Collaboration and Innovation: Manufacturing Alliance Plans Visit to New Digital Manufacturing Lab

Members of the area Manufacturing Alliance will visit the Digital Manufacturing Lab located in Ames, Iowa in early spring. The Manufacturing Alliance, facilitated by Northeast Iowa Community College, is a roundtable of area manufacturers focused on solving universal challenges and maximizing opportunities facing regional employers.

The Digital Manufacturing Lab opened in September 2019 through an exciting partnership between Alliant Energy and Iowa State University’s Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS). The Lab and its associated resources are intended to help businesses evaluate problems and find opportunities using innovative technology all within a low-risk testing environment. The lab also utilizes departments across...
GREATER DUBUQUE DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER | February 2020

DUBUQUE COLLEGIATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FAIR ON FEBRUARY 25TH

Greater Dubuque Development and AccessDubuqueJobs.com are sponsoring the 2nd annual Dubuque Collegiate Information Technology Fair to connect local students with career opportunities in their field in the Greater Dubuque area. The event will be held Tuesday February 25th, from 10:00 to 2:00 pm at the Diamond Jo Casino, Harbor Room. Students who attend the fair will informally talk with employers about career and internship opportunities with their companies and learn how IT and Computer Science is critical to local businesses in a wide variety of industries. While the event is recommended for 1st and 2nd year IT students, it will be open to any college students interested in IT or Computer Science careers and a select number of high school students interested in pursuing an IT field after high school. Students are encouraged to register through their schools.

The fair is planned in partnership with the IT Sector Partnership, a group of local industry, workforce, education, economic development, and community organizations engaged in developing solutions to skills and talent shortages in the IT sector in the region.

STUDENT AND FACULTY INFO: Visit our website under Events or at greaterdubuque.org/itfair

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES THROUGH PERSISTENCE AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ARTICLE PROVIDED BY NORTHEAST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A devoted father was sitting at the dining room table one night when his daughter asked for help with a particularly challenging algebra problem.

“My daughter asked, ‘Dad, I need help with this math problem.’ I thought to myself, how am I going to help my daughter when I haven’t earned a high school diploma yet?” recalled Jaime Hernandez-Rodriguez, of Galena, Ill. “I became more determined than ever to complete my high school equivalency diploma and advance my education.”

A native of Xalapa in the state of Veracruz, Mexico, Jaime moved to Galena 20 years ago. He paid bills by working numerous low-skill jobs, including grass cutting, dishwashing for a local restaurant and landscaping. At 20 years of age, he faced a disease that threatened to end his life, just as his adult working years were beginning – Hodgkin lymphoma. He fought through the diagnosis, completed a year of chemotherapy and radiation, and now his cancer is in remission.

Soon a restaurant employee and friend started teaching him how to cook, and Jaime moved from a background dishwasher to a frontline chef. He realized that earning more income is a matter of learning new things, overcoming obstacles, networking with others and advancing work skills.

Since graduating from Northeast Iowa Community College’s HSED program in 2013, Jaime has completed advanced manufacturing career pathway certificates in Welding and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) and now is enrolled in a third, the Intro to Industrial Maintenance program. The Opportunity Dubuque initiative, developed in partnership between NICC, local government, workforce agencies and Greater Dubuque Development Corporation, funded his first two certificate programs.

Networking with people in the community connected Jaime to new opportunities. He learned that Mi-T-M Corporation in Peosta

Continued from Page 1

Iowa State University, bringing in students and faculty from a variety of backgrounds to help solve problems and stimulate innovative ideas.

