INTERFACE

Volume 64 • No. 1 • Fall 2024

Journal of the WTEA

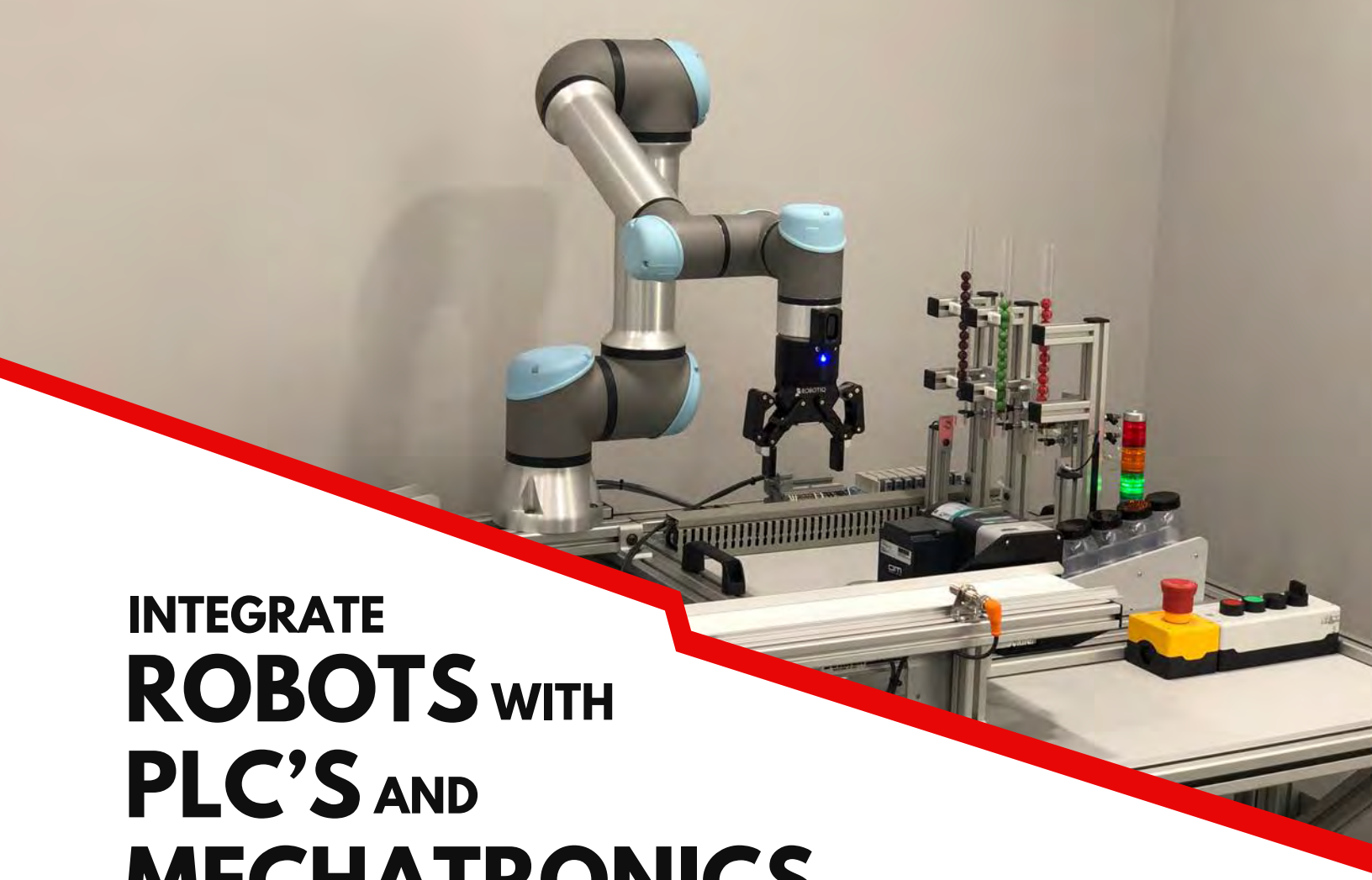
WORKFORCE READY

SPECIAL FEATURE:

- WTEA Foundation 1st Annual Charity Golf Outing

Other Highlights:

- SkillsUSA Nationals Results
- WTEA High School Program of the Year



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by Sarah Wagner, Sussex Hamilton HS

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Mark Your Calendar!
56th Annual WTEA
State Conference
March 5-7, 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer Camp Mirrors Classroom Preparations

By Mike Paquette, WTEA President

Ninety percent of winning a rally race happens in the off season. Teams take time to update their inventories, research products, practice driving, and plan their strategy for the year. However, when you read this the ARA will be winding up their 2024 Season. But, for teachers, summer is our off-season. We have had about 70 days to update lessons, research new project ideas, practice any new projects, and finalize our strategy for the year..

"I felt very unprepared... This camp was a great reminder of the planning and perseverance it takes to set a teaching year up correctly."

I, like many of you, need this time to spend with family, and go to a training or two if it fits in. However, this year was different. My eldest graduated from high school and due to this I spent some time looking for a job. After many applications, phone calls, and hours spent looking at help wanted ads and options, I ended up working at Camp Phillips, a Scouting America Camp out of Haugen, Wisconsin, teaching welding for six weeks to scouters.

When I started job hunting I was not looking to take a job at a summer camp. I was actually looking a bit closer to home. I was hoping I could find something vaguely related to my field, something where I could learn a new skill, or something where I could make a new connection locally. I was also hoping I could have a flexible schedule which would allow me to meet my volunteer obligations, like scout camp, boundary waters with the troop, WTEA golf outing, and building the golf ball cannon we need for a golfing event. Since half of my time revolved around scouting, working at a scout camp seemed fitting.

I started the job one week late, getting thrown into camp life, job paperwork, and living away from home. It took me two weeks to feel like I had everything handled. Everyday I felt like I was missing a piece of equipment. Everyday I had to review what I needed to teach. Every other day I needed to ask about camp protocols, or what some acronym meant. I felt very unprepared, like a rally driver coming off an injury with bruises and without any drive time to speak of.

Mike Paquette shows off the golf cannon with Joe Ciontea.

This camp was a great reminder of the planning and perseverance it takes to set a teaching year up correctly. Did I review my class outline? Did I take a moment to make changes to my class syllabus to outline my expectations correctly? Will I have all the supplies I need to start the class? Did I put in the work to make my school season a success?

Above and below: Mike Paquette with welding students at Camp Phillips in Haugen.

As I am writing this, I am working on achieving my successful year. I am using the last days of summer to look at my teaching schedule, do a little more training, and make some little changes to make the year more successful. Putting in the time to have a successful season. I hope your season is great as well!

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Summer Teacher Tours and Spring Conference Planning

By Joe Ciontea, WTEA Executive Director

Another school year starts. As I sit at my keyboard many of you are already back at school. Some of you are returning to the same room where you ended the school year in June, others are in a different classroom, or even a new building. In-service sessions, staff meetings, curriculum planning, ordering materials and let's not forget bloodborne pathogen training. A busy time, it'll take a few weeks to get into the routine and catch your breath. I hope your summer included some well-deserved R & R.

Summer Teacher Tour

In June the WTEA partnered with the N.E.W. Manufacturing Alliance for another summer tour. About two dozen educators attended the day of tours and networking. This year we focused on manufacturing and packaging processes used in the food industry. We started at Sargento in Hilbert. I was amazed by the technology we saw there. If you're in that part of the state I recommend you plan a field trip with your students – they are open for tours and presentations to students.

Our second stop was AK Crusts in Green Bay where we witnessed the production process and packaging used for prepared pizza crusts and dough balls. The quantity of crust they create is mind boggling.

