

Students Explore Local Career Options as Davie County Celebrates Manufacturing Day 2019



Davie students visit Ashley Furniture in Advance, NC during Manufacturing Day 2019.

[Economic Development](#), and the Davie business community.

Approximately 450 students and staff were exposed to the many outstanding career opportunities that exist here in the county. Business leaders provided informative tours including examples of how their employees use math, science, technology, and communication skills. Students were intrigued by the emphasis on safety, size of the facilities, the variety of jobs including the educational requirements for the job, and the machinery used in the day-to-day operation of the businesses.

Hosted annually, Manufacturing Day is a national event executed at the local level and typically focuses on manufacturing careers. “Middle school students are the next generation workforce and these tours are designed to expose them to career opportunities, show how their current and future curriculum ties to real-world careers and ignite interest in their future,” said Carolyn McManamy, director of Davie CONNECT, an initiative of Davie County Economic Development to connect businesses to resources and kids to careers. “During the tours, businesses showcased the scope of jobs available at their facilities and discussed the requisite higher education or skills training needed.”

By Jeanna Baxter White

To celebrate Manufacturing Day 2019, several local businesses and Davie County manufacturers provided a unique opportunity for all eighth-grade students in Davie County.

On October 4th, students from Ellis, North Davie, and South Davie Middle Schools each toured two different locations including [DEX Heavy Duty Parts](#), [Dunlop Aircraft Tyres](#), [Gildan](#), [Ingersoll Rand](#), [Pro Refrigeration](#), [DCCC – Davie Campus](#), and [WFBH-Davie Medical Center – Bermuda Run](#). Other students from all three schools spent their tour-time experiencing many different facets of [Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.](#)

This was the third year Davie County has participated in National Manufacturing Day through the collaborative efforts of [Davie CONNECT](#), [Davie County Chamber of Commerce](#), [Davie County Schools](#), [Davie County](#)



Davie Students visit Ingersoll Rand in Mocksville during Manufacturing Day 2019



Davie students visit Gildan plant in Mocksville during Manufacturing Day 2019.

advanced manufacturing career paths.”

“Manufacturing Day introduces kids at a young age to a manufacturing environment, allowing them to witness real-world applications of the skills they are learning now and will continue to learn, as they progress through their education,” said Jeremy Neff, general manager of Dunlop Aircraft Tyres, Inc. “It gives them the chance to see future opportunities available at Dunlop when starting a career and shows them that they are the future of manufacturing.”

Tonia Shore, director of human resources at Gildan, recognizes that students can’t really understand what they’ve never experienced. “Gildan is one of the largest apparel manufacturers in the world and proudly operates yarn-spinning and distribution facilities in the U.S. We are pleased to provide students in Davie County with the opportunity to discover all the interesting and varied opportunities that a career in manufacturing can offer. We truly hope to inspire the next generation to find their passion in manufacturing.”

Todd Parsons, senior HR generalist at Ingersoll Rand agreed. “We are committed to good corporate citizenship and believe that advancing the quality of life requires taking an active role in addressing the issues impacting our company and communities. It is vital for our success that we focus on and support STEM and early education experiences. Partnering with Manufacturing Day to bring students through our facility is a great way to foster STEM education and create awareness of technology trends and the work environment that they can then take back to the classroom. Our hope is that their experience

“As a school district, it is our responsibility to make students aware of all educational and employment opportunities, and this collaborative effort is an excellent means to familiarize our students with the diverse careers available in Davie County,” said Anthony Davis, director of CTE and Federal Programs for Davie County High School. “MFG Day was also a wonderful learning experience for our middle school teachers who saw first-hand the practical application of the skills they are teaching in the classroom.”

Business and industry participants appreciated the chance to showcase their facilities as well as the career opportunities they have to offer to this future workforce.

“At Ashley, we are proud to participate in National Manufacturing Day and open our doors to students,” said Todd Wanek, president and CEO of Ashley Furniture Industries. “We believe it is important to showcase to students at a young age what opportunities are available to them in their local communities and showcase



Davie students visit Wake Forest Baptist Health Davie Medical Center in Bermuda Run during Manufacturing Day 2019



Davie students visit Dunlop Aircraft Tyres plant in Mocksville during Manufacturing Day 2019

DEX Heavy Duty Parts participates in National Manufacturing Day for numerous reasons. “First and foremost, as a company in the Davie County community, it’s important for the community to know the industries that operate and support the area,” said Darin Redmon, director of operations. “DEX utilizes local employees and vendors from our area to help us all grow together; MFG Day helps share the DEX operations, employees and services showcasing this. Additionally, it’s important for students and others to see opportunities in our industry. DEX is unique in that it offers all levels of career paths from business and finance to marketing and manufacturing. It’s critical for students to see there are local companies that can support various levels of employment and career paths while also supporting our youth and the future of the community and state. Lastly, DEX is proud of our operations, employees, and community, we want to capitalize on every opportunity to share that when we can.”



translates to students, especially females, developing a passion to join STEM-related careers in manufacturing.”

“As an Academic Medical Center, Wake Forest Baptist Health strives to not only teach the doctors and healthcare professionals of today, but also next week, next year, and beyond,” said Matt Britt, marketing manager, Davie & Lexington Medical Centers. “That means when Davie County Schools asks Davie Medical Center to be involved with touring 8th

graders and sharing information about the medical profession with each of them, we are all about it. We love opening the doors of Wake Forest Baptist Health Davie Medical Center to our community and surrounding areas in whatever way we are needed.”



Davie students visit DEX plant in Advance, NC during Manufacturing Day 2019

McManamy has been pleased with the great feedback she has received from businesses as well as the students and teachers. She and Davis appreciate everyone who helped make MFG Day 2019 a success. “This is the first in a series of programs that will directly connect our students to our businesses. The next steps will involve developing a formal program where students of various ages are exposed to a broad variety of career paths and educational opportunities. Aligning business needs with curriculum will ensure Davie County has a well trained and educated workforce to meet the challenges of businesses today and in the future.”

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Davie students visit Pro Refrigeration in Mocksville during Manufacturing day 2019