

U.S. Rep. Kind: Announces \$564,093 grant to Western Technical College

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Grant will help WTC develop new programs to prepare students with the skills needed for 21st century manufacturing processes

La Crosse – Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind announced that Western Technical College received a \$564,093 grant from the National Science Foundation’s Advanced Technical Education Program. The grant will be used to develop courses at Western to prepare students with the skills needed for new manufacturing and automation processes. The new programs will also feature a collaboration with UW-Stout, offering Western students interested in advancing their degrees a continuation program leading to a four year degree.

“Our technical colleges and universities in Wisconsin are providing our students great, hands-on opportunities that will prepare them for their future. It’s important that as automation and technology improves, our educational programs do too,” said Rep. Ron Kind. “I am excited to see these new programs get off the ground with the help of this grant, and know it will help our students find great jobs here in Wisconsin.”

“Western is thrilled to begin work on this new project, which will engage industry, secondary education students and teachers, 2-year college students and faculty, and 4-year partners,” said Joshua Gamer, Vice President of Academic Affairs for Western Technical College. “Through the project, we’re building clear pathways from an exploratory experience to a degree that will help our students attain good-

paying, meaningful jobs.”

Many manufacturers in rural Wisconsin are starting to adapt to updated manufacturing equipment and more efficient processes, but students in Wisconsin’s technical colleges are still learning using outdated or aging equipment and educational materials. This project will develop an advanced mechatronics program to prepare more technicians and students with the necessary skills to support industrial automation.