

Tier 1 automotive supplier bridges the gap between high schools and industry with Tooling U-SME

“For 25 years we’ve been knocking down the local high school’s doors. Then sme comes in for two meetings and we’re inside the school. And now we’re developing industrial technology there.”

– Talent acquisition manager

Challenge

- Managing the skills gap: 75% percent of company’s skilled tradespeople will be retiring in the next five years
- Documenting and teaching tribal knowledge before experienced workers leave
- Filling entry-level positions
- Preparing current employees for the next level job
- Retaining employees

Solution

- Working with Tooling U-SME, implemented a Partnership Response in Manufacturing Education (PRIME) lab in a local high school
- Partnered with engineering schools that offer co-op programs
- Developed a high school internship program, partnering juniors and seniors with mentors in four apprenticeships
- Hired local college graduates who had moved away, enticing them to return
- Created training and development program for incumbent workforce with clearly defined career paths

Results

- Built a talent pipeline through school systems, local universities and high schools
- With the help of Tooling U-SME and PRIME, developed partnerships with local schools
- Bridged the gap between high school and industry
- Developed industrial technology in local school
- Created four state-licensed apprenticeship programs
- Fast-tracked high school students into apprenticeship programs upon graduation