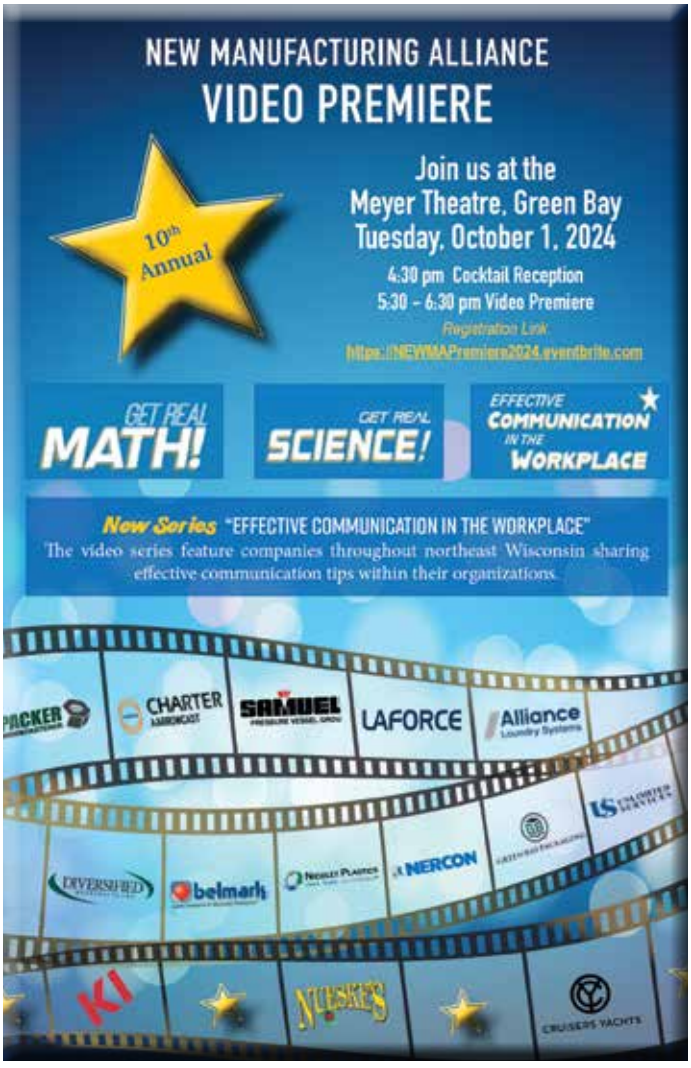
Our third and final stop was at Badger State Brewing, also in Green Bay, just blocks from Lambeau Field. We had a memorable behind-the-scenes tour of the brewhouse and canning area. All three companies provided samples of their products while explaining the company history and culture before the tours. We were not allowed to take photos in any of the facilities but they are all open to visits from school groups. If you need contact information, please reach out to me or Ann Franz (Ann.Franz@nwtc.edu).

Teachers networking after the Badger State Brewery tour in Green Bay this summer.

Workforce Ready

The WTEA leadership team has already begun planning for the March spring conference, Workforce Ready. Details and registration information are on pages 8-9 in this issue of the *Interface*.

If you need some assistance with curricular changes at school please reach out to any member of the WTEA Board, we'll do our best help identify appropriate resources for you, I hope you have a great fall semester.



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PAST-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here's To Another New School Year!

By Doug Dimmer, WTEA Past-President

Well, friends, the time has come to kick off another school year. For some of us it may be getting back in that old saddle and riding it out again with some new ideas, maybe some new faces, but mostly just getting back to the place you have established and setting yourself up for another successful year. For others, it might be a new position, grade level, a different class load, or a new building you have to get a feel for and find your way. Whatever the case may be, I hope for the best and continued success in all that you set yourself up to accomplish.

For me, it was another busy summer, with not a ton of free time. I had scheduled a couple of roofing jobs working with other teacher friends of mine, had to finish the fence that runs around my yard, move my youngest into a different house now that she has graduated and is in the working world, fix two of my kids' cars, finish a small restore project on my Harley, and of course keep my wife happy by getting out with her for a couple of long weekends in the great Wisconsin outdoors. Really, getting back to school gives me the chance to get back into a routine and keeps me more scheduled which is a bit better for my mental health.

"Another reason for this timely message is to inform you about two executive board positions that are up for election... The positions are president-elect and secretary/treasurer."

Another reason for this timely message is to inform you about two executive board positions that are up for election and will be voted on during the general session meeting at our next WTEA Annual Conference! The positions are for president-elect and secretary/treasurer. The president-elect position precedes the position of president and past-president positions. If elected, you will be assisting the president in their duties, be required to attend board and executive board meetings and learn the ins and outs of what it takes to run the organization as president.

If you choose to run for the secretary/treasurer position your responsibilities are to be in attendance and take minutes at all board and executive board meetings, collaborate with the executive board on voting topics, and maintain financial records and activities of our organization along with other executive board members. Both these positions are elected and voted on by all active members of the association.

You do not have to be a current or past board member to apply for the positions, just a current active member. If you would like to apply for the positions, please send me your name, school district, and a letter of intent. If you have any other questions about the position, email me at ddimmer@cedarburg.k12.wi.us.

Have a great start to your school year and apply for one of the positions! Prost to all!

⌗ Mark Your Calendar ⌗

N.E.W. Mfg Alliance - Video Premiere
Oct. 1, 2024 .....Green Bay, WI

WTEA Awards Nominations Deadline
Nov. 15, 2024 .....via the WTEA website

State Conference - Presenters Deadline
Dec. 1, 2024 .....via the WTEA website

ACTE CareerTech VISION 2024
Dec 4-7, 2024 .....San Antonio, TX

WTEA Officer Nominations Deadline
Dec. 13, 2024 ..... to Doug Dimmer

***Interface* Articles DUE**
Dec. 16, 2024 ..... to Duane Apel

WTEA Early-Bird Registration Deadline
Dec. 20, 2024 ..... WTEA website or U.S. Mail

WTEA 56th Annual State Conference
March 5-7, 2025..... Wis. Dells, WI

SkillsUSA 52nd State Conference
April 1-2, 2025 .....Madison, WI

ITEEA National Conference
April 2-5, 2025..... St. Louis, MO

SkillsUSA National Conference
June 23-27, 2025 .....Atlanta, GA

STUDENT VIDEOGRAPHERS NEEDED

Wisconsin Students Marketing Themselves Through Video

By Brock Fritz, Director of Communications - Wisconsin Association of School Boards

Videos draw eyes. And it's not just for mindless social-media scrolling. Marketers are using videos more than ever, with Wyzowl reporting that 91% of businesses use video as a marketing tool in 2024, and 52% of people are more likely to share videos than any other type of content.

So, businesses are relying on video. Who's producing all of it? While cellphones have given everyone the ability to shoot and post videos, not everybody has the skill set to produce, edit and display videos in the optimal way.

Elkhorn Area HS Digital Innovations 2 class documented the 2024 Wisconsin State Education Convention.

Elkhorn Area High School seeks to prepare students through its Digital Innovations class, which includes a video production component that teaches students camera operation, lighting techniques, sound recording, interviewing skills and collaboration.

"It's important for students to learn to use the technology needed to make a good video," Elkhorn School District Information Technology Specialist Gina Rand says. "The digital media industry is rapidly growing, with numerous career opportunities in fields such as filmmaking, marketing, social media and journalism. Many colleges and jobs now require a video interview as the first step of the application process."

Elkhorn's Digital Innovations 2 students took their classroom insights to the January 2024 Wisconsin State Education Convention in Milwaukee, serving as the student video team to produce a five-minute video featuring music from the Milwaukee School of Languages String Orchestra.

"It was a great opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills by creating video for a real-life event," Rand says of how the students had full access to record, interview and network with anyone at the convention. "It was so valuable. The educators were polite and interested in talking to the students, which impressed them. And e-portfolios are increasingly becoming a showcase for students' skills and creativity."

