



## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **GW Plastics' "School of Tech" Graduates Vermont-based manufacturing company completes first semester of local high school class**

BETHEL, VT (June 15, 2015) – In response to a growing regional and national skilled labor shortage, GW Plastics is leading the way in workforce training, career development, and community educational outreach through an innovative high school program. The company is proud to announce that their first year of "School of Tech" students has graduated.

GW Plastics began their "School of Tech" in January. Local students from Randolph Union High School in Randolph, Vermont were bused to GW Plastics' state-of-the-art facilities for a semester-long course focused on manufacturing technology. "It is very difficult to find a high school shop class nowadays that provides relevant training in our industry," says Cathy Tempesta, GW Plastics Director of Human Resources. "There are very limited ways for students to become exposed to the world of manufacturing, so we launched our own 'school' in order to make manufacturing attractive again."

The class, which met three times per week, began with basic business and manufacturing exposure and then progressed through the entire manufacturing process, including material selection and pricing, mold design, mold making, injection molding, and quality. RUHS faculty member and teacher Ken Cadow applied what the students learned at GW Plastics in their weekly classes. The semester culminated with a visit to Gifford Medical Center in Randolph so the students could see the products that GW Plastics manufactures used in real life and learn about the ramifications if a product is not manufactured to the highest level of quality possible.

GW Plastics hosted a "graduation" ceremony for the 10 students who completed the course. During the celebration, Tempesta spoke about applying what they learned this semester in a future career at GW Plastics or another manufacturing company, and the several GW "teachers" brought to life the many highlights of the semester. Each student was then presented with a diploma and special gift from Plant Manager Scott Perkins, after which Brenan Riehl, GW Plastics CEO and President, reiterated how proud he was of these students for taking their education into the real world.

Join us in congratulating the following students on a successful semester: Amanda Cass, Kaitlin DeJoinville, Josh Huntley, Nick Jickling, Jimmy Marks, Emily Messier, Peter Pinello, Brandon Ryan, Eric Washburn, and Austin Wheatley. In addition, GW Plastics would like to extend sincere gratitude to Randolph Union High School teacher Ken Cadow for his dedication to this program and the staff of RUHS for their ongoing support.

To learn more about GW Plastics' workforce training initiatives, please contact Cathy Tempesta at [Cathy.Tempesta@GWPlastics.com](mailto:Cathy.Tempesta@GWPlastics.com) or visit their website at [www.GWPlastics.com](http://www.GWPlastics.com).



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### About GW Plastics:

Since its foundation in 1955, GW Plastics has earned a reputation as a leader in precision injection molding and contract manufacturing serving the world's most successful companies in the healthcare, automotive safety, and consumer/industrial markets. Specializing in complex injection molded thermoplastic and silicone solutions, GW Plastics excels at close tolerance mold building, precision injection molding, and contract assembly. Core competencies include product development, in-house precision tooling, scientific molding, and automated assembly. With leading-edge technologies, a Six Sigma quality commitment, and a relentless pursuit of innovation, GW Plastics continues to attract and delight industry-leading market leaders who seek consistency of ownership, financial stability, a professional leadership team, and a workforce with the experience to deliver on-time and within budget. Headquartered in Bethel, Vermont, the company's standardized ISO 9001, ISO 13485, ISO 14001, ISO/TS 16949 and FDA-registered manufacturing facilities are located in Bethel and Royalton, Vermont; San Antonio, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; Querétaro, Mexico; and Dongguan, China.

For more information, contact:

*Rebecca Murphy*

***Inside Sales and Marketing Coordinator***

GW Plastics, Inc.

