

In the spotlight

Lakeshore welding program gets state notoriety

By **LOUISE WREGE**
HP Staff Writer

STEVENSVILLE — Lakeshore High School's welding program is receiving statewide attention.

A crew filmed students welding at the high school Wednesday in preparation for the Governor's Economic Summit, which will be March 15 at the DeVos Place Convention Center in Grand Rapids.

"This is just a huge honor for us because out of all the programs in the entire state, and there's over 60 welding programs, we were chosen to be a part of this economic summit," said Adam Carr, the school's welding instructor.

The footage will be in a piece highlighting career and technical education (CTE) programs in the state. The crew shot footage of other Berrien County CTE programs, including the Professional Health Careers Academy at Lakeland Hospital in Niles, a manufacturing program in Brandywine High School and a firefighters program in Berrien Springs. Berrien RESA coordinates the county's CTE. Students from member high schools can attend each other's CTE programs.

Carr said Lakeshore High School is expanding its CTE



Louise Wrege / HP staff

Lakeshore High School junior Max Lutzxen welds in one of the new welding booths at the school Wednesday. A film crew was at the school Wednesday filming students welding in preparation for the Governor's Economic Summit in March.

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options. New in the fall is a machine tool technology program, he said.

"We're working with Berrien RESA and Lake Michigan College to (develop) programs so that students can graduate high school, go on for one year at the community college and actually graduate with an associate degree," he said. "Those type of things lead right into paid internships. This is the type of thing that keeps Berrien County kids in Berrien County. It makes Southwest Michigan strong."

Brad Smith, the instructor who will teach machine tool technology, said the program will teach students precision manufacturing.

"We have a large amount of machine tool shops in the area. Now that we can bring this offering to the Stevensville area, it will be a big help to the community," he said.

"We are a manufacturing-based community," said Carr. "Our goal is to get kids to stay here, and these programs allow that."

Superintendent Phil Freeman said the district is spending \$180,000 to buy a CNC (computer numerical control) milling machine, which will arrive this summer.

"That is the same type of machinery they'll see in the work world," he said. "They're getting real-world experience right here at Lakeshore High School."

He said the machine is funded through the \$36 million bond voters approved in March 2013.

"The students will be able to design something (in CAD) and send it to the machine shop to get fabricated," said Smith, who further teaches mechanical drawing and CAD at the high school.

He said his CAD students already design items for welding students. With the CNC milling machine, he said there will be even more opportunities for items designed in CAD to become reality.

Carr said the high school is trying to get out the word about the new program so students throughout the county can sign up for it.

Because of recent legislation allowing students to get credit through CTE, he said the programs are gaining momentum. For example, the machine tool technology program can count as credit for a third year of science, a senior math elective, a second year of foreign language and/or Algebra II.

"Math and science ... those are already integrated into our curriculum," he said. "We just need to make kids aware of that."

Contact: lwrege@TheHP.com, 932-0361, Twitter: @HPWrege