

Mack Molding exposes students to manufacturing careers

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ARLINGTON -- Mack Molding has partnered with the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center this week to expose local students to manufacturing careers.

The three days of workshops, dubbed "Made in Vermont" days, will be held through Wednesday of this week, with students from nearby Arlington Memorial High School, Burr and Burton Academy, and the Career Development Center participating.

According to Mack Molding Communications Director Julia Horst, the workshops were inspired not only by National Manufacturing Day, which fell on October 4, but also by the company's a "robust" internship program.

"We've actually hired four or five of this summer's interns full-time in different areas here," Horst said. "We decided that since the internship program has been so successful, to reach down to the next level, upperclassmen in high schools in the area. We thought that they too might be interested in learning more about what we have to offer."

Horst noted that the workshops are designed to showcase modern manufacturing as a whole, but to also highlight what products are made locally at Mack Molding.

A different school will visit the plant on each of the three days, according to Horst.

Throughout each day, students will have the opportunity to tour the facility and work with Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center Advisors Dan Shea and Ken Walker on a hands-on assembly line simulation activity.

"This will help students to better understand what is involved in full-scale manufacturing," Horst said, adding that members of Mack Molding's Human Resources Department will also be presenting to the students.

"They will speak to the students about job opportunities here at Mack Molding," Horst said. "They will also talk about the jobs available in different career paths, the types of skills we look for when hiring employees and also how to prepare for an interview."

Plant Manager Bryan Campbell is one of the many Mack Molding staff members supervising the workshops and spoke to the value of this newly implemented program.

"Students are able to see future employment opportunities here in Vermont," he said. "We want to highlight that manufacturing is on the rise and that there are opportunities close to home."

At the end of each day, students have the opportunity to sign up for additional one-on-one or group sessions for more information regarding career opportunities.

"We really hope this acts as a pipeline for future interns and applicants." Horst said. "Whether students are interested in a college oriented engineering track or a post-high school technical track, we're interested in them and we have opportunities here for them."

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Burr and Burton Academy students take part in a manufacturing exercise Monday at Mack Molding in Arlington. The company-sponsored workshop continues today and Wednesday, with students from Arlington Memorial High School and the Southwest Vermont Career Development Center attending. (Peter Crabtree)

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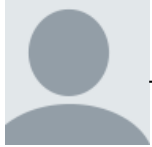
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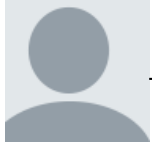
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