

Clemco And Local College Launch Welder Apprenticeship Program

CLEMCO INDUSTRIES of Washington, Missouri, in collaboration with East Central College in neighboring Union, Missouri, launched their Welder Apprenticeship Program. Four Clemco employees are enrolled in the three-year program, which is funded by a Missouri Registered Apprenticeship Program (MORAP) grant. The \$239,550 MORAP grant, awarded by the Missouri Department of Workforce Development, has enabled East Central to partner with Clemco to develop apprenticeship programs.

The four Clemco employees in the Welder Apprenticeship Program range in age from 20 to 33 and from between less than a year and 4.5 years of employment in the Clemco manufacturing facility. Last fall they spent their Tuesday and Thursday evenings in four-hour, hands-on classes on the East Central campus. They were taught metal inert gas (MIG), tungsten inert gas (TIG), and stick welding. The MORAP grant covered the students' tuition and book fees, and they maintained their day jobs at Clemco.

"Our program with East Central College offers four of our employees an opportunity they may not have otherwise had," says Clemco Vice President of Manufacturing Lou Ann Feldman. "Clemco now can more easily help four good employees progress within the company, and for that we, and I know they also, are grateful."

After completing the fall semester of instruction at East Central, the four apprentices began moving into full-time welding positions at Clemco. The hours they work count toward their on-the-job training required to earn their specialization in welding certificates from East Central.

In mid-January, KETC Channel 9 (the St. Louis public television station) posted a video about the Welder Apprenticeship Program in its *Working St. Louis* web series, which explores in-demand jobs and careers in the region that are attainable after high school, with or without a college degree. The series is part of the station's "American Graduate: Getting to Work" initiative. The video can also be viewed on YouTube.

Clemco Industries employs more than 145 people. It is the world's largest manufacturer of air-powered abrasive blast equipment used to clean, deburr, shot peen, remove coatings, finish, or otherwise improve surfaces. Since the mid-1940s, Clemco Industries has built industrial-grade blast equipment for contractors, facility owners, metal fabricators, and manufacturers around the globe. The company also sells safety and protection accessories.

MEET THE CLEMCO APPRENTICES

Kasheea Portell

Current Position: Cabinet Assembler

Welding Experience Prior to Apprenticeship: None

"I like learning a new trade and being challenged, and that Clemco has offered me an opportunity for a second promotion within the company."

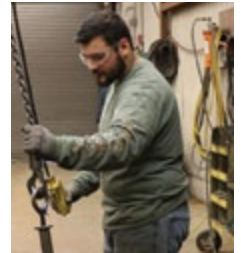


Christopher Kallmbah

Current Position: Pressure Vessel Hydrotester

Welding Experience Prior to Apprenticeship: Two-month MIG welding credential from East Central College. MIG welder at previous employer for one year.

"Through the apprenticeship I've learned new welding techniques and theories and different processes. Aside from the apprenticeship, I appreciate the other benefits at Clemco."

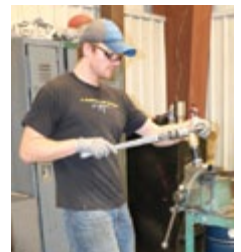


Dennis Beanblossom

Current Position: Plumber/Blast Operator

Welding Experience Prior to Apprenticeship: None

"The classes are fast-paced so we learn a lot in a short amount of time, and soon I will be moving to the fabrication side of the plant where I will be welding. I appreciate that Clemco offered me the apprenticeship."



Jarrett Vandaveer

Current Position: Welder

Welding Experience Prior to Apprenticeship: MIG, TIG, and Stick welding certificates from Jefferson College in Hillsboro, Missouri

"I like the apprenticeship. It's a great opportunity. Clemco is allowing us to participate in this program even though we are slammed with overtime. But Clemco is flexible. I like the people, the job, the facility. Other places won't look at people who have less than four years of welding experience, but Clemco is willing to train you."