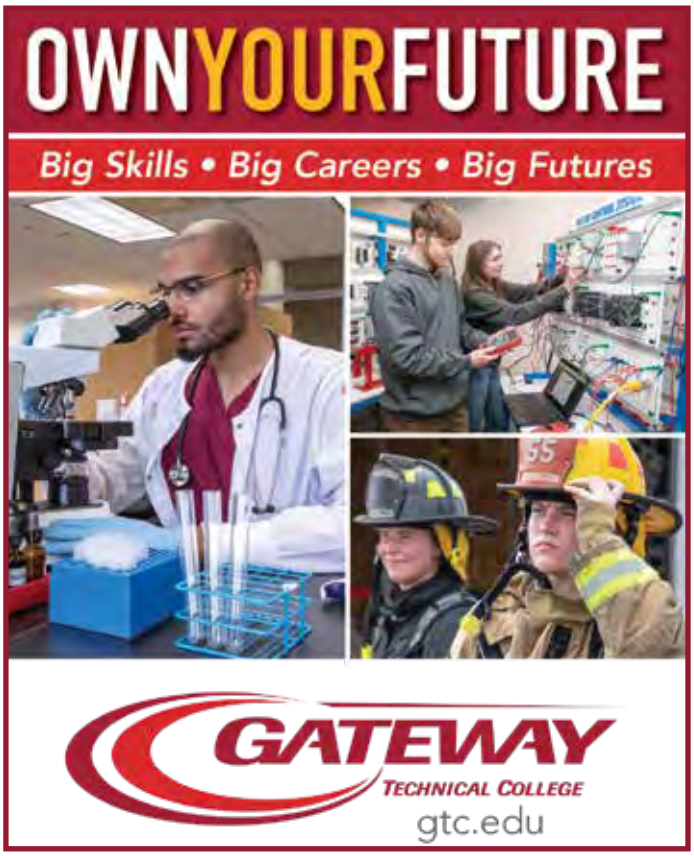
The convention, which is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, is attended by school board members, superintendents, administrators, educators and other public education leaders.

"The convention offers students a unique platform to put their skills on display in a professional setting," WASB Director of Conferences & Events, Amy Qualmann adds. "We hope they return to their classroom more enthusiastic about the work they do and the possibilities of education."

More students will have that opportunity in 2025, as the WASB is seeking a video team of two or more Wisconsin public high school students to highlight the convention, scheduled for Jan. 22-24 in Milwaukee.

"Working with student attendees is my favorite part of the convention," Qualmann says. "They always bring fresh perspectives and an enthusiasm that reminds school board members why they do the work they do. It's fun to see the convention through their lens, and I love seeing the amazing talent in our public schools."

Brock Fritz can be reached at 608-512-1701 or bfritz@wasb.org.



WTEA Membership Application & March 5-7, 2025 Conference Registration

Membership year runs from September 1st through August 31st

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Home Phone (_____) _____ Local Tech College District _____ # years teaching _____

School Dist. _____ School Name _____

School Address _____

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Check appropriate boxes below & total amount due. *(To pay fees with a credit card go to the WTEA website)*

Membership Fees: [ ] 3 year membership - $90.00 [ ] 1 year membership - $35.00 $_____

Spring Conference EARLY BIRD Registration (Must be postmarked by December 20, 2024)

[ ] $150 members [ ] $185 non-members $_____

Spring Conference Registration (After Postmarked date of December 20, 2024):

[ ] $175 members [ ] $210 non-members $_____

WTEA Awards Banquet - Wed. Mar. 5th *(Tickets must be purchased in advance)*: [ ] $32 $_____

[ ] Bill my school district - purchase order is attached [ ] Payment enclosed **Total $** _____

Send completed form with payment or school purchase order to: **WTEA, P.O. Box 373, Hazelhurst, WI 54531-0373**

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If your school uses ACH payment please contact the WTEA for new bank routing.

***Room reservation: DEADLINE FOR CONFERENCE RATES -** 2/21/2025

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Chula Vista will also honor the state rate for single rooms upon request with appropriate documentation.

WORKFORCE READY

56th Annual Technology Education Conference & Trade Show

Tentative Conference Overview

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
5:30pm – 8:30pm..... Conference Pre-registration
6:45pm – 9:00pm.....Awards Banquet

Thursday, March 6, 2025
7:30am – 3:00pm..... Conference Registration
7:00am – 9:00am.....Project Showcase Setup
8:00am – 4:00pm.....Trade Show
9:00am – 3:30pm.....Project Showcase
8:55am – 9:05am.....General Welcome
9:05am – 10:00am.... 1st General Session
10:15am – 3:30pm.... Concurrent Sessions

Thursday Keynote Speaker:

Janice Neitzel
Site Director
3M - Menomonie

Thursday, March 6, 2025 *(continued)*
7:00pm – 9:00pm.....President's Reception

Friday, March 7, 2025
7:30am – 11:30am.....Conference Registration
6:45am – 7:45am.....WTEA Breakfast
7:45am – 8:30am..... WTEA Membership Mtg.
8:45am – 12:15pm.....Concurrent Sessions, Demonstrations & Project Showcase
12:30pm – 2:00pm.....2nd General Session & Luncheon
2:15pm – 3:30pm.....WTEA Board Meeting

Friday Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Bryan Albrecht
President Emeritus
Gateway Technical College

Session Topics Include: Additive Manufacturing in the Classroom, Digital Media, Geometry in Construction, Double Elimination Energy, Residential Electrical, Robotics Roundtable, Home Maintenance, Fabrication: How to Build a Trailer, Retirement Ideas, What Works in the Wood Shop, Automotive Curriculum, SkillsUSA, Standards Based Grading, Business and Industry Connections, Fanuc Robots, Architecture, The Power of TikTok and YouTube, Welding Best Practices, Graphic Design - Page Layout & Logos, Graphic Arts Ideas, Building High Mileage Vehicles, Project Showcase, Middle School Roundtable, New Teacher Boot Camp, and much more!

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Ask for WTEA Conference Rate! See page 8 for details.

NOMINATIONS: Officers & Awards

Be Part of the WTEA Team

We are currently accepting nominations for the offices of WTEA President-Elect and Secretary/ Treasurer. This is your opportunity to serve your profession in a leadership position. The WTEA Board of Directors works together as a team to plan and coordinate professional development activities, give association awards and promote the advancement of our profession. The Board meets up to four times per year; meetings are held both face to face and virtually, as appropriate. If you have questions please contact any member of the WTEA Board of Directors.

Secretary / Treasurer

(2 year term): Spring 2025 - Spring 2027

President-Elect

4 year term: 2025-2026 as President-Elect, 2026-2028 as President, 2028-2029 as Past-President

Send nominations to WTEA Past-President Doug Dimmer: **ddimmer@cedarburg.k12.wi.us**

Nominations accepted until December 13, 2024

*Ballots will be mailed to members approximately February 1st.
If candidates run unopposed, a unanimous ballot is cast by the Board and no paper ballots are mailed.

WTEA Awards Nominations Needed

Each spring at our annual awards banquet, held at the WTEA Spring Conference, the WTEA recognizes technology educators, industry, and technology education programs that have demonstrated outstanding achievement. The WTEA needs your help as educators to identify these worthy teachers, programs, and other professions that deserve recognition.

The WTEA is looking for educators that are going above and beyond in their classroom. We have a variety of award categories that cover teachers, programs, and examples of classroom excellence. Members are encouraged to visit the WTEA's awards page on the website to see the criteria.

As a profession we need to continue to recognize greatness in our profession! The WTEA Awards Banquet gives us that opportunity. The awards committee will contact the nominee and request information regarding the nominee's curriculum, achievements, and contributions to technology education, along with letters of endorsement.

TO NOMINATE A TEACHER, PROGRAM OR INDUSTRY visit the awards tab on WTEA website at wtea-wis.org. Nominations must be submitted via the WTEA website. The awards ceremony will be held Wednesday, March 5th, at the Chula Vista Resort during our 56th annual conference.

