



DICKTEN MASCH PLASTICS

ADVANCING TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

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Dickten Masch Plastics Hosts Teacher Internship with Ankeny Workforce Partnership

Teachers visit manufacturing facility, experience career benefits manufacturing offers students.

ANKENY, Iowa (January 17, 2011) – Dickten Masch Plastics (DMP), recently hosted a teacher internship at its Ankeny facility. The two-day internship was part of the Ankeny Workforce Partnership, a three-week program designed to expose local teachers to a number of career opportunities in Ankeny for their students. DMP is a custom thermoplastics and thermoset molder based in Wisconsin and Iowa.

The time spent at Dickten Masch offered teachers a realistic look into the manufacturing industry, demonstrated the benefits that type of career could offer their students and helped them understand the required skill sets necessary for their students to succeed in that occupation.

“The intent of the program is to get teachers into different environments, in this case, a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant,” said Steve Dyer, President and CEO. “Our goal was to show teachers that factories aren’t the mundane places they might imagine, but instead, bright, automated hubs of innovation and technology.”

The Workforce Partnership is designed to provide teachers with insights that can help them enhance their teaching methods and curriculum to better prepare the students who will be Ankeny’s future workforce. Teachers from Ankeny High School and both middle schools were offered the three-week internship opportunity.

“The Workforce Partnership offers both teachers and students a unique opportunity to understand what’s expected of students to succeed in today’s workplace,” said Ankeny Economic Development Director Tim Moerman. “Businesses are able to engage teachers and students in learning about the many career options there are at businesses in Ankeny. Having an ongoing dialogue among business, teachers and students doesn’t happen in many other settings.”

Other businesses hosting the teachers included Snyder & Associates Engineers & Planners, LLC, John Deere Des Moines Works and Siemens Building Technologies. At each location, the teachers spent time in the office learning about the administration of the business and also experienced work in the field and on the factory floor. The five teachers who participated completed their experience by writing an action plan on how they will incorporate what they learned into classroom curriculum.

The internship was just one component of DMP’s larger effort to help fill the coming talent gap left by retirements. The company focuses many of its resources toward promoting the technical education of the next generation in association with regional schools and nationwide organizations.

Manufacturers are leading the American economy forward. To continue this momentum, Collaboration among manufacturers and educational institutions is essential to the industry's future.

"If more manufacturers band together like this to support and promote technical education, we can change the image of manufacturing careers and, while doing so, continue to emphasize the importance of the science and math skills pertinent to the industry," said Dyer.

The Ankeny Workforce Partnership is an outgrowth of the city economic development department's ongoing conversations with business and industry and their feedback about skills needed to prepare students to enter the workplace. Partners include the City of Ankeny, Ankeny Community Schools, Ankeny EDC, local businesses, DMACC and Heartland AEA. MidAmerican Energy provided funding support.

Steve Dyer also serves as the chairperson of the Waukesha Manufacturing Alliance located in Wisconsin. The organization supports an alliance between education and manufacturing. To accomplish this, DMP and the Alliance work closely with Waukesha County Technical College, the University of Wisconsin system and others school systems. Their collaborative efforts include the following:

- Curriculum development based around current needs and trends.
- Plant tours to demonstrate the technically advanced environments of today's manufacturing facilities.
- Internship/apprentice programs to connect students with indispensable plant floor experience.
- Tool and machinery donations to help ensure sure students are learning on real-world equipment.

About Dickten Masch Plastics: *Dickten Masch Plastics is a custom thermoplastics and thermoset molder with technical expertise and advanced processing capabilities that produce unique advantages for customers in a range of industries. The company's commitment is to help customers throughout the value stream by providing engineering and design support, world-class materials analysis, high-quality tooling, rapid prototyping, experienced project management and an array of value-added secondary operations. As part of the Patmian Group of companies, Dickten Masch Plastics has access to the resources it needs to grow in a way that is most advantageous to customers. To learn more, visit Dickten Masch online at <http://www.dicktenplastics.com/>.*

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