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EVSC announces three advancements in manufacturing area at Tech Center

By Zach Evans Special to the Courier & Press

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EVANSVILLE — Hoping to continue attracting students to the blossoming world of computer based manufacturing, the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp. announced three program advancements in its manufacturing area at the Southern Indiana Career and Technical Center on Wednesday.

Cory Herrin, the principal of the Career and Technical Center said he was "thrilled" to see the school grow.

"One of our mission is to prepare our students for success. And part of doing that is making sure that we have the best curriculum and the best equipment for our kids."

The school — now in its sixth year — has nearly 700 students from 20 schools in five counties. The school emphasizes career and technical education with almost 20 programs of study.

One of the new programs announced Wednesday was the Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics Pilot Program, led by Conexus Indiana.

Claudia Cummings, the Vice President of Workforce and Education at Conexus said the Indiana Department of Education is releasing new standards for advanced manufacturing and logistics in 2013.

Because of this, Cummings said, Conexus is putting together a curriculum based on industry standards to give to students in 2013. But before that happens, they will be testing it on students in the EVSC through the pilot program.

"First we're testing it here as well as five other communities. What we learn here will be transferred statewide."

While people may often see the manufacturing world as dark and dangerous, that isn't the case, Cummings said.

"You're more likely to work on a computer today than an assembly line in a manufacturing facility."

She said the she hopes that by getting students involved young they will have a positive impression of the manufacturing world and come out with skills that they need so they can perform sooner and better.

Another announcement Wednesday was the opening of the Yaskawa Motoman Robot

Laboratory at the Career and Technical Center. The lab will feature eight industry robots that students can program to perform tasks like those used in the manufacturing world.

Seniors Forest Kolley of Castle High School and Allen Engler of Central are enrolled in the upper level electricity class that use robots at the tech center.

Both students will be going to Vincennes University after graduation to enroll in the Computer Integrated Manufacturing program there.

Engler said he is attracted to robots and manufacturing because of the opportunity it brings.

"The amount of manufacturing careers is expanding, seeing that and knowing that there is going to be a shortage of people to fill that brings a good opportunity for me."

Herrin said he wants to shake the negative connotations parents may have with the manufacturing industry.

"Every parent wants their kid to be able to have the very best experience they can possibly have. And part of what we want to do is to communicate to parents that what they once thought of as 'factory work' is no longer factory work."

Herrin said the manufacturing world is a career that requires both skill and education.

"Students won't be working the assembly line their entire life. They have upward mobility available to them."

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