



News Release

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November 24, 2006
NR06068

NMCC student gets jumpstart on career as well as scholarship and job offer as result of internship

Aroostook County - As Benjamin Duplessis of Presque Isle looks ahead to graduation from Northern Maine Community College next May with degrees in both automotive technology and precision metals manufacturing, he can check finding a job off his list of things to do. For that matter, Duplessis can also relax when it comes to worrying about paying much of the tuition expense for his final academic semesters.

The reason this 27-year-old needn't concern himself with the usual issues facing most college students is that he has earned himself guaranteed employment at Winslow-based Mid-State Machine Products upon commencement, as well as been awarded a generous scholarship from the same firm, in exchange for a one-year contractual commitment.

Not at all by chance, the job offer and financial assistance are the result of hard work and the impression he left behind during a recently completed internship at the central Maine metal manufacturer. During this time, he not only learned every facet of the operation firsthand, but became a key contributor to the organization.

"It was a really good experience. I was able to see how the industry works by learning and working in every part of the shop, from the pre-set area, where I would set up tools for CNC (computer numeric control) machines, to the tool and cutter grinder shop," said Duplessis. "It was quite demanding, but a very good opportunity. I discovered I could work there for years and learn something new about the industry every day."

Duplessis worked six days a week, earning both overtime pay and high praise for his efforts. He frequently worked nights setting up tools for projects that would be completed the next day.

"Mid-State Machine Products was privileged to employ Benjamin Duplessis. Throughout his internship Benjamin worked on a variety of projects. Supervisors and managers evaluated and commented on his performance and willingness to accept new challenges and his desire to gain knowledge in everything he was assigned to do. He certainly has the qualities we look for in employees," said Dana Berry, human resources manager for the company.

The long hours and demanding work were nothing new for the 1998 graduate of Presque Isle High School. Duplessis spent four years (1998-2002) in the Marine Corps as a non-commissioned officer in the infantry division.

Although he brought with him the drive and determination to succeed, he is quick to credit the opportunity for his recent hands on experience and his level of knowledge and skill to the NMCC faculty and the top-notch academic curriculum he has been introduced to.

“The college, and in particular instructor Dean Duplessis (no relation), has been laying the foundation for my becoming a machinist. I came into this program not knowing anything about machining, and I am now operating high-tech CNC machines,” said Duplessis. “The overall NMCC experience has been great. I have not only learned a great deal in both of my two degree programs of automotive technology and precision metals manufacturing, but have learned other valuable and important information in other college courses that will serve me the rest of my life. I believe I have a fair understanding, but there is still so much to learn and that industry will pick up where my schooling leaves off.”

For instructor Dean Duplessis and his faculty colleagues at NMCC, Benjamin Duplessis sentiments define exactly what the educators hope they impart on their students above all else: the importance of being a lifelong learner.

“Ben is a model student. He brings a lot to the table. All of our trade programs are demanding and precision metals manufacturing/machine tool technology is no exception. The trade by nature requires an individual to be meticulous and detail oriented and you have to enjoy working with your hands as well as your head. Ben is extremely motivated and enjoys what he’s doing; that’s half the battle to achieving success in most anything you do,” said Duplessis.

For Benjamin Duplessis the immediate focus is now on completing another successful semester. He also plans to encourage students in this year’s incoming class to consider doing as he has by looking for opportunity to get hands-on training in their chosen career field.

“I would encourage others, if they have the opportunity to do something like this, to take advantage of it. It was well worth the experience. I wanted to get my foot in the door of the industry and this opportunity helped me a great deal in that way, as well as in my course work here at NMCC,” said Benjamin Duplessis.

Benjamin Duplessis is the son of Dick and Mary Ellen Duplessis of Presque Isle.

Founded in 1968 as a subcontract precision machining facility, Mid-State Machine Products has established itself as a leading supplier of high quality, difficult to manufacture, precision machined components. Utilizing its state of the art 92,000 square foot manufacturing facility, Mid-State provides complete manufacturing services from design development through production including sophisticated finishing and testing services.

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