



NEWS RELEASE

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Wabash Heartland Innovation Network Celebrates Grant to Develop Robotics Programming for K-12 in the WHIN Region

[WEST LAFAYETTE, IN] Region 4 Workforce Board, Purdue University, Indiana Next Generation Manufacturing Competitiveness Center (IN-MaC), and Greater Lafayette Commerce, serving through the WHIN Region, have been granted \$367,770 to continue to create a cohesive regional talent pipeline for next generation manufacturing that immerses youth in K-12 in hands-on industry-education environments. The group received a year 1 grant from WHIN in May of 2019 and has now received their year 2 funding to continue the projects they have been executing throughout the Wabash Heartland Region.

In year one they developed curriculum, laid out plans on how to best reach partners in each county, and held events such as CoderDoJos programming at many community sites and local schools throughout the region. IN-MaC Design and Make Studios were equipped and teachers trained in regional elementary schools including Prairie Crossing Elementary, Lewis Cass Elementary, Dayton Elementary, and Woodland Elementary. They also held Manufacturing Week activities throughout the region serving over 3,000 students in the WHIN region. Purdue University designed curriculum and delivered training for these events as well as gathered data to complete presentations and publications on Investigating the influence of industry-driven outreach on children career perceptions. With WHIN's goal of establishing this region as the global epicenter of IoT and next generation manufacturing, we will need a talent pipeline that will be willing and able to hold careers made available from advancement in IoT technology. The activities happening because of this grant will be key in exposing and curating talent from the K-12 youth throughout the WHIN region that can work in coding, robotics, and smart manufacturing careers in the future.

The group will continue to hold the robotics in manufacturing youth summer camps, Manufacturing Week activities focused on career exploration and awareness for K-12 students, CoderDojo after school programs to introduce robotics and coding, Design & Make Studios to provide IoT-enhanced active learning and additional data collection and research. The following activities will deliver opportunities to educate and inspire the emerging workforce, spark creative thinking, and develop the essential skill sets critical for future careers in manufacturing. Through this grant, Region 4 Workforce Board, and partners, will also partner with Purdue University faculty to evaluate the impact of these initiatives in terms of career awareness and perceptions as well as technical skill development for the next generation workforce.



Please help us at WHIN to congratulate Region 4 Workforce Board, Purdue University, In-MaC, and Greater Lafayette Commerce for their grant to enrich the talent pipeline throughout the WHIN region for next generation manufacturing. We cannot wait to see the value and positive changes this grant will continue to bring to the youth of the Wabash Heartland Region!

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ABOUT WHIN: WHIN is an innovative nonprofit organization devoted to making the 10-county Wabash Heartland region of north-central Indiana the global epicenter of digital agriculture and next-generation manufacturing empowered by smart IoT technology.

If you would like more information about this topic, please visit:

www.whin.org or email info@whin.org

WABASH HEARTLAND INNOVATION NETWORK

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