

Franklin County machine technology program graduates fourteen



MSMI Fall 2014 graduating class in order of the group portrait seen here from left to right: Victor Darmanchev, Craig Bassett, Charles Peterson, Nicholas Halbach, James Bitzer, Pasha Divorenko, Michael Gale, Kody Stevens, Dominic Lively, Clinton Dawley, William Ferris III, DaVonte Williams, Charlene Berniche. (not pictured Benjamin Demers) *(photo provided)*



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on December 11, 2014 at 3:36 PM, updated December 11, 2014 at 3:40 PM

TURNERS FALLS - The [machine technology program](#) offered by Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board and community partners at Franklin County Technical School has graduated another 14 skilled manufacturing employees in its most recent class.

This 12-week program is for adults who are either unemployed or underemployed. This incumbent worker training works in concert with Franklin County Technical School's programs for high-school age students.

Partners include industry and Greenfield Community College.

Both programs use the machine shop at [Franklin Country Technical School](#) that was given a \$717,000 makeover with new equipment paid for both with state grants and contributions from business in the region.

Manufacturers asked for the updated programs after finding it hard to hire skilled labor. It is part of a statewide Middle Skills initiative aimed at improving skills beyond a high school education but not involving a four-year college degree.

Four of the current students are already working in the in precision manufacturing, and 25 new candidates are vying for seats in the Spring 2015 training program, the Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board said.

This is the third class to graduate. Graduates of the first two training cycles now working at VSS, Inc., which used to be known as Valley Steel Stamp, Bete Fog Nozzle, the duMONT Co. Deerfield Packaging, Quabbin, Inc., L.S. Starrett, Kennametal and other businesses,

The starting at an average wage is \$15.50 an hour.

The next Manufacturing Careers information session will be held in Greenfield on Wednesday, Jan. 12. Organizers said those interested should call the Career Center at 413-774-4361 to reserve a spot in that information session.

Steve Capshaw of VSS, Inc. said

"We hired three, trained one of our current workers and expect to hire 10 more in the next few years."
Lisa Stefanich, Kennametal Greenfield said

"[Kennametal](#) recently made a decision to bring jobs to Greenfield instead of Asheboro, North Carolina, and the strong partnership with the FHREB's Middle Skills Manufacturing Initiative has been an extremely valuable resource in helping us hire top notch candidates for those jobs."