

Where are they Now?

The Minnesota Innovation Institute (MI2) has partnered with Bemidji High School to pilot a program for high school students looking to explore the manufacturing sector. Since the inception of the program in 2014, 25 high school students have participated in the program. MI2's approach is innovative in that our courses and program are designed by industry, yet each individual's program experience is tailored to help them succeed.

Listen to what some of our participants have to say.

Billy Nelson

Billy was part of MI2 in 2015 and went on to work at Norbord during the summer of 2015. Billy now is at M State in Wadena in the Lineman Program.

"I completed four Mechatronics courses and the CNC Mill Level 1 Operator training. This training taught me a lot about time management, computer skills and being open to learning new things. I also learned a lot about working in a safe environment and having fun. What I liked the best was the freedom to learn at my own speed. The training is set up to enable you to go as fast or as slow as you want."



Wyatt Tennyson

Wyatt Tennyson took Mechanical Fabrication, AC/DC Electrical Systems and Basic Hydraulics through MI2 in 2015 and then worked at Potlatch as a summer vacation relief worker. After proving himself, Wyatt was offered a permanent position at Potlatch in their Maintenance Division and may enter a corporate sponsored Registered Apprenticeship Program in Mechatronics.

"Having this opportunity to get a paper that says 'I'm qualified in something'... that's a cool thing to be able to do, especially in high school".

Jake Larson

Jake went through MI2 in 2014 and is now pursuing a degree in Plumbing at Northwest Technical College, where he is on the Dean's list. He is currently working at Gregg's Plumbing gaining experience towards his journeyman's license.

"I really appreciated the experience of coming to the NTC campus to get a feel for what it would be like to go to a technical school. The experiences I had gave me the confidence that I too could go to a technical school and succeed. I would definitely recommend this training experience. It has made a huge difference for me."



Who do we serve?

The Minnesota Innovation Institute (MI2) has served over 700 individuals. Industry said we need training that is Adaptable to a changing marketplace; Cost effective; and, Time sensitive (ACT). Participants told us they need the same thing whether they are at the beginning of their career, changing direction within their careers or seeking a promotion within their current workplace. MI2 works with individuals looking to explore careers, gain skills, earn school and college credit and obtain credentials.

Below are some examples of how MI2 helps you compete.

Entry Level Workers

An important part of the MI2 mission is to bring new workers into the workforce. We work with local job placement and staffing agencies to identify individuals looking for a new career path.



High School Students

Central to the mission of MI2 is to develop and support local workforce development, and provide career opportunities for individuals in our region. MI2 piloted a program with the Bemidji High School that allowed juniors and seniors to take our Mechatronics courses for school credit that could also be accepted as college credit. We helped many of these young people secure their first job and enter college. This program has been highly successful and is now expanding into other area high schools in our region.



Incumbent Workers

As part of the mission of MI2, we work with local companies who are looking for individuals who want to work...may or may not have technical skills...but are willing to take on new challenges and learn. Because industry changes and our world is increasingly reliant on technology, it is important companies have an adaptable workforce. MI2 works with companies to identify their needs and prepare their employees for the future.