239 Pleasant Street

Bethel, VT 05032

(802) 234-9941

Rebecca.Murphy@GWPlastics.com

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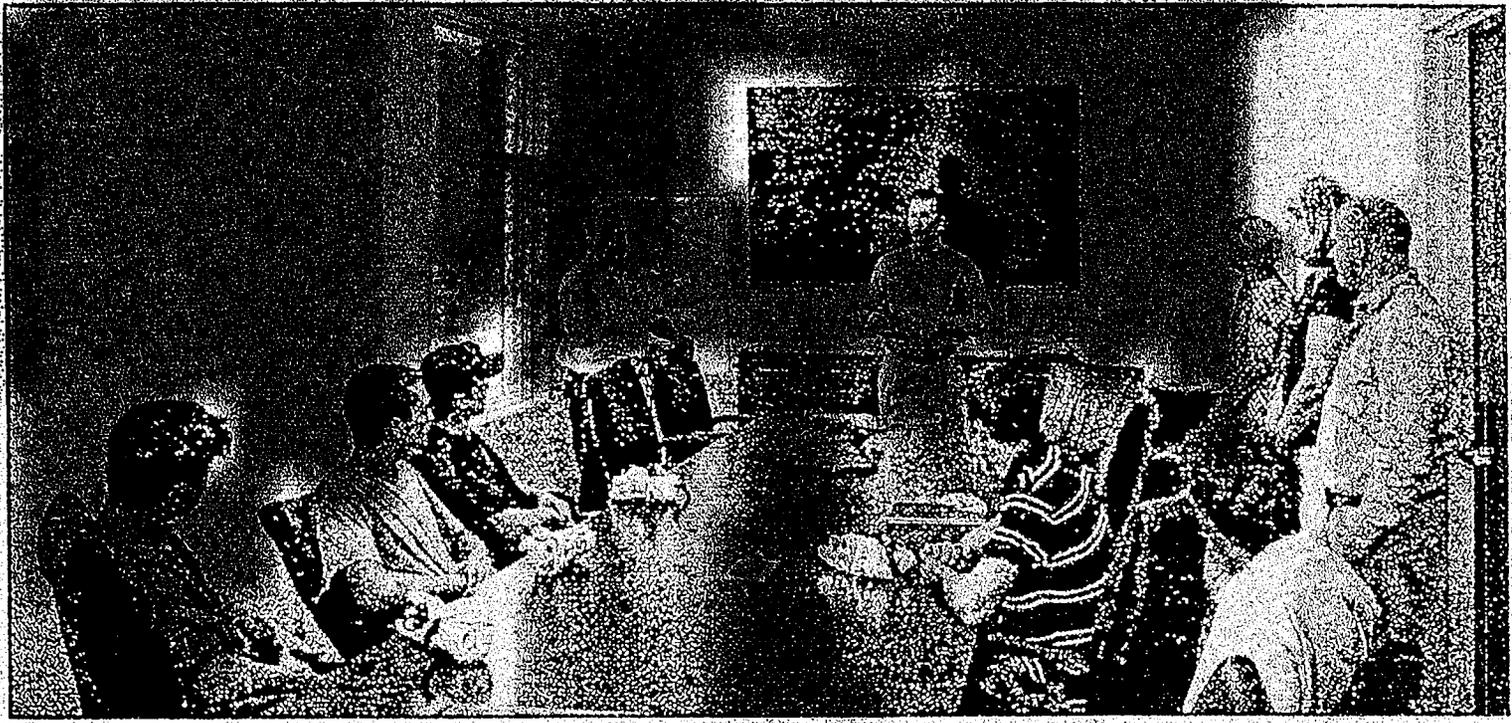
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GW Plastics President Brenan Riehl, center, addresses Randolph Union High School students and GW Plastics teachers who are participating in the Bethel company's School of Tech program. Ten stu-

dents participated in this semester's program and another group has enrolled for the upcoming fall semester.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF GW PLASTICS

