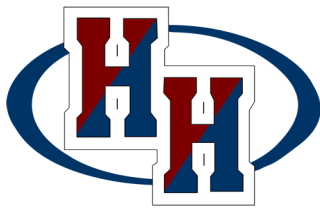


STAND OUT. STAND ABOVE.

Success Story



HERITAGE HILLS HIGH SCHOOL ENGINEERING PROGRAM

Location:

Lincoln City, Indiana

Program Enrollment:

- 75 students per year and growing

Success Metrics:

- Teaching industry skills to prepare students for the workforce
- Credential valued by advanced education facilities and local and global employers
- Certification to validate leading engineering software skills

Indiana High School Prepares Students for Manufacturing and Industrial Workforce with Autodesk Certified User Exam

Heritage Hills High School Implements Certification in CTE Engineering Program



CHALLENGE

Heritage Hills High School serves approximately 700 9th through 12th graders in Lincoln City, Indiana. With significantly higher scores than the state average, Heritage Hills boasts an impressive 90 percent graduation rate, and also offers several Career and Technical Education programs for students.

The Engineering Program, which is also a nationally certified Project Lead The Way® (PLTW) program, gives students access to state-of-the-art technology to learn computer-aided drafting and advanced manufacturing concepts.

“Manufacturing and agriculture are the dominant industries in Southern Indiana, so I am striving to prepare my engineering students for the workforce or two- or four-year programs in this industry after high school,” said Jennifer Hohne, Engineering Instructor at Heritage Hills.

Approximately 75 students participate in the Engineering Program at Heritage Hills each year, taking courses such as Introduction to Engineering and Design, Principles of Engineering, Computer Integrated Manufacturing, CAD and Advanced Engineering. Hohne teaches all of the engineering courses, which include instruction in Autodesk applications, the industry leading 3D design and engineering software.

“Autodesk software is used heavily in the engineering industry, and I want my students to know it well so they can jump right into a job without the employer needing to train them,” said Hohne.

After teaching the Engineering program for a few years, Hohne hoped to find a certification program to help her students validate their

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Engineering Instructor
at Heritage Hills

ABOUT CERTIPOINT

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Autodesk software skills. She knew certification would boost their resumes and also satisfy the state’s requirements for an industry-recognized certification as one step to earning a technical honors diploma.

SOLUTION

Hohne researched certification and contacted Autodesk, but at the time they did not have a student certification exam available. They were, however, in the process of developing an online exam for students that would be distributed by Certiport.

“I knew the Autodesk Certified User Exam being developed by Autodesk and Certiport was exactly what I needed, so I continued to teach the software in my courses and waited patiently for the exams to be released,” said Hohne. Hohne took an early version of the exam and provided feedback to Autodesk and Certiport. Then, she became a Certiport Authorized Testing Center and when they were ready, began to offer AutoCAD® Certified User and Autodesk Inventor® Certified User certifications to her students.

“Jay Hohne championed the Autodesk exams and worked very hard to get the program going at Heritage Hills,” said Glenn Weil, Patoka Valley Career and Technical Education Director. “The district is very supportive of any teacher who can find a valuable, industry-recognized certification like Autodesk’s certification and fit it into their curriculum to give students an added credential.”

Since Heritage Hills already taught Autodesk tools in the Engineering Program, they chose not to make any changes to the existing courses or curriculum for the certification exams. Students spent approximately an hour a day working with the software and then took the exam towards the end of the school year. The Heritage Hills AutoCAD course is a dual credit course through Ivy Tech, so students can also earn college credit with certification.

RESULTS

Fifteen Heritage Hills students took the Autodesk Certified User exam the first time

it was offered, and Hohne was pleased with the results. “The students who earned certification were very excited. They knew Autodesk was widely used in the engineering and manufacturing industry and at local employers, so this certification would help them in college or to find a job.”

Local industry employers see the value of certification, such as Jarid Hirt, Vice President at Spencer Industries. Spencer Industries is a custom thermoformer in Dale, Indiana.

“The employees we hire for our shop floor must have a high school diploma, but if they have CAD training, they can more easily be promoted to work as set-up technicians for our computer numerical control (CNC) machine,” said Hirt. “These high school students are taught to be comfortable working in a three dimensional space, which gives them a leg up on using our equipment. Any type of certification, such as Autodesk’s certification program, just validates for us that the individual is better prepared to work for us.”

Hohne also teaches an AutoCAD course for college credit through Vincennes University with mostly adult participants, and she hopes to expand the program to allow more members of the workforce and community to certify. “The incumbent workers in our local economy would benefit greatly from this instruction and exam, I truly hope we can expand the program to help the economy in Indiana,” she said.

Weil believes certification does two things – helps schools earn higher marks on standard evaluations and shows employers that certified students have validated knowledge. “Certification is incredibly valuable, since it proves the certified individual knows how to practice the skill in a real world setting. The students who earn Autodesk certification are better prepared for further study or the workforce with this accomplishment on their resume.”