

AmSkills Pre-Apprenticeship Graduates Another Class of Adults Ready to Launch Their Manufacturing Career

On July 19, 2018, five more proud graduates completed their 400 hours of training in the AmSkills Adult Pre-Apprenticeship Program. These students learned the foundational skills needed to start a career in manufacturing and were provided the opportunity to explore several career tracks through hands-on projects in an effort to help them determine if manufacturing is the right career for them. Two of our candidates immediately secured jobs with AmSkills assistance and here are their stories:

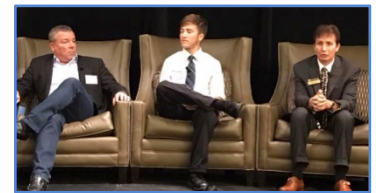
Alex Gerwe is a 26-year-old former Army man who found AmSkills by accident. But it was the best kind of accident.

Getting to the AmSkills training facility was not easy for Alex, because he was walking up to 3 miles each day to and from home; but he knew that in order to succeed, he has to make sacrifices. When AmSkills learned that Alex was walking to the program because he didn't have any transportation, we worked with a local nonprofit to have a bike donated to Alex and helped to secure reduced rates from PSTA bus transportation services.



After successfully completing the Pre-Apprenticeship Program, AmSkills helped Alex to secure a job at Oscor, Inc. which has locations in Pasco & Pinellas Counties and is a manufacturer of innovative medical devices. Alex began his "Career Launch Phase" on July 23 in Palm Harbor, where he is being considered for a future Apprenticeship. "If not for AmSkills, I think I'd probably be working at McDonalds or some other low-paying job," said Alex. "I'm so glad I found AmSkills."

Alex was also invited to participate in a TBARTA Transit Summit (see picture on right) at Tampa International Airport on July 20, and spoke about being a transit user and how he used mass transit to get to AmSkills training.



Alex Grewe (Center) Participates on TBARTA Panel on Public Transit

Nikki (not shown) is a single mother of three who has been living in a homeless shelter (Metropolitan Ministries) for the past year in Pasco County. She also completed her Adult Pre-Apprenticeship in July and recently started working at Tru Simulation & Training (TRU), a Pasco County company that develops, manufactures and maintains state-of-the-art flight training simulators. Metropolitan Ministries is working with AmSkills to help her launch her career and has indicated that Nikki can remain living there until she secures permanent employment and has saved enough money to find new housing. AmSkills will continue to coach Nikki and work with her Mentor at TRU in order to help her succeed as she launches her career. Congratulations to both Nikki and Alex!

AmSkills Youth Pre-Apprenticeship Program Update: Northeast High School Automotive & Manufacturing Academy is a Pinellas County high school located in St. Petersburg, Florida and in fall 2017, AmSkills was asked to help the struggling manufacturing academy, which had more than 100 students. AmSkills worked with Principal Mr. Hernandez and school administrators to establish an AmSkills Workshop on-site, provide curriculum with hands-on projects, and provide instructors from the manufacturing industry. In addition, AmSkills facilitated multiple tours for students to visit local manufacturers so they could see for themselves, the many career opportunities available.



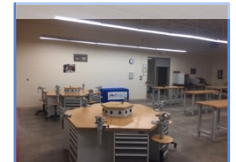
Students Prepare for Hand-On Project

One of the manufacturing tours included H & S Swansons' Tool Company located in Pinellas Park where students were able to meet two recent graduates of the AmSkills Youth Pre-Apprenticeship Program. Dean Pulver and Zachary Smith graduated from Dixie Hollins High School in 2018 and with AmSkills assistance secured permanent jobs at H & S Swansons'. The Northeast High School Manufacturing Academy students were amazed to see such recent high school graduates working on large CNC Machines so quickly after graduating.

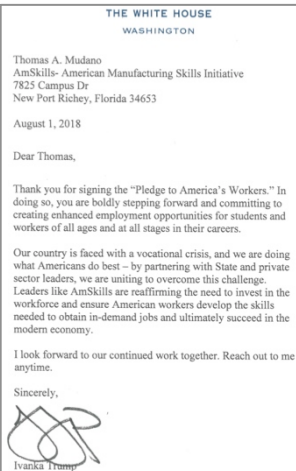


AmSkills Workshop @ NEHS

The AmSkills Youth Pre-Apprenticeship Program was initially created as an afterschool program. However this limits participation due to transportation problems and conflicting after-school activities. One of the goals of AmSkills is to work with local School Districts to develop effective manufacturing programs, in partnership with industry, where students not only achieve academic credit, but ultimately provide young adults with increased career opportunities resulting in a greater pipeline of skilled candidates for local manufacturers. Working with Northeast High School is the first step to achieving that goal.



