



School benefits from finishing partnership

Accessa Coatings partners with Reed-Custer High School to boost Industrial Technology education.

Students in the program have been using Accessa finishing products to finish their projects such as this table in a longstanding partnership between industry and education.

Lots of woodworking businesses complain about not being able to find skilled workers, but at Reed-Custer High School in Braidwood, Illinois, they are working to change that. Young men and women are preparing for careers in fields where people design, construct, build, service and repair — hands-on, skilled jobs. Mark Smith, who at one time was director of the WoodLINKS USA effort, leads the school's Industrial Technology program. He works to collaborate with industry to improve the program. One such long-standing partnership involves finishing, where his students have used Accessa coatings and stains for about 17 years.



A student at Reed-Custer High School, Braidwood, Illinois, learns professional spraying techniques in a partnership with Accessa Coatings.

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Besides pro finishing skills, the students learn CADD and CNC manufacturing processes to make things like this sign.

Accessa recently donated product and expert consulting for Smith's class.

"Since 1996, my students and I have been building partnerships with industry to support Industrial Technology education," Smith said. "Our partners make an advanced manufacturing program possible by supplying technical support, networking opportunities, internships, field trips, material donations and career opportunities. Without our program supporters, the educational experience that inspires my students would not exist."

Many of the Reed-Custer students will pursue post-secondary education opportunities in engineering, advanced manufacturing, architecture and CADD.

Working in a space designed to feel like a commercial computer-integrated manufacturing facility, students are executing high-quality projects with the help of partners like Accessa.

There are two destinations for



Students in the Industrial Technology program at Reed-Custer High School learn professional hands-on processes such as this kitchen installation.



Cabinet assembly is just one of the skills taught in the Reed-Custer High School Industrial Technology Program, which is led by Mark Smith, former director of WoodLINKS USA.

student projects. Case goods, such as cabinets and entertainment centers, and signs that are delivered to residential or commercial spaces.

All other projects go home with students. Those include long boards, foot stools, bed frames, shelving units, tables and chairs.

Their craftsmanship and pride in their work are apparent in photos from the program, and were recently highlighted in a newsletter from Accessa.

With a history dating back to 1979, Accessa specializes in supplying coating and finishing products to a wide range of customers in woodworking and other industries.

They are based in Indiana and more information is available at www.accessa.com

To find out more about the Industrial Technology program at Reed-Custer High School and see completed projects, go to rchsit.weebly.com. **+**



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