***Important Notes**:

- **Nominations must be received by November 15th** to be considered for recognition the following spring.
- Technology Educators must be a member of the WTEA to be considered for award recognition, unless the award being nominated is "Special Recognition."
- For a detailed description of the awards please visit our website or contact any member of the board of directors.
- If you have any questions please send an email to: awards1@wteafoundation.org

Award Nominations DUE Nov. 15th

WTEA AWARDS

Technology Educator of the Year
M.S. Program of the Year
H.S. Program of the Year
Award of Excellence
Inspire Award
Special Recognition Award
Community Service Award

SUBSCRIPTION

Renew Your *Interface* School Subscription

The WTEA school (building or district) subscription provides you and your local colleagues with an opportunity to keep informed about technology education in Wisconsin. The more local technology educators you sign up, the more you save. An individual subscription is $35 per year, but you can sign up 3 or more staff members and receive a discounted rate. Each person receives: a personal copy of the *Interface*, all association mailings and notices, invitations to attend regional technology education meetings and workshops, access to the secure file area of the WTEA website, discounted admission to the association's annual technology education conference, and eligibility to receive all association awards (Educator of the Year, Program of the Year, Award of Excellence, 25-Year Award). All mailings will be sent to the work address. The school subscription will expire the following fall. See fee schedule (below).

How to sign up:

Create a list of everyone you want to include in your group subscription and include the name, email, school name, and work mailing address for each person. Mail the list along with a check or school purchase order to:
WTEA, P.O. Box 373, Hazelhurst, WI 54531-0373

Want to pay by credit card? Send an email with everyone's contact information and request a payment link. Emails should be sent to Executive Director Joe Ciontea at jc.wtea@gmail.com.

To be eligible for all benefits of this special pricing, school subscriptions should be sent as soon as possible. Please note: The *Interface* is published 3 times per year: fall, winter and spring. Electronic copies are also posted in the secure file area of the WTEA website.

*Group discount fee schedule:

1st person $35, 2nd person $30, 3rd person $25. 4th person and beyond are $20 each.

Not sure if your membership is expiring?

Use the WTEA "Member Log-in" on our website to check your membership status *(no longer displayed on the mailing label).* Then select "Edit / Profile" to update your WTEA contact information. Be sure to click "Save" at the bottom!

DESIGN CONTEST

Students: Design Our Next Cover!

INTERFACE

Cover Design Contest

ATTN: Tech Ed instructors!
- WE NEED YOUR HELP -

What: *Interface* Magazine 2nd annual cover design contest for your students.

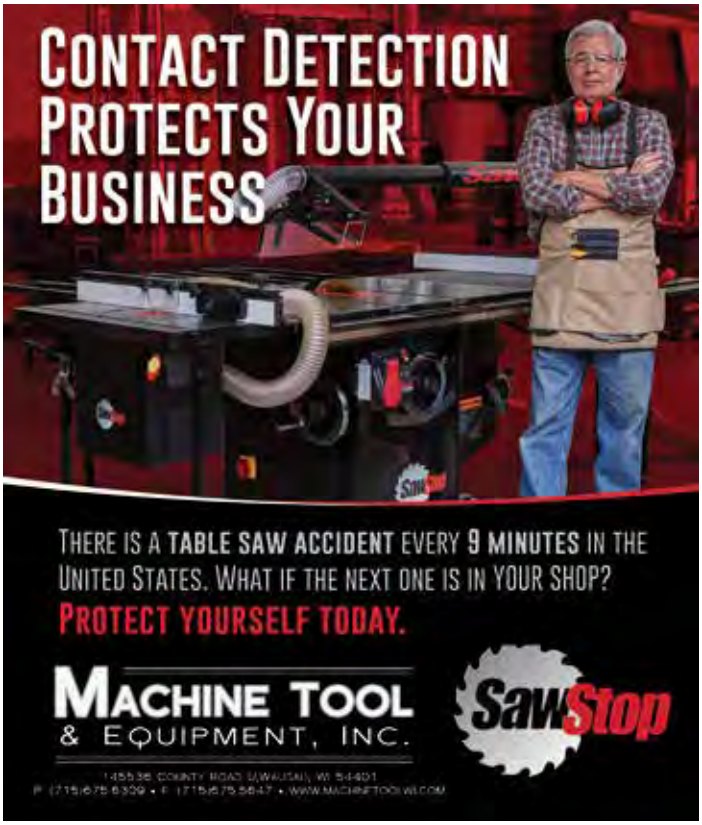
Why: To capitalize on the outstanding abilities of TE students statewide AND provide them with great real-world design experience!

When: Designs DUE in December 2024 with winning design to be used beginning with 2025 spring *Interface* issue.

How: Email *Interface* editor, Duane Apel, at interface.wtea@gmail.com for specific criteria,magazine spec's, & exact dates.

Award: $50 awarded to the winner, and name and photo included in magazine.

Theme: The WTEA theme (to be used on the cover) will be announced by Nov. 1st



UPDATES FROM MADISON

State Standards, SkillsUSA, & Career Pathways

By Mike Mihm, DPI TEE Consultant & SkillsUSA State Director

So, after one year around the sun, I can say with certainty that I'm not in the classroom any longer. My first year as the DPI TEE consultant as well as the State Director for SkillsUSA, Wisconsin, has been a rewarding, yet challenging journey.

I want to start by saying, "Thank you." I want to thank all of you for welcoming me into my role and having confidence in me to carry out my duties. Many of you have been gracious and kind offering help and assure continuity within our profession. I feel as if we will continue to make progress together the more time I am in this position and working on ways to improve our discipline of Technology and Engineering Education with educators like yourselves willing to step in to help at a moment's notice. To all of you who reached out to me this year and helped in any number of ways, "Thank you."

"Your rewards don't always come with a thank you... but understand that once you have engaged your learners in hands, and in mind, they will remember you forever."

State Standards Progress

I just want to touch on a few things that happened this past school year. Late last fall I called to order a group of folks to reconvene the standards writing team. Thanks to the many contributors who saw the job through. I am happy to report that the standards have been approved and are in draft form on the DPI website: https://dpi.wi.gov/cte/standards. Working copies and a searchable excel document should be published shortly. I appreciate your patience with this process. I will email the listserv once the new documents have been published on the DPI website.

Special thanks to Erik Wolbach, Allen Carlson, Brian Schiltz, Randy Way, James (Jim) Eastman, Duane Elfering, Gretta Balczewski, Tony Ingram, Chris Martin, Eric Mumm, Alan Ligocki, Mason Pautsch, Ryan Stodola, Jeff Otto, Anna Vitale, and Aaron Hoffman who all took the time to meet in person and see the standards to the finish line. This exceptional group of people carried the torch for our discipline and delivered standards we can all be proud of and utilize in our classrooms.

Throughout the school year I will be partnering with CESAs around the state and other CTE consultants with standards learning sessions. I will be talking mainly about what's new and changed as well as a brief overview on how to use the standards. Additionally, I am looking to offer at least two in-depth training sessions on utilizing the standards as well as potential additional professional development. More on those offerings as programming is solidified. For now, pencil your calendars for the tentative CESA training in your area: CESA 1 - Oct 23rd, CESA 7 - Dec 13th, CESA 8 - Dec 4th, CESA 9 - Dec 12th, CESA 10 - Dec 18th, CESA 11- Nov 15th. For more information on how to contact your CESA headquarters see: https://dpi.wi.gov/cesa.

Wisconsin CESA Map

SkillsUSA

I'd be remiss if I didn't take the time to talk a bit about SkillsUSA, Wisconsin. If you were a part of SkillsUSA last year, years past, or considering it this year, you are on the right track to assisting your students see the complete picture of being career ready! SkillsUSA's mission is to empower members to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. SkillsUSA is an INTRA-CURRICULAR student organization. What does that mean? It means you can and should be offering this programming in your district. It doesn't need to be considered extracurricular if you are including it in your classroom. SkillsUSA, and what it stands for, helps develop the whole student. Yes, we can teach the "technical skills," but what about workplace (soft) skills, and personal skills? Employers are looking for employees who can communicate, work as a team, provide leadership, and problem solve. SkillsUSA programming offers all of that and more. Haven't looked in a while? Come check out our Wisconsin website and email me with any questions you might have at Jake.mihm@dpi.wi.gov.

Career Pathways

As I look to the new school year one of my goals is to better serve you, our Technology and Engineering Educators. I want to be able to provide you with resources that include improved networking, shared resources, and increased education partnerships.

Part of my work this past year has been working in

Continued on next page...