The bus trip will occur in the early Spring (date TBD). Businesses will have a full-access tour of the lab, however a detailed agenda for the day is pending. Attendees will also have the opportunity to learn through demonstrations and connect with experts on automation and technology.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EVENT:
Northeast Iowa Community College: Greg Willging at 563-557-8271 x 3128 or Wendy Mihm-Herold, Ph.D, at 800-728-2256 x 221
Greater Dubuque Development: Dan McDonald at danielm@greaterdubuque.org or 563-557-9049

Continued on Page 3
needed more welders. He applied, passed employment tests and a welding proficiency evaluation, and the company hired him full-time the same day. Currently, he works a 5-8 a.m. shift at Mi-T-M, attends industrial maintenance classes from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. at NICC and then returns to Mi-T-M for a 1-4 p.m. shift.

“I like the environment at Mi-T-M. It’s giving me more experience. It’s a good place to work, good pay with benefits, plus 401K. They are flexible with employees and with me continuing my education at the College,” he said.

As he continues to build his resume and increase his earning power, Jaime is raising two daughters, ages 18 and 8 years old, as a single parent. He still works full-time at the Galena restaurant. His story is an example of persistence, resilience and hard work.

“One of my dreams was to buy a house to raise my family. For years, I walked by this old house in Galena that I always loved. In September 2019 that house became mine – I achieved a dream,” he said. “When you complete training programs, you are more competitive as a job seeker, or when looking to advance in a company. This is an opportunity to build my talents, and I want to get more education. Eventually I want to study AutoCAD and design to create welding art, and open my own shop in Galena.”

Opportunity Dubuque is a nationally-recognized, collaborative job training effort developed in response to local employers’ needs for a skilled workforce. Through this initiative, individuals complete industry-driven certifications to upgrade their skills or launch their careers. Since 2012, Opportunity Dubuque has trained and employed hundreds of individuals in automotive, advanced manufacturing, construction, culinary, customer service, healthcare, information technology and transportation careers. Tuition is often free for qualifying students to participate through state and local funding since they are ineligible for traditional college financial aid.

dubuque’s true north

GREATER DUBUQUE DEVELOPMENT AND LORAS COLLEGE RELEASE YEAR 3 RESULTS OF COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

The third-year results of an ongoing community survey are now available. The 2019 Community Perceptions Survey, conducted by Loras College, captures public opinion on topics such as the direction of the city, challenges and opportunities for the community, perceptions of safety, and other important issues such as race relations. Some points of note from this year’s results:

- 69% of respondents “believe the community is on the right track”
- 77% of respondents believe Dubuque is a “good place to live”
- 94% of respondents feel safe or very safe in their own neighborhood
- 67% of respondents believe “diversity is beneficial to our community”, with approximately 11% disagreeing
- 45% of respondents believe “Dubuque is an inclusive community”, with approximately 13% disagreeing

The Community Perceptions Survey will be conducted for a minimum of five years through the partnership between Greater Dubuque Development and Loras College.
NEWCOMER SERVICES REPORTS

Newcomer Services Assistance

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Community Tours

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Employers Assisted

| YTD 19-20 | 35 |

Distinctively Dubuque Participants

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**Number of Employers Participating YTD FY 19-20: 52**

Monthly Relocation Guide Distribution

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goals & progress

JOB CREATION UPDATE

The resident unemployment rate for December 2019 was reported as 3.1% and non-farm employment was 62,000.

DUBUQUE MSA LABOR FORCE | GOAL: 64,000

CURRENT: 62,000

SOURCE: Iowa Workforce Development
NEW CONSTRUCTION UPDATE


MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME UPDATE

As of December 2019, the median household income for Dubuque County was reported as $61,321.
POPULATION GROWTH UPDATE
As of April 2018, the population was 96,854

DUBUQUE COUNTY POPULATION GROWTH | GOAL: 100,000  CURRENT: 96,854

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, updated annually

upcoming religious celebrations & cultural events

FEB 21ST Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
FEB 26TH - APR 9TH Lent (Christian)
MAR 1ST Remembrance Day (Marshallese)
MAR 9TH - MAR 10TH Holi (Hindu)
EVENING OF MAR 9TH - EVENING OF MAR 10TH Purim (Jewish)