



News Release

Contact:
Jason Parent
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
jparent@nmcc.edu

April 10, 2009
NR09045

Downstate metal manufacturer donates equipment to NMCC precision metals program; lauds work of instructor and students

Aroostook County - A leading central Maine precision metals manufacturer is supporting its future growth through a donation of needed equipment to a high-tech program at Northern Maine Community College with graduates in high demand statewide.

Officials with Mid-State Machine, a Winslow-based computer numerical controlled manufacturing facility, recently visited the precision metals manufacturing lab on the NMCC campus to present instructor Dean Duplessis and his students with new technology valued at \$6,000. The gift came both to support the program and also in recognition of the well-established reputation it has garnered within the industry and within the education and training community.

“We are very impressed with the quality of the precision metals manufacturing program at Northern Maine Community College. We feel it ranks as one of the very top programs in the state and throughout New England,” said Pete McAllister, human resource manager for Mid-State Machine, visited NMCC to meet with Duplessis and his students and to present the new equipment. “The attention to detail by instructor Dean Duplessis in his program, his students and the facilities is outstanding. From Mid-State Machine’s perspective, his curriculum, instruction methods and expectations of his students fit our business model perfectly.”

The donation by Mid-State consists of three electronic height gauges capable of measuring parts up to 24 inches in height and to an accuracy of .0005 inches – or the equivalent of one-sixth the width of a human hair. According to Duplessis, the gauges, which are used for presetting tools for the computer numerical controlled (CNC) machines in his lab, are necessary both in his classroom and within the industry to assure quality control. Students currently enrolled in both the associate degree precision metals manufacturing program and the machine tool technology certificate program at NMCC previously had access to only two such electronic measuring tools, which often proves challenging.

“Students in both the precision metals and machine tool programs are required to perform full inspections of parts they produce to assure the standards of quality are adhered to. Ask any student of the program and they’ll tell you the two current height gauges are in constant use and demand. The additional height gauges will reduce wait time for measuring equipment and provide students increased efficiency in the lab,” said Duplessis.

Even in the current economic downturn, highly skilled and trained machinists across Maine remain in great demand. A shortage of skilled workers in the profession, coupled with continued growth and product demand in the industry, have led companies like Mid-State Machine to develop unique partnerships with education and training facilities like NMCC.

“Mid-State feels strongly that partnering with NMCC is essential to supporting our company and industry’s growth by providing the skilled talent that is needed to sustain and grow our business, as well as meet the challenges in today’s marketplace. NMCC’s outstanding precision metals manufacturing and machine tool technology curriculum will enable the College to place graduates in high paying jobs with future career growth opportunities,” said McAllister.

Mid-State Machine is a fully equipped, precision CNC manufacturing facility that was founded in 1968. The company serves several industries that range from aerospace and aircraft engines to commercial printing and power generation. Some of Mid-State’s major customers include General Electric, Boeing Commercial Airplane and Siemens-Westinghouse.

#####



Showing the three electronic height gauges which were recently donated to Northern Maine Community College’s precision metals manufacturing program by Mid-State Machine are, from left: Matthew Dewitt, a student in the PMM program; Dean Duplessis, lead instructor for the program; NMCC President Tim Crowley; and Pete McAllister, human resource manager for Mid-State Machine.