



At left, Chad Betts, vice president of engineering, is pictured with a group of Warren County School District students touring Betts Industries for a look at local career opportunities as part of Manufacturing Day. This is a new event sponsored by the School to Work Partnership of the Warren Forest Higher Education Council.

Chad Betts of Betts Industries, at right, discusses with a group of WCSD students the building and repairing of metal stamping dies by



Tool and Die Machinists. The dies are used to process components in the company's metal stamping press department.

Manufacturing Day Connects Students with Employers

Twenty three students from the Warren County School District invested a day in their future during Manufacturing Day, a new event sponsored by the School to Work Partnership of the Warren Forest Higher Education Council, and four local manufacturing companies.

Superior Tire and Rubber Company, Betts Industries, Ellwood National Forge, and Whirley Drink Works welcomed the students and offered them a close look at the employment opportunities available in and around Warren. "Manufacturing is enjoying resurgence locally," noted Rod Henry of Betts Industries. "We want our young people to know there are opportunities to have a good job, a career right here in Warren."

The group started the day at Superior Tire and Rubber, where each student received a packet that included a job application and a copy of the company's pre-employment test. "We wanted to provide these young people with important information about our company and the opportunities we offer," commented Anne Nelson, Human Resources Manager. "Programs such as our tuition reimbursement plan offer employees a way to gain new skills while employed, and prepare themselves for the next steps in their careers."

Facility tours were offered at each location and flexibility made the experience more meaningful for students with special interests. According to John Bonavita, School Counselor for the Warren County Career Center, "We had three students with an interest in computers on the tour, and several of the companies were able to provide interaction with their information technology departments. It was a bonus for those students. We really appreciated the extra effort all the companies put forth."

The range of job opportunities students explored included, Machine Technology, Welding, Engineering, and Information Technology, to name just a few. Starting wages and pay scales were presented along with benefit information. "After the students realized that it was OK to ask about these things, they opened up and started asking the important questions that would help them decide where they might want to work," Bonavita noted. "Each student seemed to connect with one company or another. By the end of the day, I could see the wheels turning and they really were thinking seriously about where they would like to be after graduation."

Following the tour at Ellwood National Forge, students had lunch during a question and answer session with tour guides and Terryjane Chiaravalloti, Manager, Human Resources. "It's great to meet with students who are thinking seriously about their future," she commented. "It is an advantage for them and for us to find people from the area who want to come to work here."

Beth Pellegrino, H.R. Project Coordinator at Whirley Drinkworks, offered a different perspective. "We are looking for students who are interested in going to work for us right now, in addition to those who are looking for a career after graduation."

There is great variety among the products, processes and environments in manufacturing among these four companies. "What a great experience for students preparing to enter the job market in a few months," noted John Lasher, School to Work Coordinator who helped to organize the event. "Having our business partners open their doors and help students see the opportunities should pay a big dividend for the companies and the young people. With the success of this event, we will try to expand to other areas such as health care and the oil and gas industry."

More information about the Warren County Career Center can be found on the Warren County School District Website, <http://wcsdpa.org>. For more information about the Warren Forest Higher Education Council, the School to Work Partnership, or to participate in a career education event, go to www.hi-ed.org.