



News Release

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NMCC students benefit from industry expert visit

Aroostook County - As business and industry in Aroostook County and across the country increasingly go high tech and high speed, they will need more and more qualified people to install the cable for computer networking, as well as for security systems, video conferencing and automated systems that will give them a competitive edge.

For many businesses in the region, the trained workforce they will need to handle these functions tomorrow can be found today in classrooms and lab facilities at Northern Maine Community College. To ensure these future professionals have access to the latest information and hear from experts working in the field, instructors like Joe McLaughlin of the computer electronics program often invite industry professionals to visit with students in his classes.

Such was the case recently when McLaughlin welcomed Katharine Koziell of Ideal Industries, a manufacturer of wire-nuts, tools and supplies for the electrical trade, to speak to students in his program, as well as in the information technology and electrical construction and maintenance programs. Altogether, the guest speaker presented before 23 students and one additional community member invited to participate in one of two sessions led by Koziell.

“This demonstrates to students what industry is using for test equipment and network terminating components. Students see the information being taught at the College is what industry is looking for,” said McLaughlin.

Not only did the students learn about the proper way to terminate different types of cable and the different types of test equipment available to check and certify cable installations, Koziell provided them with a “hands-on” opportunity in the area of terminating cable. Specifically, the students installed three different types of connectors.

“I discussed the best practices when installing low voltage/computer wiring and cable, as well as testing requirements. All of the students I presented to were attentive and participated in the discussion. Several had some prior exposure to the subject and offered their insights. Many asked good questions, so I know they were thinking about the topic,” said Koziell.

“The hands-on work included in the presentation replaces one of the labs we regularly do in the computer networking hardware course. Katherine did an excellent job presenting it,” said McLaughlin.

Koziell has been a representative for Ideal Industries since 1995 and has presented at schools and colleges throughout the country. “I have followed students through school and into the field as contractors or into the distribution side of the electrical trade. It is rewarding to have them remember that I presented at their school,” said Koziell.

Ideal Industries is located in Sycamore, Illinois, with manufacturing facilities in Illinois, as well as New Jersey and California. It has been a family owned and operated company since 1916.

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Katharine Koziell of Ideal Industries speaks with NMCC students recently. Koziell is among a number of industry experts NMCC faculty use to ensure students hear from professionals in the various career fields to which they aspire.