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conjunction with the DPI Career Pathways team. Specifically, to the industry sectors that are TEE related (Architecture and Construction, Energy, Manufacturing, and TDL). A small team of us have been developing resources and maps to be shared statewide in an initiative to reconnect the pathways to viable work-based learning opportunities, industry recognized credentials, as well as strengthen business and industry partners around the state. The idea behind this work is to lay the groundwork for identifying IRCs, various jobs and education needed to get there, as well as utilizing data from the labor market to align with job opportunities in the future. Not quite sure what I'm referring to? Please refer to the DPI website: https://dpi.wi.gov/pathways-wisconsin/industry-sectors. I plan to utilize these maps and integrate them into professional development throughout the calendar year.

Your Work Is Important!

Whether this is your first year in the classroom or perhaps your last year, I wish you all the best in 2024-25! This year will bring you challenges, no doubt, but you are in the right place. You are connecting kids with the skills and abilities to jobs and career opportunities that are in demand. This is important work. Your rewards don't always come with a thank you or seem visible at times but understand that once you have engaged your learners in hands, and in mind, they will remember you forever. Good luck and have a wonderful school year!

CALL FOR PRESENTERS!

2025 WTEA Conference Theme: ***"Workforce Ready"***

56th Annual Spring Conference • March 5 - 7, 2025 • Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells

Presenter form must be submitted by December 1, 2024 by mail, website submission or email.
Submit directly via online form under the Conference & Events tab on the WTEA website.
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1st Annual WTEA Foundation Charity Golf Outing A Big Success!

By Jesse Domer, WTEA Operations Coordinator

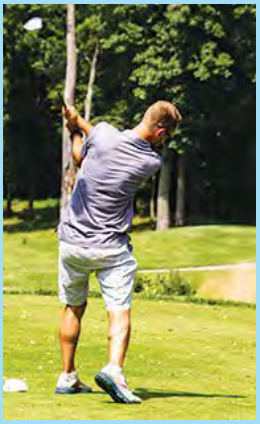
Thank you to everyone that came out in the heat to support our first annual WTEA Foundation Charity Golf Outing this past summer! 50 golfers (educators and business people) came to Wild Rock Golf Club in Wisconsin Dells and had a great outing on July 30th, 2024.

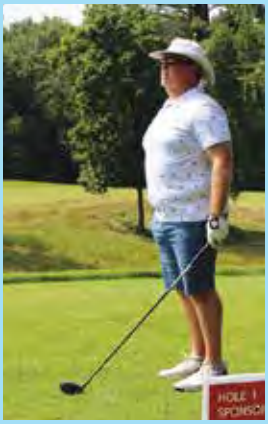
We gave away over $1,000 in prizes to our game winners and golf foursome winners. The WTEA Foundation raised over $3,000 in support of their mission of supporting scholarships and STEM Education in Wisconsin. We look forward to another great golf outing next summer. Mark your calendars now for a fun day on Thursday, July 31, 2025.

For more information on next year's golf outing, or if you want to be a sponsor, contact Alan Mamerow at mameal@hamilton.k12.wi.us

1st Place: People's State Bank

2nd Place: Nvisia





Join Us July 31st, 2025 for the WTEA Foundation's 2nd Annual Charity Golf Event!

OUR SPONSORS

Special shout out to our sponsors for helping make this event possible!

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SKILLSUSA NATIONALS RESULTS

Wisconsin Students Perform Well in Atlanta

By Jamie Birchman, Wisconsin SkillsUSA Event Coordinator

Wisconsin had 35 middle and high schools represented at SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 23-27, 2025. That included 89 contestants in 54 different competitions. The event brought together more than 16,500 attendees, including students, instructors, industry partners, government officials, administrators and more. The highlight of the NLSC is the SkillsUSA Championships, where more than 6,500 state champions competed for national gold, silver and bronze medals in 114 skilled and leadership competitions.

Other highlights included the largest technical education trade show in the nation in SkillsUSA TECHSPO, an exciting opening session, leadership training, workshops and seminars, a community service project to benefit city children and an awards ceremony filled with tears of joy!

State Officers in Attendance

- **Marly Novy (President):** Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School
- **Matthew Verela (Vice-President):** Waunakee Community High School
- **Cooper Yecoshenko (Secretary):** Waunakee Community High School
- **Shelly Nash (Reporter):** Lakeview Technology Academy
- **Sophie Koehler (Treasurer):** Merrill High School
- **Noah Mintie (District 5 Vice-President):** West Bend High School
- **Zequiel Van Der Linden (MS Representative):** Riverside Middle School, Watertown

Wisconsin Competitors at 2024 Nationals
Antigo High School
Badger High School
Barneveld High School
Black River Falls High School
Bruce Public Schools
Chetek-Weyerhaeuser High School
Chippewa Falls Senior School
Fall Creek High School
Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau High School
Hartford Union High School
Kewaunee High School
LakeView Technology Academy
Lincoln High School-Alma Center
Little Chute High School
Madison Memorial High School
Marshfield Senior High School
Mineral Point High School
New Glarus High School
Oconto Falls High School
Prairie View Middle School
Pulaski Community High School
Shawano High School
Slinger High School
St. Croix Falls High School
Stevens Point Area Senior High School
Sun Prairie East High School
Unity High School
Watertown High School
Wausau East High School
Wauzeka-Steuben High School
Webster High School
West Bend High School
Whitnall High School
Winneconne High School

INTERESTED IN STARTING A SKILLSUSA CHAPTER BUT NOT SURE HOW?
Go to the SkillsUSA website: www.skillsusa-wi.org - OR - Email Jake Mihm at: jake.mihm@dpi.wi.gov

Continued on next page...

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Shawano HS: Gold Medal - Automotive Maintenance and Light Repair; Advisor - Jeremy Hodkiewicz.

Kewaunee HS: Gold Medal - CNC 3-Axis Milling Programmer; Advisor - Randall Charles.

Barneveld MS: Gold Medal Team Engineering Challenge (Team Event); Advisor - William Hodgson.

2024-25 SkillsUSA EVENTS CALENDAR

Welding Challenges

- **Fox Valley Technical College**: Oshkosh..... Oct 1, 2024
- **Mid-State Technical College:** Wis. Rapids..... Oct. 18, 2024
- **Blackhawk Technical College:** Milton.....TBD

Fall Leadership Conference

Holiday Inn: Stevens Point ..... Oct 27-28, 2024

District Competitions

- **District 1:** ..... TBD
- **District 2: Marshfield HS**..... Nov. 4, 2024
- **District 3: Antigo HS**..... Nov. 15, 2024
- **District 4: Watertown HS**..... Dec. 11, 2024
- **District 5: Menasha HS**.....Dec. 4, 2024
- **District 6:** ..... TBD

Regional Competitions

- **Mid-State Technical College:** Wisconsin Rapids.....Jan. 17, 2025
- **UW-Platteville:** Platteville ..... Jan. 31, 2025
- **Northcentral Technical College:** Wausau ..... Feb. 7, 2025
- **Gateway Technical College** (IMET Center): Sturtevant ..... Feb 14, 2025
- **Fox Valley Technical College:** Appleton ..... Feb 21, 2025
- **UW-Stout:** Menomonie..... Feb 27-28, 2025

52nd Annual State Leadership & Skills Conference: Madison
Alliant Energy Center & Madison Area Technical College .....April 1-2, 2025

National Leadership & Skills Conference
Atlanta, GA ..... June 23-27, 2025

SkillsUSA Membership Deadline.....March 1, 2025

Riverside MS (Watertown): Gold Medal Robotics-Urban Search and Rescue (Team). Advisors - Jonathon Pickelmann, Anna Vitale.

Lakeview Technology Academy HS: (Pleasant Prairie) - Silver Medal Prepared Speech; Advisor - Madelyn Lacroix.

Bruce HS: Silver Medal- Customer Service Advisor - Monica Nohr.

NOT PICTURED: **Job Skill Demo - Open;** Prairie View MS – GOLD. Advisor - Nate Metzger.

4th PLACE FINISHES:

- Chippewa Falls Senior HS: Electronics Technology.
- Webster HS: Automated Mfg Technology (Team).
- Winneconne HS: Facilithon-Leadership in Facility Management.

