

Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

For Immediate Release

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Metals & Manufacturing Lab Opens at WNHS

The new Metals & Manufacturing Lab opened to students late last semester offering Woodstock North High School students a chance to learn and develop their career possibilities on their home campus.

The lab will be dedicated at a Jan. 31 event where students will demonstrate the new equipment and provide an opportunity for community members to take a look inside.

While there is a similar lab across town at Woodstock High School that had classes open to Woodstock North students, the travel time was prohibitive for some who found class schedule difficulties.

Funding for the lab was obtained through Advanced McHenry County via an ARPA (America Rescue Plan Act) which Woodstock Community Unit District 200 applied for last spring.

Assistant Superintendent Justin Smith and career facilitator Amanda Harmer made a presentation to the McHenry County Board and the District received \$258,172 to transform the space of two classrooms. Woodstock Community Unit School District 200 also received an additional \$21,000 from the Technology & Manufacturing Association.

Career & Technical Education teacher Austen Luedtke said he's thrilled that District 200 is now able to provide the opportunity for students on both campuses.

"I'm very excited about having another machine shop. This shop starts a new pipeline of young, skilled tradespeople. That is something this region is in desperate need of," Luedtke said.

The shop is home to six lathes, six mills, two surface grinders and two drill presses as well as a Haas CNC lathe and CNC mill.

"The students are eager to get to work every day. It's exciting to see the look on their faces when they complete a project. They even bring their friends into the shop to show them what they have been learning,"

Luedtke said students have made jewelry boxes, rings, spinning tops, hammers, keychains,, pens, among other items. More importantly, they're learning skills that are in great demand in the labor market.