manufacturers, ModVic, Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board, River East School-to-Career, Inc., Collaborative for Education Services, MASS MEP, and Holyoke Community College.

At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, Ware High School established classes in Principles of Engineering and CAD for grades 9-12. This included project work, training in skills critical to manufacturers (safety, problem-solving, shop math, measurement, blueprint reading, and workforce readiness). A Steampunk project with ModVic and 6th graders started in the second semester.

Ware Superintendent Dr. Marlene DiLeo stated, “This year Ware High School was awarded a coveted designation as an Innovation Pathway High School with a designation in Advanced Manufacturing by the state. Additionally, Ware High School has been awarded a Project Lead the Way Grant and Pathway in Engineering. The Junior High School, the Middle School, and SMK Elementary have all been awarded Project Lead the Way Grants and Pathways in STEM and Computer Science. Our program offers training during the school day in problem-solving, workplace organization, drafting, blueprint reading, computer programming, Fundamentals of Lean Manufacturing, Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Makerspace training on 3D printers, CNC machines, hand and power tools, and an OSHA Safety Course leading to OSHA Certification, (a MACWIC Level 1 module). Using grant funding, we have built a Makerspace, Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering Lab and a CAD lab.”

“The skills that our students develop in the program could enable them to graduate with an OSHA-10 and MACWIC Level 1 Certification that can be applied to real-life, in-demand career opportunities in

advanced manufacturing,” DiLeo added. Makerspace is a specified area where skills are developed through hands-on activities and training in physical learning spaces.

David Kirk, retired manufacturing executive and co-founder of the Manufacturing Partnership Council, shared, “There are 120 small- to medium-size manufacturers within 25 miles of Ware, but since their products are not sold directly to the consumer, the companies and the career opportunities are largely unknown in the community. These companies all have high-tech operations producing products that impact our lives every day. These companies are growing, and their number one challenge is finding skilled people,”

“Local manufacturers train people on their specific equipment and processes but look for applicants with some safety training, problem-solving, teamwork, shop math, measurement, blueprint reading, and workplace readiness. The manufacturers know the students who study and participate in the Ware school programs, such as Work-Based Learning, and the Makerspace programs could become employees who possess the highly sought-after skills they need for their businesses,” Kirk added.

Despite interruptions brought on by the pandemic, the Ware program has expanded to include Makerspace and related activities for grades 4-12, allowing students to become aware of products and be more involved with projects related to those products manufactured by Council members. This fall it is expected students will have an opportunity for Work-Based Learning with the manufacturers, and the project-based program with ModVic will continue to take place with 6th-grade students.

Participating in the council, local manufacturers are aware of the benefits of this collaboration and its potential.

Stacy Gilmour, VP HR & Corporate Services at Quabbin Wire & Cable Co., Inc remarked, “Employers in our region value training resources provided by local schools and organizations that are aimed at preparing students for successful careers in the manufacturing sector.”

Aimee Correa, HR Business Partner, Human Resources at Vibram Corporation stated,

“We encourage all students to participate in training that prepares them to succeed in the dynamic and rewarding manufacturing industry.”

For more information on the Manufacturing Partnership Council, please contact Amy Scribner at 413.283-5051 or ascribner@rivereast-stc.org.

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