

SHOP TALK

FEBRUARY 2017

PMI & EMPLOYMENT THROUGH EDUCATION: Adding Tools to the Toolbox

By Sara Gehr and Dr. Armendia Dixon



The new students starting October 2016 in the CNC Machinist, Electric Arc Welding, and Electro-Mechanical Technology programs offered at PMI were the first to be part of an inaugural class called Employment Through Education (ETE).

Dr. Armendia Dixon, Executive Director of the Crawford County READ program, indicated that Patrick Faller, Crawford County Roundtable Chairman and the roundtable research committee designed the curriculum based on a 2014 survey they conducted with 24 leading employers in the county. These employers believed the greater barrier to employment was hiring workers who could not maintain employment because they were frequently absent, didn't take the job seriously, couldn't get along with others, couldn't stay drug free, couldn't leave family drama outside the workplace, etc.

Ed Petrunak, Director of PMI, said, "the number one reason why people get fired is a lack of soft skills." Dennis Wilke, PMI Chairman, said at graduation, "I talk to about 300 employers each year. More than half of what they are looking for are soft skills." PMI has recognized that there is an overall problem with the lack of soft skills in employee candidates. The need for soft skills has been brought up in numerous PMI Advisory Committee Meetings. So when PMI was approached last summer by the Crawford County Roundtable to discuss a possible partnership with PMI and integrating the ETE class into the programs' existing curriculum---it just made sense.

Dr. Armendia Dixon played a crucial role in facilitating the partnership and the curriculum with PMI. She said "A place to pilot the Employment through Education curriculum began to become a reality when Mr. Petrunak, Sara Gehr, Student Services Coordinator at PMI, Patrick Faller and the Crawford County Roundtable Research Action Team worked together to integrate it into the academics. PMI, like so many state institutions, school districts and agencies have been in conversation as to how to embed 21st century workplace skills in course requirements. These workplace skills are Ways of Thinking: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, learning, decision making; Ways of Working: Communication, collaboration, awareness, social networking, digital environment; Ways to Live in the World: Citizenship, life career, financial planning, personal and social responsibility." Dr. Dixon stated "the curriculum included Employability Skills, taught by Eileen Mullen; Applied Mathematics taught by Ann Knott; Financial Management, taught by Linda Gens; Basic Workplace Skills taught by Armendia Dixon and Life-Long Learning Skills taught by Karen Cross." The PMI instructors in each class worked alongside each soft skills instructor, helping integrate these skills into the classroom/lab setting. These instructors were John Adams in Welding; Marty Hubert, CNC Machinist and Jake Proper in Electro-Mechanical Technology. Students were given the General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN®) as pre and post

assessments. The GAIN is a basic education and workforce development program; it helps to accurately identify educational needs in communication and mathematics. As a post assessment, it helps to track the degree of improvement in each student's proficiency level.

Once the post assessment was given, the results were significant. Out of 30 students assessed, 61% increased in communication and 61% increased in mathematics. There were 7 students who started out at the top communication level and 10 students who started out at the top in mathematics.

In a survey, designed by a student committee facilitated by Michael Millard, 85% of the 20 respondents believe they are better prepared to succeed in the workplace because, in addition to their academic skills, they learned good workplace behavior. They know the importance of showing up to work on time, doing a good job each day, respecting other workers, understanding the mission of the company /supporting that mission, leaving non-related matters outside the job and being a great team player.

The skills learned in the ETE class will help make the students more employable and valuable to an employer. Congratulations to the 32 students who completed the ETE class and were recognized in a special ceremony on January 9, 2017. The students worked together, embracing participation on different committees to develop, plan, and execute the ceremony.

G01X.567 PMI 43Z 556F23M08
PMI
 Precision Manufacturing Institute

PMI TRANSITIONS TO CREDIT HOUR SCHOOL

PMI is excited to announce its transition to a quarter-term schedule and credit-based system for students starting in January of 2017. Previously, the school operated on a clock-hour system. This change, approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges, and the U.S. Department of Education, will simplify and streamline student schedules and the process for

administering Federal Student Aid and other financial aid for students. The CNC Machinist and Electro-Mechanical Technology programs will be comprised of four quarter terms, and the Electric Arc Welding program will be comprised of two quarter terms. Student progress will be measured in credits earned, rather than clock hours, to more closely align to the typical collegiate-based standard.

PMI
 PRECISION MANUFACTURING INSTITUTE
OPEN HOUSE
 Saturday, April 22, 2017 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

SEE the School - TALK to Instructors
 MEET Current Students - DISCOVER Our Programs
 LEARN About Industry Trends

To register, call (814) 333-2415 or visit www.GoPMI.org

CALL (814) 333-2415 FOR MORE INFORMATION