



# News Release

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## **Ridgewater Machine Tool Students Benefit from \$54,000+ in Industry Support**

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HUTCHINSON and WILLMAR, MN - Industry support for Ridgewater College students comes in many forms – internships, scholarships, donations, materials, and more. Last week, Machine Tool Technology students felt the support of two local manufacturing leaders – Midwest Industrial Tool Grinding, Inc. (MITGI) of Hutchinson and Nova-Tech Engineering of Willmar.

MITGI donated more than \$27,000 in carbide tooling. Each student taking Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining courses received a kit with a variety of small-diameter endmills that can be used for engraving and other fine work. The larger-diameter tool donations were added to the program's tool crib for all students to use for general machining.

Nova-Tech Engineering, LCC, donated eight pallets of materials valued at more than \$26,000. First-semester students will use the aluminum, plastic, and steel blanks of various sizes to create projects on manual lathes and mills, while experienced students will use the materials on Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machine projects.

"We are thankful for the generosity of our local business and industry partners," said Ridgewater's Matt Feuerborn, dean of technical instruction. "The materials donated by MITGI and Nova-Tech help keep instructional costs down while also preparing students for the great opportunities that exist within our local employers."

"The wonderful industry partners and their donations are HUGE blessings," said Tammy Jablonski, one of Ridgewater's Machine Tool instructors. She explained that she often designs student projects around donated materials. "When I get a pallet of aluminum blocks that are all one size, I start envisioning how I can scale a specific project to fit the blocks, or come up with entirely new project ideas altogether." Materials are expensive and students go through a great deal.

Industry sees value in the partnership as well. "The students are the foundation of our future," said Katie Bruns, executive assistant at MITGI. "We sincerely enjoy working with both Ridgewater College and the TigerPath program (at Hutchinson High School). Through these programs we have found dedicated and valuable employees. The dedication from Tammy Jablonski and all who have made these programs successful does not go unrecognized. It is a true pleasure to work with such dedicated individuals who want to see our students succeed."

Jeff Turbes, Nova-Tech Engineering machine shop product owner, agreed that supporting students is mutually beneficial. "The partnership we have with Ridgewater is a win for the students, the college, and us as an employer. We

are sponsoring several team members' education who are attending the Ridgewater CNC program, so we have a vested interest in helping them succeed, helping the college succeed, and helping our communities succeed. By investing in our local school and programs, we can help grow our future workforce and show students the dedication of the local community."

Both companies also donate toward student Machine Tool T-shirts with partner logos to help promote the program and industry partnerships. "Students love them!" Jablonski said. "Industry partners make a HUGE positive impact."

Donations like these have a ripple effect because the Minnesota Legislature considers them when determining matching funds for Ridgewater to purchase new equipment.

"Our partnerships with local employers go beyond material and tooling donations to make sure that Ridgewater College graduates are ready to hit the ground running and add value from day one!" Feuerborn said, something he feels fortunate to witness in several programs.

For more information about Machine Tool Technology, go to [www.ridgewater.edu/machinetool](http://www.ridgewater.edu/machinetool).

#### Cutline

Pictured in photo left to right: Derek Ortloff, Nola Schwarzrock, Eli Sladek, and instructor Tammy Jablonski

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Ridgewater College is a community and technical college with campuses in the central Minnesota communities of Willmar and Hutchinson. The college serves more than 5,000 students through its nearly 100 academic programs and more than 68,000 training hours for individuals and businesses through customized training and continuing education. The college is a member of Minnesota State and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

*Minnesota State includes 30 community and technical colleges and 7 state universities serving approximately 340,000 students. It is the third largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.*

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