

Cain Millwork Becomes WoodLINKS – Illinois Industry Leader

The key component to the success of the WoodLINKS program is the involvement, leadership and the support that the local wood industries' provide the students, school and the teacher. How else will the education side learn about the modern methods that the manufacturers use? How else will the WoodLINKS graduate become employed in the future from an industry that states many times that they need skilled workers? How else will State officials recognize the importance of skills education programs?

Donald Lupa, President of Cain Millwork, Rochelle Illinois announced that he and his executive staff, Roger Cain, Rick McGrath and Andrew Manukas will partner with WoodLINKS Illinois to expand the wood industry program in that state.

Rick McGrath stated, "We need organizations such as yours to promulgate our industry and attract and educate our future employees and industry leaders."

Mark Smith has many equipment and tooling supporters for his program at Shiloh High in Hume Illinois. His students were known nationally as some of the best educated for careers in the modern wood and machinery manufacturing industry. Mark's students built kitchen cabinets and created millwork – much of it with their Thermwood CNC Router and other donated or greatly cost - reduced equipment.

Mark's students attended machine shows in Atlanta, Anaheim and this year, Las Vegas. His WoodLINKS graduates are Valedictorians and Salutatorians of the school. Some have gone on to University of Illinois into engineering programs and hopefully into the machinery manufacturing business. Some have interned over the summer with Wood Manufacturing Industries. But very few wood manufacturing companies were close to the school to lend the type of regional support that many other schools received.

Mark Kannmacher of Martinsville High located further south in Illinois, also suffered the same problem. Shiloh and Martinsville High were isolated in a farming area noted for corn and soy crops – far from where the students could find jobs. What Mark Smith and Mark Kannmacher needed were long-distance industry supporters to make things happen. Cain Millwork offered to lend a hand and we greatly appreciate their sense of leadership.



Mark Smith, Shiloh High School WoodLINKS teacher and his son Timoty being shown equipment at Cain Millwork, Rochelle, IL