Chippewa Falls Senior HS: Bronze Medal Welding Fabrication (Team Event); Advisor - Timothy Pomietlo.

Watertown HS: Bronze Medal Robotics-Urban Search and Rescue (Team); Advisors - Randy Johnson, Tim McGuire, Josh Wilkey.

Arrowhead Union High School Named TE Program of the Year

At the Wisconsin Technology Education Association's (WTEA) Annual Spring Conference in March, Arrowhead Union High School was named the 2024 recipient of the prestigious High School Program of the Year Award. This award recognizes outstanding schools that demonstrate exceptional commitment to providing students with high-quality technology education experiences.

"We are incredibly honored and humbled to receive this impressive award," said Jeremy Schlitt, Tech Ed Instructor at Arrowhead Union High School. "This recognition is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire team, including our teachers, administrators, students, and community partners. We are committed to providing our students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the ever-evolving world of technology."

"It's clear that Arrowhead has an excellent program and that the school and faculty understand the industry's need to help get students interested in the trades and engineering."

The WTEA selection committee was impressed by Arrowhead's program for several reasons, including:

- **Innovative curriculum**: The school offers a wide range of technology education courses aligned with state and national standards and incorporating real-world applications.
- **Dedicated faculty:** The technology education teachers are highly qualified and passionate about their subjects. They provide students with personalized instruction and encourage them to explore their interests.
- **Engaging learning environment:** The school provides students access to state-of-the-art technology and equipment, including CNC brake press, CO2 CNC lasers, CNC mills and lathes, and CNC routers.
- **Strong partnerships:** The school has established strong partnerships with local businesses and industries, which provide students with valuable internship and job shadowing opportunities.

About Arrowhead High School

Since 2012, Arrowhead has taken a transformative leap forward, crafting a modern and relevant engineering and manufacturing program that reflects the latest industry trends. This overhaul encompasses the curriculum, physical space, and student experience. Partnering with leading businesses, Arrowhead has created a program that is both rigorous and relative to training the next generation. "Our learning and workspaces are designed to be bright, clean, organized, and equipped with the same technology our business partners use," explains Anthony Christian, Arrowhead Tech Ed instructor. "We want to ignite students' passion for tech-based careers right now, not later, and our environment is crucial."

Students operate the Bystronic press brake for components to be used in the Landmark Credit Union signature pad mount.

Arrowhead Union High School's Manufacturing and Engineering program is known for its innovative, modern approach to education, boasting state-of-the-art facilities and a curriculum that equips students with the latest technologies and skills. The program has consistently been a leader in the county, consistently producing graduates who are ready for the workforce and are highly sought after by local employers. "It's clear that Arrowhead has an excellent program and that the school and faculty understand the industry's need to help get students interested in the trades and engineering," said Sherri Eubanks, Vice President of Operations at ACE Precision. "The curriculums, classrooms, and workspaces allow for both classroom and hands-on learning. Students are learning about the importance of problem-solving and collaboration. There is a role and need for all different strengths to get the job done. A variety of manufacturing capabilities are available for students to explore, and they are supported by faculty who work hard to prepare them for the real world."

TE Dept: Jeff Luetschwager, Anthony Christian, Jeremy Schlitt, Jacob Ruff, Andrew Zuercher, Tom Whelan.

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The Arrowhead Manufacturing program equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in various manufacturing fields. The program offers courses in CNC machining, metal fabrication and welding, woodworking, automotive, and engineering (PLTW), all delivered within the program's modern labs. "We are incredibly grateful for partners like ACE Precision, who are at the forefront of supporting Arrowhead's Technology Education program," says Anthony Christian. "Every new piece of technology we integrate expands our students' capabilities. They are exposed to industry-standard equipment, allowing them to develop valuable skills and knowledge as they pursue their manufacturing careers. It is truly impressive to witness their work with this sophisticated equipment." By providing students with access to the latest technology, industry-relevant curriculum, and real-world experience, Arrowhead prepares its graduates for exciting careers in the ever-evolving world of manufacturing.

Warhawk Manufacturing–A Student Business

Warhawk Manufacturing is a student-run job shop that opened its doors for business during the 2019-20 school year. The student employees learn the process for the business side, including quoting jobs, ordering material, invoicing, customer service, accounting, and payroll; as well as the manufacturing side, including production, quality control, shipping, receiving, project management, and equipment maintenance. Each student will have a primary role and cross-training to help supplement production needs. They experience key manufacturing fundamentals and obtain valuable in-house work experience while applying skills from other classes that help them contribute to the business's success.

In addition to high school credit, students earn profit sharing and scholarships to aid their future education and training. Instructors Anthony Christian and Jeff Luetschwager oversee the company and production. This past school year, students took on many jobs for outside companies and businesses. Examples include: Designing/creating a new signature pad holder for Landmark Credit Union; designing/CNC routering a backlit LED photo wall and sign for a local wedding venue, The Valerie; creating a new landmark stainless steel monument/attraction for downtown Hartland; and, manufacturing a new scorer's table for the Arrowhead gymnasium.

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Warhawk Mfg. students pose with the scorer's table they designed and manufactured for the Arrowhead gym.

Engineering Design and Development students designed a stainless steel monument with the Hartland Business Improvement District that will be permanently placed in downtown Hartland. Warhawk Manufacturing students completed the fabrication, which will serve as a place for visitors to take photos.

Warhawk Mfg students in front of the LED backlit wedding wall that they manufactured. The wall is being installed at a local wedding venue called The Valerie.

Stainless steel cut sign created by Warhawk Manufacturing for The Valerie wedding venue.

RETIRED TEACHERS A HUGE ASSET TO TE

Helping to Shape Wood and Young Lives

By Louie Paynter, Retiree / Wood Shop Volunteer

Recently retired, it is with a certain amount of satisfaction that, when asked, "What are you doing with your time," my answer is, in part, "helping out in a local high school woodshop." Everyone has knowledge and passions. One of mine happens to be woodworking, and pursuing an opportunity to share with high school woodshop students and to assist the teachers has far exceeded my expectations. This idea of "helping out" is only limited to an individual's knowledge and passion, be it any industrial technology area, computer science, sports, history, a foreign language, accounting, you name it. This idea is something that many reading this article can also explore.

After leaving the teaching profession and entering private business, a reoccurring dream took place; that I was back in a high school woodshop teaching woodworking. During a 40-year business career, my teaching experience was tapped from time to time with teaching and instruction being part of job responsibilities. Also, numerous pieces of furniture were created for our home along with items for family, friends, and some based on requests and sold. Life always seemed more complete when a project was in the works. Each piece continued to increase my knowledge of working with wood.

"As my work career moved to...full retirement and having new found "free time," the idea of volunteering in the local high school and helping in the woodshop seemed intriguing."

As my work career moved to semi-retirement and then full retirement and having new found "free time," the idea of volunteering in the local high school and helping in the woodshop seemed intriguing. If I could help in a small way and share some experiences, this would be a good use of my time. The school is the same school system and shop that I taught in back in 1977-78. Same shop footprint but now with a fully equipped woodshop and state-of-the-art equipment. As it turns out, the school has an industrial technology program that is thriving due to administrative and instructional desires to make it a reality.

Louie Paynter assists 7th graders with a project.

After a brief conversation with the school administrator and sharing the idea of volunteering, he suggested I contact the instructor (Mr. Mike McDowell) directly. Mike and I had met previously but really did not know each other. Our conversation started at the end of school year 2017-2018. Mike was receptive to the idea, as he had other volunteers previously, and suggested that we start my involvement the following year. He felt it best that he get the new school year started and the classroom portion of the curriculum completed first. Then, when actual time in the shop started, my involvement would begin.

Mike and I agreed that spending time to get acclimated to the equipment prior to my starting would be a good place to start. Even though most of the types of machines were familiar, any woodworker knows that each brand/model has its own nuisances. The goal was to acquire a basic understanding so assisting Mike and the students would go as smoothly as possible. We started our "journey" in October, 2018. We decided that spending a couple of mornings a week would work for both of us. In addition to working with two woodworking classes, the opportunity to work with a second instructor and a 7th grade Introduction to Tech Ed also presented itself.