AmSkills is currently bearing the full cost of the program at Northeast High School and other Youth Pre-Apprenticeship Programs in Pasco and Hernando Counties and that is one reason why we have established the AmSkills Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non profit to assist in securing funding partners. To date, AmSkills has been funded by each County, however this funding is coming to an end. We are truly changing lives and need members from the manufacturing industry, our community and others to help us to continue. Learn more on the following page how you can help!

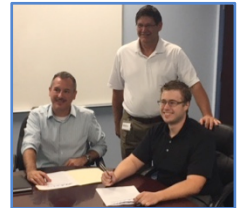


AmSkills Participates in "Pledge to America's Workers."

On July 31, 2018, AmSkills Executive Director Tom Mudano had the honor of being invited to attend a White House event on workforce training in Tampa where President Trump signed an executive order for job training. The pledge commits AmSkills to helping "create enhanced employment opportunities for students and workers of all ages and at all stages in their careers." A letter (left) was received as a thank you for our commitment to "reaffirming the need to invest in the workforce and insure American workers develop the skills needed to obtain in-demand jobs"

First AmSkills Tool & Die Maker Apprentice Starts at Leadertech, inc.

AmSkills graduate Sam Gates signed his apprentice contract at Leader Tech on June 13, 2018, becoming the first graduate of the AmSkills Pre-Apprenticeship Program to become a tool & die maker apprentice. Sam joined AmSkills after deciding that he needed a career change at age 27. And from day one of the program, he was hooked.



After finishing the Adult Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program, AmSkills staff began the process of finding Sam the perfect apprenticeship. "The administrators and instructors at AmSkills were dedicated to not only my education and skills, but also to finding me employment with a company that matched my strongest aptitudes," said Sam. "They spent time determining my abilities, personality and goals, and then did their best to find a position with a company that best suited me."

That company was Leader Tech, a manufacturer of EMI-shielding products for circuit boards, electronic enclosures, interconnect cables and Thermal solutions. Beginning January 2018, Sam spent approximately four months there during the Career Launch Phase of his training. Now, he begins his official apprenticeship, which will last for the next three years. After that, he will officially be a skilled toolmaker.

AmSkills Apprenticeship Foundation, Inc. Officially Achieves 501(c)(3) Status

AmSkills has officially formed a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with the primary purpose to seek grants and other funding for the benefit of the AmSkills organization and students. As a result, we have been actively identifying potential grant opportunities and have begun educating more people within our community on how AmSkills is changing lives on a personal level. In recent months, AmSkills learned that funding from Hernando County has been cut due to budget shortfalls, and Pinellas County funding is contingent on the Homestead Exemption referendum on the November ballot. If it passes, funding from Pinellas may be cut for the upcoming AmSkills fiscal year. It is imperative that we keep the momentum going. If you or your company would like the opportunity to get involved, please contact Tom Mudano @ 727.301.1282 ext. 122.

Special Thanks for Donations & State Appropriations Benefiting AmSkills Programs & Students

Recently AmSkills and the AmSkills Foundation received several grants and/or state appropriations to help support our programs and services. On behalf of the Board, we want to thank those who have contributed:



Thank You Dr. James Gills
For Your Donation
Supporting AmSkills



Tom Mudano Receiving \$5,000
Check for Mobile Workshop from St.
Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman

- Special thanks to Dr. James Gills for his generous gift of \$34,500 which will be used for equipment, a van to transport students on manufacturing tours and a Mobile Workshop.
- Thank you City of St. Petersburg and Mayor Rick Kriseman for a \$5,000 grant from the My Brothers/Sisters Keeper Community Grant Program. This funding will be used to purchase a trailer for the AmSkills Mobile Workshop (see next months newsletter to learn more).
- Pasco Hernando Career Source also donated \$9,800 to sponsor the Creative Metal Arts Program, which AmSkills will be establishing to introduce women, in a creative way, to career opportunities in manufacturing. This program will be a part of the AmSkills Mobile Workshop and will be used at events for PACE for Girls, Career Source and other neighborhood events. Thank you Jerome Salantino, CEO Career Source Pasco and Hernando for this sponsorship.
- AmSkills was awarded a State Appropriation from the Florida Department of Education in the amount of \$50,000 for FY18/19. Funding from this will be used for recruitment, marketing and grant writing in an effort to increase enrollment & funding for programs.
- The Gene Haas Foundation awarded AmSkills \$10,000 as a grant to support scholarships and NIMS credentialing for students. We are very grateful for this donation.

