

# VERMONT TECH

In celebration of National Manufacturing Day, Vermont Technical College hosted an open house on its Randolph Center campus on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The event was part of the coordinated national effort to educate young people and to inspire future generations to join the manufacturing industry. It was also the college's chance to show off the newly upgraded advanced manufacturing labs and thank the legislative representatives who supported the capital bill which funded the \$1 million renovation. That legislative support was an endorsement of the college's commitment to helping address the workforce challenge faced by the state's manufacturing sector.

Manufacturing is a legacy industry in this state, and many factors point to its ongoing impact and potential for growth. There are more than 5,500 open positions and thirty thousand people currently employed in manufacturing in Vermont today. Jobs in manufacturing garner an average salary 36% higher than the average Vermont salary. It is a sector in which many Vermonters find long term employment with opportunities for growth.

Vermont Technical College is a place where Vermonters and the needs of Vermont industries intersect. For manufacturing in particular, the quality infrastructure of the renovated lab and teaching spaces enables the college to continue to educate the skilled workforce in demand at Vermont manufacturing companies. The 3D prototyping equipment, new CNC mills and lathes, Virtual Workstations, virtual lab instruments and metrology instruments – some of which are the exact same technology used at local manufacturers – provides the Vermont Tech student the practical, hands-on experience needed for working in manufacturing before graduation. This college is where the skills gap closes.

The \$1 million appropriation represents the first phase of renovations for the college. The Legislature awarded Vermont Tech another \$500,000 for FY17, contingent on the college raising \$500,000 to match the state funds. In Phase II, the college has the potential to add more advanced system applications, like controls and robotics, to the manufacturing labs. Manufacturers and affiliated industries in the state have already started to contribute to the college's matching fund, including with 'in-kind' donations of equipment, but more work needs to be done to assure that Vermont Tech can leverage the state's commitment. The comprehensive investment of \$2 million over two years is part of a multi-pronged set of initiatives in support of the manufacturing industry. The college's leadership team is committed to positioning the college as a source of competitive advantage for the Vermont manufacturing industry.

For those interested in supporting the advanced manufacturing industry in Vermont and Vermont Tech, please click here - [vtc.edu/labinnovation](http://vtc.edu/labinnovation) - or contact the office of the college's president, Dan Smith, at [president@vtc.edu](mailto:president@vtc.edu) or (802) 728-1252, and ask for information about how to donate to the matching fund.