

Warren County and Clermont County Schools Kickoff Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Students from Kings High School and Goshen High School get on-the-job training in advanced manufacturing from Festo Didactic, made possible by funding from Easterseals and the State

March 2022 - MASON, Ohio -- A group of 14 high school seniors in southwestern Ohio have become the first beneficiaries of a workforce development grant to fund a newly formed pre-apprenticeship program focused on modern day manufacturing.

The grant was awarded to [Easterseals](#), a Cincinnati-based nonprofit organization focused on improving workforce equity, inclusion and access.

Kings High School in Warren County and Goshen High School in Clermont County are the first high schools in the state to participate in the pre-apprenticeship program in collaboration with Festo Didactic, a global leader in industrial and technical education.

“The Area 12 HUB (Butler, Clermont, Warren counties and Easterseals) partnered with Festo because they have an exceptional model for their manufacturing pre-apprenticeship program,” said Jessica Dean, Manager, Youth Services Community Operations at Easterseals Serving Greater Cincinnati. “In this program, there’s a strong commitment to help youth become successful. For students to have access to high quality STEM education and hands-on training like this, it opens up a world of possibilities.”

According to [apprenticeship.gov](#), by definition, pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). Pre-apprenticeship programs help employers save time and money by providing pre-screened, ready-to-work employees who have been trained in the specific skills employers need. U.S. Department of Labor case studies have shown that pre-apprenticeship programs can attract more diverse candidates, including women and people of color, and increase employment of disabled workers.

Specifically, Festo’s pre-apprenticeship is designed to introduce students to modern day smart manufacturing. The program prioritizes hands-on, experiential learning that exposes students to the wonders of [bionics](#) and [robotics](#) in addition to beginner-level engineering concepts in [pneumatics](#) and [mechatronics](#). Pre-apprentices receive a comprehensive learning experience in the classroom with textbook and hybrid learning, then head off to the lab to apply their knowledge hands-on with IoT hardware and [software systems](#). Upon completion of the program, students will receive a certificate of completion.

“We are very pleased to be partnering with Festo and their pre-apprenticeship program,” said Mark Edwards, Director of College and Career Readiness at Goshen Local Schools. “Helping to inspire, motivate, and connect our future workforce is a team effort and Festo has really come through with a program that does all of it. Our students have been excited to learn and are motivated by the potential that a career in advanced manufacturing has to offer. Helping students connect to employers in the process is the icing on the cake.”

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Chris Griffin, school counselor and men's cross country coach at Kings High School added, "In order to be prepared for today's world of work, students need exposure to project-based learning and real world problem-solving. The pre-apprenticeship program at Festo has provided Kings High School students that opportunity. Festo's program offers our students opportunities to leverage manufacturing software with an eye towards creativity and innovation."

The inaugural class began in January and will run for 10 consecutive weeks until March 16th. A 16-week summer program is currently under consideration.

Classes are held at Festo's Regional Service Center (RSC), a 47-acre state-of-the-art logistics and manufacturing plant that provides automation technology serving all of North America. The plant opened in 2015 and is among the 15 largest employers in Mason.

The RSC also serves as the home base for Festo's award-winning [Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program \(MAP2\)](#) which first launched at the Festo Learning Center in 2016. In 2020, MAP2 earned the Best in Ohio Business Award in the Workforce Development Program category.

Festo's Learning Center has ambitious plans to innovate and expand into a full-scale Industry 4.0 Experience Center. The new center and showroom is aimed at closing the STEM skills gap by bringing technical education, industrial applications and manufacturing all under one roof. The Experience Center will house the latest in Festo technology from networked cyber-physical stations to factory robots, assembly components, supply chain innovation and more.

"Pre-apprenticeship is something completely new we're doing with high schools to help students successfully enter the job market after they graduate," said Cristobal Jimenez, Master Trainer at Festo Didactic. "Our goal is to get students engaged and interested in post-secondary apprenticeship opportunities. Completing a registered apprenticeship program can open doors and fast track careers. Once they acquire the skills needed to qualify for jobs in advanced manufacturing or other STEM-related fields, the sky's the limit."

Interested students, parents and educators contact Karen Oberer at karen.oberer@festo.com or visit <https://www.festo-didactic.com/us-en/> to learn more.

Press Images



Pre-Apprentice

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Festo Didactic North America

Festo leverages its automation expertise to provide comprehensive industrial and technical education solutions. Festo Didactic is committed to providing educators and employers with the hands-on training, digital coursework and blended learning solutions needed to close the STEM skills gap. Our lab equipment, curriculum and certification programs are thoughtfully designed to support various learning pathways and on-the-job training. With over 30,000+ certifications issued and 36,000 Festo-equipped educational institutions, Festo Didactic and

its partners are preparing students and employees for the future of work. Learn more at [Festo.com](https://www.festo.com)