

Crawford Tech students tour firm, learn about opportunities

MEADVILLE TRIBUNE

Crawford Tech's precision machining and drafting and design program students recently toured local tooling and machining firms to learn firsthand the opportunities in local precision manufacturing.

The tours are a followup to similar ones held in the spring semester of 2022 organized by Eileen Mullen, program coordinator of Crawford County K-12 Career Education Alliance and Bonnie Stein and Tina Craft, cooperative education coordinators at Crawford Tech.

The Northwestern Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association got involved with this fall's student tours — arranging additional tour sites and sponsoring lunch for the students.

It has been assumed students enrolled at Crawford Tech already were sold on the career they were learning about, but that wasn't so, according to Tami Adams, executive director of the local NTMA chapter.

"I have realized that is often not the case and most drafting and design students were going on to different career paths after graduating," Adams said.

"We want to expose drafting and precision machining students to the various career opportunities available to them in this area," Adams said. "Local tooling and machining businesses continually are searching for qualified applicants to fill open job positions, so it is key to make connections with Tech students."

There were 46 students who did tours recently at Sippy Historic Machine Shop and Highpoint Tool and Machine, Greenleaf Corporation and C&J Industries.

Last spring, students toured Pennco Tool and Die, Area Tool & Manufacturing Inc., Acutec Precision Aerospace



Contributed photo

Sean Kineston of Highpoint Tool and Machine of Saegertown talks about precision machining with Crawford Tech students touring the company.

Inc. and Stam Tool and Manufacturing.

"The plan is to offer at least three tours each fall and spring to students in their 10th through 12th grade years at Tech so they have the opportunity to visit 18 sites by the time they graduate, Stein said. "We think it is extremely important to the success of our programs to expose our students to local job opportunities."

Crawford Tech offers

17 total career and technical education programs for high school students residing in western Crawford County.

Experiential learning opportunities at Crawford Tech give students a head-start on applying their knowledge to real-world situations and can prepare students for a college or university experience, Stein said.

Currently more than 80 Crawford Tech students are

enrolled in cooperative education work placements. Of the spring 2023 graduates, 78 percent of the students on co-op transitioned into full time employment upon graduation, Stein said.

Applications for Crawford Tech's 2024-2025 school year are currently open for ninth grade students. Application may be made online at crawfordctc.org or through the student's high school guidance office.