

Rock Valley Apprenticeship Program To Graduate First Class

The first group of seven students will complete their training in the Rock Valley College Manufacturing Youth Apprenticeship Program next spring. Upon graduation, they will have earned their Associate of Arts degrees from Rock Valley College or their journeyman's card from the Rockford Tooling and Machine Association.

The Rock Valley Apprenticeship Program is part of the nationwide Tech Prep program. It is modeled on the German apprenticeship program, which combines academic study with on-the-job training.

Students begin their training in their junior year of high school. The program is a combination of classroom and on-the-job training, including an extensive summer school program between the junior and senior high school years. After com-

pleting high school, students go on to a four-year apprenticeship program.

The apprenticeship training facility is located at the Pfauter-Maag Cutting Tools facility in Loves Park, IL, and Pfauter-Maag was one of the original sponsoring companies of the program.

Twenty-eight manufacturing companies in the Rock Valley/Rockford area are involved. Since 1993, some 140 students have participated in the program, which boasts a 70% retention rate.

M & M Precision Systems Acquires New Product Line

M & M Precision Systems Corp., manufacturer of gear inspection systems, has acquired the product lines of Apeiron, Inc. of Bloomington, MN. M & M will manufacture these laser dimensional measurement systems and market them worldwide under the M & M name. These non-contact laser measurement systems can accurately and rapidly identify dimensions on surfaces that cannot be measured by traditional contact methods.

Bison Gear Opens New Facility

Bison Gear and Engineering has officially opened its new world headquarters and gear motor manufacturing plant in St. Charles, IL. The 115,000 sq. ft. facility on 9.7 acres brings all the Bison operations under one roof.

The new building, designed and built to Bison's specifications, houses administration, finance, sales and marketing, research and development, warehousing and manufacturing. Special amenities include a gear technology center, a fitness center for employees and training facilities for professional and personal advancement. It has high technology equipment for hobbing, machining, gear inspection and assembly and testing.

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