At this point, it is good to share that patience was needed for this experience to work. My wife has continued to be a great supporter and sounding board. As I would respond to her, "How was school today?" questions, she would remind me to be patient. Everyone involved needed to become comfortable with my being a "guest" in "their" shop. Her counsel has been very helpful. Before long, it became apparent that this experience was teaching me much more than I could ever share.

Safe to say, that the first few weeks of my volunteering was an exercise of determining how to help most without "stepping on toes." Mike, from the beginning, was and continues to be, extremely receptive to ideas being shared. His receptiveness to suggestions continues to amaze me. In hindsight, if someone came into "my shop" and shared ideas, even with a sincere intent to help, my reaction may have been more along the lines of, "Who the hell do you think you are?" Whether it was there or not, that concern was not communicated by Mike. After the first few weeks, I offered some observations. Reviewing these a year later, some had merit and others did not.

Continued on next page...

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In retrospect, this is good reminder that "you don't know what you don't know".

With the beginning of each new class Mike explains my involvement and "the getting to be comfortable with each other" begins. Not only has he been supportive of my time with him and students, most students seem receptive to my spending time with them during their shop class. Last year, most students worked on individual projects. Some asked for my help and/or advice - others, not so much. The most value my involvement can provide is to be available to answer questions or to be a sounding board when Mike is busy with other students. I will make pro-

Instructor Mike McDowell, retiree/volunteer Louie Paynter, and instructors Paul Helm and Corey Clark, as Paynter displays his Oriole Nation Community Excellence Award for volunteering in Tech Ed in the local middle & high school.

active suggestions that may or may not be accepted. Last year, there was a student who was very independent and wanted to do things his own way. It seemed that if this student approached me for advice at some point, then we would know that my time was being viewed as valuable by the students as well as instructors. His request did ultimately come as the year neared its end. For me, that was a very good day.

As the 2019-20 school year began, my time with Mike and his classes started on the first day of school providing the opportunity to observe the classroom portion of the curriculum. Observing Mike's instruction with the students has provided the opportunity to reference and reinforce his message in the shop.

This year's classes range from 12 to 24 students in Woods 1, Woods 2 and Woods 3 classes with up to 30 students in the 7th grade "intro class." We landed on my helping with five classes on Tuesday and Thursday and four on Wednesday. My being able to help part of the class while Mike works with others helps to keep things moving forward. This could be a specific task that the class is working on, helping a student get caught up after missing class, or just being another set of eyes and ears. The overall experience continues to be extremely rewarding for me. If it is anywhere as helpful for teachers and students, we are doing a good thing.

It is great to see how respectful most students are. Rarely does a day go by that a student doesn't say thank you for helping in some way. Due to Mike clearly communicating my role as a "volunteer with some knowledge," students will approach and ask for my help and/or suggestions when Mike is helping others. Questions about when I will be in the shop next are not unusual, indicating students have things they would like my help with. Students will proactively show me things they have been working on or have done since my last time with their class.

With the ongoing shortage of trades personnel, it is gratifying to see how the instructors and school system in general encourage the students in the Tech Ed courses to consider a career in the trades. The shop environment has certainly changed since I was a high school student and then a teacher in the woodshop environment. Cell phones, texting and technology in general were not tools, and in some cases, issues back then.

Many of us hear people question (myself included prior to this experience) the work ethic of the next generation. In many cases, it is not that they don't want to work. It seems they have not been given the chance and/or have been taught how to work. Those with this perception have most likely not been provided with the opportunity to spend time with these young adults. If the students that I have had the privilege to work with over the last year and one half are any indication, this next generation will help keep the art and skill of woodworking moving forward. We will also have a great pool of young adults prepared to learn as they enter the trades.

If this experience is intriguing to you at all, it is likely there is an opportunity in your area that would welcome your involvement. By reaching out, who knows what may happen!

- A Grateful Volunteer

Seventh-graders send well wishes to volunteer Tech Ed instructor, Louie Paynter.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Exciting Professional Development Opportunity for Tech Ed Teachers

By Tom Barnhart, WTEA Exhibit Coordinator

Overview: On February 12, 2025, the Universal Technical Institute, in partnership with the WTEA, will be hosting an exclusive professional development event designed specifically for Wisconsin Tech Ed teachers. This unique opportunity will allow you to network with peers from various WTEA districts while exploring secondary education advancements in manufacturing, including fabricating, machining, and automotive service. This event not only offers valuable insights into these industries but also provides a platform for professional growth and collaboration.

Complimentary transportation, free meals, giveaways: To make this experience even more enriching, we are pleased to offer complimentary transportation via coach bus at several pick-up/return locations between Green Bay and Kenosha, admission to the renowned **Chicago Auto Show**, all meals throughout the day, and exciting giveaway items to enhance your classroom. Don't miss out on this chance to expand your knowledge and connect with fellow educators.

For more details or to register: Please contact Tim Zoch or Tom Barnhart. We look forward to your participation in this exceptional event! Tim Zoch: 920-737-0422 or at tzoch@uti.edu; OR Tom Barnhart at tb.wtea@gmail.com

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Precision Metalforming Association Scholarships Now Open!

By Alan J. Mamerow, District E Director, Sussex Hamilton High School

Instructors: Do you have current seniors or recent graduates from your program that are enrolled in courses related to metalforming, tool and die, or welding? Consider directing them to the fall PMA scholarship opportunity!

The Precision Metalforming Association Educational Foundation (PMAEF), in cooperation with PMA Wisconsin, is offering scholarships of $1,000 or more to individuals seeking a career in the metalforming industry. Each award is for one year and are granted based on academic merit. Post-secondary students may reapply for consideration the following year.

Applicant must be a high school senior or current post-secondary student enrolled in one of the following:

- Metalforming/Manufacturing/Technology/Engineering Program
- Trades/Job training/Apprenticeship or Machining
- CNC
- Tool and Die
- Welding or Stamping Certificate Program or an accredited institution with 20 or more contact hours

The applicant must:

- Have a minimum of one manufacturing-related course in high school.
- Be pursuing further education for a career related to manufacturing in a post-secondary educational institute, trade/tech school, or apprenticeship program.

Applicants will need:

- 250 to 500-word personal statement with the focus around manufacturing experiences.
  - Topics to consider include career plans, long-range aspirations, special achievements and honors, employment experience and why you think you'd be a good recipient of the award.
- Two letters of recommendation:
  - One from your technology /engineering instructor.
  - One from a current or recent employer.
- GPA of 2.0 or better.

To apply: Have students fill out the educational scholarship application form at https://pmaef.submit.com/. Applications are open through November 3, 2024.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Milwaukee, Atlanta and the Future of Our World…

By Tom Martin, WTEA CESA Representative

Greetings Wisconsin's Technology & Engineering professional educators! On behalf of my team at CESA 3, I thank you for the work you've done and soon will do. I wish all of you a great year!

Summer 2024 for many of you was I'm sure the time to recharge, refresh and renew that commitment to yourself, your community and to your students. While I did that, I also went well outside my comfort zone to experience your world in a way that was truly inspiring.

Robotics and Automation Training

For one, I immersed myself for a week in robotics and automation training with Mike Dietrich and the great folks at LAB Midwest in Mequon. While I was far outside my realm of understanding, since that time in early June, I have been studying so that when our FANUC robotic arm arrives later this fall, I can begin to program it with the end goal to train colleagues in my region on the concepts of robotics and automation, ultimately leading students to earn a Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) certification.

"Summer 2024 for many of you was...the time to recharge, refresh and renew that commitment to yourself, your community and to your students. While I did that, I also went well outside my comfort zone to experience your world in a way that was truly inspiring."

Now one might ask, "Why would one do that? Well, because many of you would and do. CESAs interface with their professional educators to determine needs and, with passion, work to empower educators to be high functioning while also saving our districts time and effort. While no one will look to hire me anytime soon to run a robot, I believe that automation will be, and is already, the key to so many industries. So, in the spirit of the yeoman's approach to our discipline, I went out of my way to soon bring robotics to our region.

