

ACC hosts manufacturing boot camp

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ALPENA - Twelve unemployed/underemployed adults participated in an advanced manufacturing boot camp last week at Alpena Community College through a United States Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant to create and enhance innovative programs. Advanced manufacturing is one of the four tracks identified.

Recruitment was completed through Michigan Works and Michigan Rehabilitation Services referrals, as well as advertisement for the boot camp.

Those who were able to participate were immersed in a week of intense, hands-on experience in manufacturing. The participants designed using computer-aided design software, welded with newly purchased welders through the grant, and completed the manufacture of an aluminum clock using CNC technology.

"This was a very robust engagement with some people in our community that don't always receive this level of service," grant Director Dawn Stone said. "We were able to show a group of people who have to retrain or get trained to go into manufacturing what it takes to go into the program and what they are like. These folks are often overlooked and aren't meeting the specific requirements. They need to know what's out there and connect with the machines and the people."

Each of the participants was exposed to guest speakers and plant tours, which provided insight into local manufacturing companies including Cadillac Products, Conveyor Systems, Inc., Yukon Manufacturing Corp., NOVA-Tron Manufacturing Corp., Coding Concepts, Inc., Wilco Manufacturing, Inc., and Magnaloy Coupling Company. ESI delivered a presentation to discuss job readiness techniques, writing resumes and cover letters, job applications, preparing for an interview, and interview techniques and common questions.

Participants had the opportunity to interview with local manufacturers' human resource professionals, including Cadillac Products, ESI and Star Staffing.

"It was a lot of fun," ACC CAD/CAM and CNC instructor Bob Tosch said. "A lot of the participants didn't realize what was out there and what we had available for training at the college. They learned a lot about manufacturing and financial aid for training, and were excited about the programs."

Admissions at Alpena Community College and financial aid staff also talked with the group about the process involved in becoming an ACC student.

"The manufacturing boot camp was a huge success," ACC learning technology technician Sarah Burt said. "Participants took with them a new understanding of advanced manufacturing and the opportunities available in the field around the area."

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