# Teaching Tech

May 31, 2015  
Valley News

## GW Plastics Introduces Students to Modern Manufacturing

BY STEVE ZIND

Vermont Public Radio

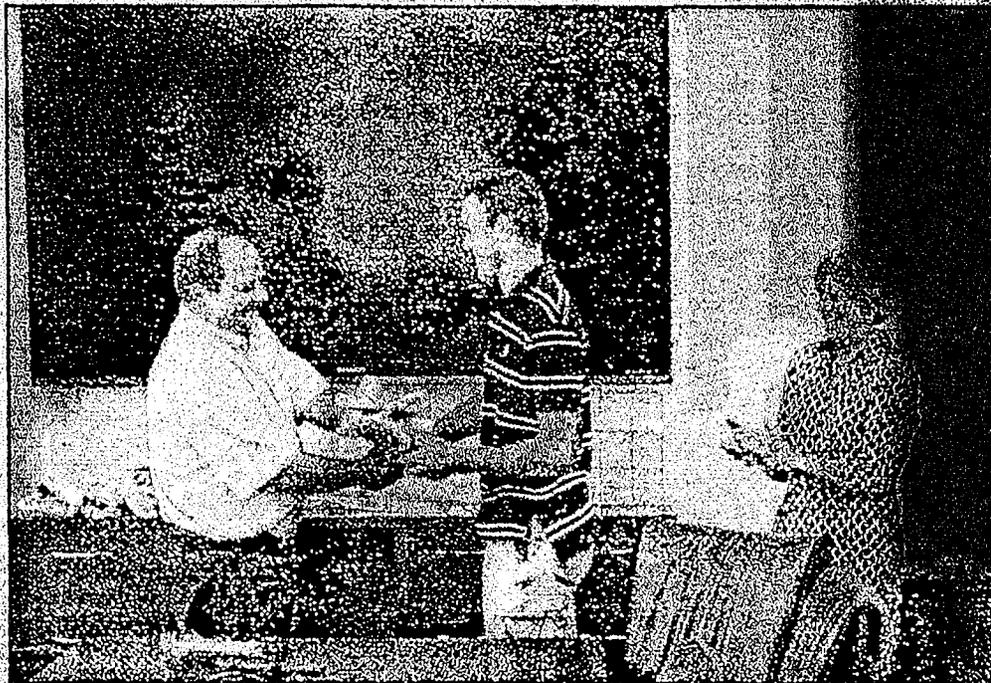
**Berthel** — The number of manufacturing jobs in Vermont has declined from historical highs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the state has shed 17 percent of manufacturing jobs in the past decade. But there are still plenty of manufacturers in the state, and many of them feel that years of talk about disappearing jobs have led people to believe their industry is dead. They say the impression can be self-fulfilling — and it's one reason they're having difficulty filling some positions.

In an effort to get ahead of the problem, GW Plastics in Berthel is working with Randolph Union High School to introduce students to a high-tech manufacturing environment.

"Historically, when we look for our technical people, we look for somebody who already has the skills coming in the door and we've had to look outside of the state. It's very challenging to attract people to move to rural Vermont," said Cathy Tempesta, director of human resources at GW Plastics, who said some of the best-paying technical jobs at GW Plastics are some of the hardest to fill. "We started thinking, why not look at the people who are already here? Offer the kids the opportunities for more education, for the skills, for the experience — and stay where their families are," she said.

GW Plastics now has its own class, called the School of Tech. For the past semester, 10 Randolph Union High School students have been enrolled in the school. Last week, the class celebrated its graduation.

Many manufacturers have training programs



Scott Perkins, left, GW Plastics' Royalton plant manager, and Cathy Tempesta, director of human resources, present a graduating student with his diploma from the company's School of Tech.

for people in the job market, or they host visits by students. The School of Tech is unique in that it's an educational program for students and involves both classroom lectures and hands-on work.

Recently, John Lemmon, corporate metrology manager at GW Plastics, was on the company's production line with students, illustrating some of the points he'd made in an earlier class session. Company employees have created a series of pre-

sentations that serve as the students' introduction to high-tech manufacturing.

Ken Cadow is the teacher at Randolph Union who recruited the students for the program. From his perspective, he said, it's not about filling jobs at GW Plastics, but giving students a clearer sense of what their options are.

Cadow said some students see skills like math

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## Teaching High-Tech at GW Plastics

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as abstractions that don't have real-world value. This program gives them a chance to see those skills in use. Students also come into contact with marketing and human resources people at the company, which Cadow said gives them a broader view of how English and communication skills can be used.

"These guys get a lot of it here," he said. "Another major interest for the kids was (that) these are good paying jobs in Vermont. Some of our

better-paying jobs are unfortunately either our best-kept secrets or something that we're still trying to align our education system to."

Nick Jickling, a Randolph high school senior who plans to study either engineering or biology in college, signed up for the GW Plastics program to get a clearer idea of what engineering involved.

"This just seemed like a great way for me to get some experience so I could see if I wanted to continue with

it in the future," said Jickling.

Jickling said he was struck by the complexity of the manufacturing process.

"I was really surprised how precise these machines are, what these tools can make," he said.

GW Plastics plans to continue its School of Tech next year. The company also is partnering with Vermont Technical College to fund a scholarship program and provide paid summer internships to students.