SkillsUSA Nationals A Life-Changing Event

The second life changing event was my first ever attendance at SkillsUSA's National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC). As many know, I have been with SkillsUSA Wisconsin for over 25 years, but the NLSC never worked for me logistically. This year I finally made the pilgrimage to Atlanta and am so glad I did.

When they tell you about the 31 football fields of competition, the tens of thousands of people that attend and the crazy work produced, it sounds dreamlike, but seeing it firsthand confirmed that this is a must-see and -do every year.

SkillsUSA is a culmination of the work we do in Technology & Engineering. In your programs, SkillsUSA allows students to enamor technical and leadership skill sets. Our state competition (April 1-2, 2025) continues to get better every year with a leadership team you will see wants to make this an amazing experience.

With no deference to State, Atlanta is crazy. Imagine walking 25 minutes straight without getting from one end of the building to the next. Imagine seeing millions of dollars in equipment and talent under one roof. Even though I was there a brief time, absorbing all the sights and sounds of NLSC was impossible. But as I flew home, I felt a sense of pride knowing that work we do in Wisconsin is making a difference in the world.

So, the object lesson and purpose of this is to prove that we can and should step out of our comfort zone. While many that know me know I'm not the sharpest tool in the shed, I am also one to try.

So try! Learn something new. Start a SkillsUSA Chapter. Integrate an industry recognized credential into your program. Let's make 2024-25 a year in which we grew ourselves, our programs and our regions. When we do so with a student focused aperture in mind, great things are sure to happen!

District E Fall Meeting

By Alan J. Mamerow, District E Director, Sussex Hamilton High School

Happy fall to all WTEA members! Hopefully you had an enjoyable summer filled with relaxation, family time, or those ever-elusive, "projects in the shop when no one is around to bother me," and feel prepared for another school year. This fall, we will be organizing another District E meeting to include a school tour and a discussion about projects, program growth, and industry partnerships. Be on the lookout for an upcoming email with a date, time, and location! I would love to see our corner of the state host a few "high-tech weekend" events this year as we share project ideas.

If you are new to the region, please reach out to me at mameal@hamilton.k12.wi.us so I can add you to the district email list, and if you need anything from me or the WTEA, don't hesitate to reach out. I look forward to seeing many of you this fall!

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Excited to Explore "BUILD Moto"

By Brian Schiltz, District B Director, Tomahawk School District

As we gear up for a new school year, I want to extend my warmest greetings and express my excitement about the possibilities that lie ahead. I hope you had a refreshing summer, full of relaxation, inspiration, and perhaps even a touch of innovation.

This year, I hope you are looking forward to exploring new technologies, embracing creative teaching methods, and continuing to inspire our students to engage with and shape the future of tech. Your dedication and enthusiasm play a crucial role in preparing the next generation of innovators and problem-solvers.

One exciting new project we're considering for our automotive class and/or a SkillsUSA initiative is the "BUILD Moto" motorcycle program. You can explore it further here: https://buildmoto.com.

We're thrilled to announce that we've hired a new TE instructor, Jerett Flynn. Interestingly, Jerett's mother works at one of the Harley Davidson plants here in Tomahawk. Recently, a few engineers from Harley Davidson reached out to inquire if our school would be interested in collaborating on this project. Harley Davidson has long been a supportive partner in our community, offering employment opportunities, participating in youth apprenticeships (my daughter is currently a youth apprentice there), and contributing to local events like the Northwoods Fall Ride. You can learn more about this event here: https://northwoodsfallride.com. We're excited about the potential for this collaboration and look forward to exploring how it can benefit our students and enhance our programs.

Here's to a fantastic school year filled with fresh ideas, meaningful projects, and the joy of seeing your students grow and succeed. Let's make this year one of our best yet! Please reach out to your district representative or the executive committee with any questions and/or suggestions on how we can better serve you. Welcome back!

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Nitro-X Middle School Summer Camps

By Brent Kindred, Vice President - The Wisconsin Auto & Truck Dealers Foundation

One way the Wisconsin Auto and Truck Dealers Association (WATDA) Foundation is trying to solve the technician shortage is to hold middle school summer camps, also known as Nitro-X Summer Camps. These middle school camps are a great way to introduce children to transportation careers and our dealerships. It gives young students a weeklong experience to grow, become more self-confident about transportation careers, and allows them to make friends who are learning the same new skills as they are.

There are not many, if any, middle schools that can offer the type of experience our Nitro-X camps offer. When children go to their middle schools in the fall, they are traditionally immersed in core subject matter classes. They might participate in sports and various after-school extracurriculars throughout the school year but have time for little else. Our summer camps provide a dedicated, distraction free, in-depth transportation experience for children to develop an automotive, collision, or diesel interest.

Since our Nitro-X Summer Camps are weeklong events, it allows the children to do a deep dive into the industry. Students were able to learn about automotive technology, collision repair, and diesel by learning technical skills through hands-on activities over the five days. And the marquee hands-on experience for the students is building their own remote-control car.

One of the highlights for the summer camp is painting their remote-control car. Students work with technical college staff and industry professionals to prep and paint their cars using the same materials and techniques used in the collision repair industry. The car bodies are customized by the students.

And the highlight of the week, after learning new skills, touring dealerships, meeting new friends and hearing about all the noble career pathways is the students get to race their remote-control cars. Everyone shows up for race day – family, friends, dealerships, instructors, etc. This is the student's opportunity to see who can master the road course and hopefully win the race. It is a fun-filled day and a great way to end a busy and rewarding week!

Summer Camp Locations:

- **SWTC**
- **GTC**
- **Northcentral Technical College**
- **Madison College**
- **WCTC**
- **Northwood Technical College**

FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

Lesson Plans in Industry

By Mike Cattelino, WTEA Advisory Committee Chair; & Manager – Organizational Excellence | Pierce Mfg

The WTEA board was asked to summarize our thoughts on what we did this summer to upgrade our curriculum. At first, I thought the topic was unrelated to my daily tasks, but the reality is that it was very closely related.

I constantly find myself doing things that draw out my educational background and experience even though I now work in the private sector. Who would have thought!? At Pierce Mfg., we are a volume producer of mostly one-off customer fire apparatus. Over 1,000 trucks roll out of our Appleton plant every year. Almost every truck is different than the last one, snowflakes, if you will. Describing the assembly process to new team members or visitors can be a challenge because each truck often requires unique tasks and skills. Imagine the complexity of training team members to get proficient at tasks that change with every truck.

One thing we are good at is imagining, adapting, powering through struggles as a team, working overtime, etc., to meet our throughput goals. Seems like it's the norm. Some of the result of that can be dissatisfaction in team members and turnover. Among other things, that can lead to frustration in training. Train someone and they leave soon after. In recent years we feel like we have turned the corner in a better direction but there is still work to do.

We have taken on the monumental task of creating better documentation of work processes or tasks. Call it building better lesson plans. Same concept, different application. This will build a better foundation of information for trainers, a more consistent exchange of information as team members transition in and out of workstations, etc. A long-term and likely endless project as we have hundreds, if not closer to a thousand, unique workstations in the truck build process.

The long-term vision of this new project is that as new tasks are surfacing, those involved will follow the new template and create documentation for those that follow. This all may seem like something that should have been done long ago but here we are, trying to get back on track. We have been fortunate the last two years to have had several local teachers join us for the summer to dive into the project and add unique perspectives. Four teachers were with us last summer, two returned, and three new teachers joined them this summer.

We are very appreciative of the opportunity to have the teachers working side by side with our production and engineering groups to move the project forward. We have all learned a lot - I believe more than we anticipated. The production team is excited that the result of this project will be improved process documentation and training materials.

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Interface, the journal of the Wisconsin Technology Education Association, is published & mailed from Stoughton, Wisconsin, three times a year and is distributed to members of the WTEA. Individual subscriptions available at $35 per year. For subscription information, back issues, or reprints please send requests to joe.ciontea@wtea-wis.org. Articles for publication should be sent to editor, Duane Apel, at interface.wtea@gmail.com.

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