



Southridge High School junior Nathaniel Pendley, back left, and senior Hannah Camplin, back right, watched junior Daniel Pund attempt the virtual welder program during National Manufacturing Day held at the Center for Technology, Innovation and Manufacturing on Vincennes University Jasper Campus on Thursday. The simulator gives those who have not welded before an opportunity to experience what it is like.

ERICA LAFSER  
THE HERALD

## Manufacturing day: Skilled jobs are here

By WYATT STAYNER  
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You don't have to leave Dubois County to work with 3-D printers. That was one of the messages at Thursday's National Manufacturing Day held at the Center for Technology, Innovation and Manufacturing on Vincennes University Jasper Campus. Center Director Ray Niehaus said this year's event, the third annual manufacturing day at VUJC, was a success in its ability to expose and educate students to the various job paths available in manufacturing.

"A lot of people had no idea how the skill level is changing in the manufacturing workforce," Niehaus said. "Students have to be aware of how the (manufacturing) industry is changing. Their computers skills that they love to do, they can utilize now and use them in ways that change the industry and make it more efficient and more profitable."

Jasper Engines and Transmissions, MasterBrand, Indiana Furniture, Kimball International, Jasper Group, Waupaca, Kimball Electronics and Advanced Furniture Testing hosted booths at the forum. The county's strong man-

*"We're so heavy in manufacturing and manufacturers always worry about students leaving the area. It's events like this that make all the students aware of the potential."*

**Ray Niehaus**  
Center for Technology Innovation and Manufacturing director

ufacturing base increases the importance of educating kids about changes in the industry. Niehaus said new technology, such as 3-D printing, which is employed at Kimball International, is part of an industry that's changing rapidly and manufacturing day is supposed to educate students on that shifting landscape and let them know that they don't have to leave Dubois County to be a part of it.

"We're so heavy in manufacturing and manufacturers always worry about students leaving the area," Niehaus said. "It's events like this that make all the students

aware of the potential."

All county high schools and Heritage Hills High School were represented at manufacturing day.

Brad Wibbeler, a pre-engineering teacher at Southridge, said he preferred this year's iteration of manufacturing day more than the last two years because the event previously occurred at night when fewer students could attend. Wibbeler, who has been teaching for 13 years, said manufacturing day reinforced the engineering and

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on the back page

## Dubois Strong takes job message outside county

By WYATT STAYNER  
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Dubois Strong is ramping up its job recruitment efforts to fill openings in the county.

Ed Cole, president of Dubois Strong, the county's economic development group, said that in June

brochures and employment information on Dubois County were given to Keller Crescent workers after the Evansville-based plant announced it was closing and eliminating 150 jobs. Cole said the county information packets were given to WorkOne, an office of Indiana's workforce development

system, who then passed the packets onto Keller Crescent workers that visited the agency.

"We're trying to get this in the hands of these folks to say, 'come to Dubois County if you're not able to find anything locally' because we got jobs," Cole said.

At 3 percent, Dubois County

currently has Indiana's lowest unemployment rate. Still, the county is home to a number of local companies that have promised jobs as a requirement of accepting tax abatements. In April 2014, MasterBrand announced plans to add up to 260 jobs by the end of 2016 as a part of its abatement package. As

of July, MasterBrand had added 70. Jasper Engines has added more than 175 jobs in that same time period.

Cole said the employment information and brochures, which out-

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### Friday

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### Weather

TONIGHT



Cloudy with a shower  
Low: 49°

SATURDAY



Partly sunny with a few showers  
High: 60°

Five-day forecast, maps and more information on Page 2.

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# Skilled

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design projects students worked on in school.

"It shows that what we are doing in class relates to real-world jobs, especially in this area because of our manufacturing," Wibbeler said. "That's the reason all these companies are coming because they need to fill their jobs."

Two of Wibbeler's students, Taylor Nuekam and Hannah Camplin, both seniors at Southridge, said they enjoyed just about every aspect of Thursday's gathering, especially seeing the different routes they could take just at Dubois County companies. Both were most attracted to the Career Advancement Partnership program, which partners with seven local companies to provide students the opportunity to attend school for two to three days a week while working the other days.

"It was kind of cool to see all the different things you could apply (engineering) to before you have a degree," Nuekam said.

Jasper Engines and Transmissions, Indiana Furniture Industries, Manufacturing of OFS,



Heritage Hills High School math teacher Andy Fischer, left, and senior Pierce Brown learned how to use an interactive table during National Manufacturing Day held at the Center for Technology, Innovation and Manufacturing on Vincennes University Jasper Campus on Thursday.

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THE HERALD

Wabash Valley Produce, Masterbrand Cabinets, Kimball International and Jasper Rubber

participate in the CAP program and Jeanna Knepper, the senior manager of human resources at

MasterBrand, said it's a great way to subsidize tuition costs and gain knowledge.

"They're learning and getting real-world experience at the same time," Knepper said.

# Outside

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line county amenities and facts such as the population and median family income, were given by WorkOne to about 40 laid-off Keller Crescent workers. Cole said WorkOne told him feedback on the county was positive from workers, but that

there's no great way to track if any of those employees ended up moving to the county. The next venture for Cole is to get that same information into the hands of workers in Randolph County, where Indiana Marujun announced that it will be closing its Winchester plant, which employed more than 750 people.

"We don't want to give the wrong impression that we're trying to take (other county's) people," Cole said. "It's just, 'here's an alternative.'"

Eventually, Cole would like to extend the county's job recruitment efforts into other states such as Illinois and Kentucky. Doing

that might be more difficult, as Cole noted that other state's employment offices might not be as helpful as Indiana's WorkOne, which operates regional posts throughout the state. So instead of handing out a thin brochure and a list of websites, Cole said that Dubois County might have to look

into advertising in out-of-state areas. Cole considers the approach necessary to creating a strong and successful county.

"The areas that do it well and promote themselves well are going to grow and the areas that don't are going to have a world of problems," Cole said.

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