sme EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Inspire. Prepare. Support.

QUARTERLY REPORT

First & Second Quarter 2026 Highlights

Inspiring, Preparing, and Supporting the Next Generation of Talent in Manufacturing and Engineering

At the SME Education Foundation, we are committed to inspiring and preparing the next wave of manufacturing and engineering talent. This quarterly report shows the progress we've made over the last two quarters and the impact of our collective efforts. We hope it informs and inspires you to partner with us as we build a strong, innovative future for manufacturing.

Feature Story

A Record-Breaking Year for Scholarships

This year, the Foundation awarded more than $1.5 million to graduating high school seniors as well as undergraduate and graduate students — the biggest award season in our history!

Nearly 250 scholarships, averaging almost $6,000 each, were selected from over 2,000 applications, thanks to the dedication of 300 volunteer reviewers who gave their time to make it happen.

Read the full story →

> **"These record-breaking numbers reflect both the growing demand for skilled talent in manufacturing and the incredible potential of the students stepping up to meet that need."**
>
> — Rob Luce, Vice President, SME Education Foundation

Success Stories

January:
Rollomatic Scholarship is 'Holiday Gift' to Customers

Rollomatic is investing in the future of manufacturing — and its customers — through a unique annual tradition.

"The scholarship with the SME Education Foundation is our holiday gift to customers," says Joe Kane, CEO of Rollomatic. By supporting manufacturing students, he explains, the company isn't just filling the talent pipeline. "It's for the machine tool builders, peripherals suppliers, our customers and the end users… it's super important for us."

Read the full story →

February:
New Scholarship Empowers Neurodiverse Students

Together, the SME Education Foundation and the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF) are helping to open doors for neurodiverse students through a new scholarship designed to expand opportunity and rethink what's possible in the manufacturing workforce.

> **"I think this is really an opportunity for us to expand our notion for what people who are neurodiverse can do, and I'm really excited about that."**
>
> — Tara Havlicek, MEAF

Read the full story →

Success Stories (continued)

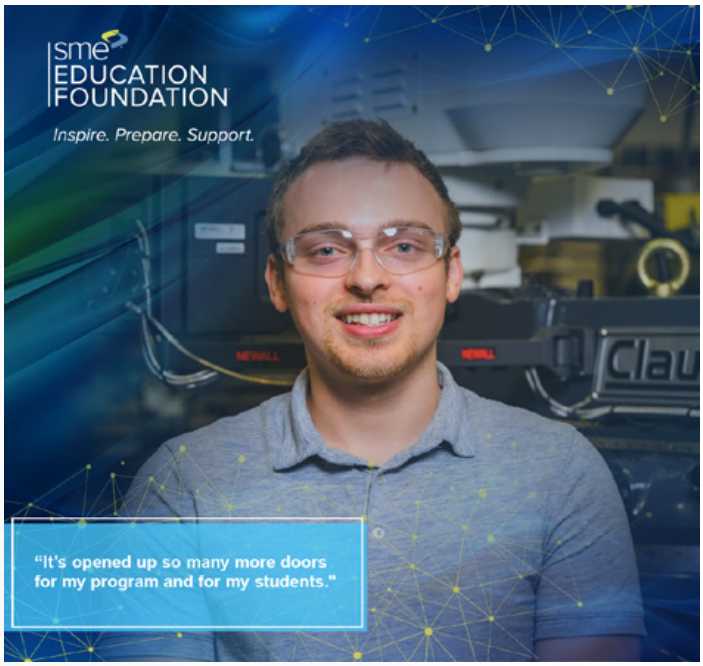
March:

CTE 'Teacher of Year' Succeeds With Help of SME PRIME

Earlier this year, Trent Trout, computer integrated manufacturing instructor and SME PRIME educator at Saline High School, was named the Michigan Association for Career and Technical Education (MI ACTE) Teacher of the Year, recognizing his outstanding impact in career and technical education.

This award celebrates educators who go above and beyond to shape student success, build real-world skills, and inspire the next generation of skilled professionals — and Trout is doing exactly that.

Read the full story →



April:

Love of Math, SME Scholarship Drive Student's College Career

A strong foundation in math set Carlos Aleixo Domingues on a path toward something bigger. Today, he's pursuing a career in industrial engineering with the support of an SME Education Foundation scholarship.

With the financial burden eased, Carlos can stay focused on building the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in manufacturing and beyond.

Read the full story →

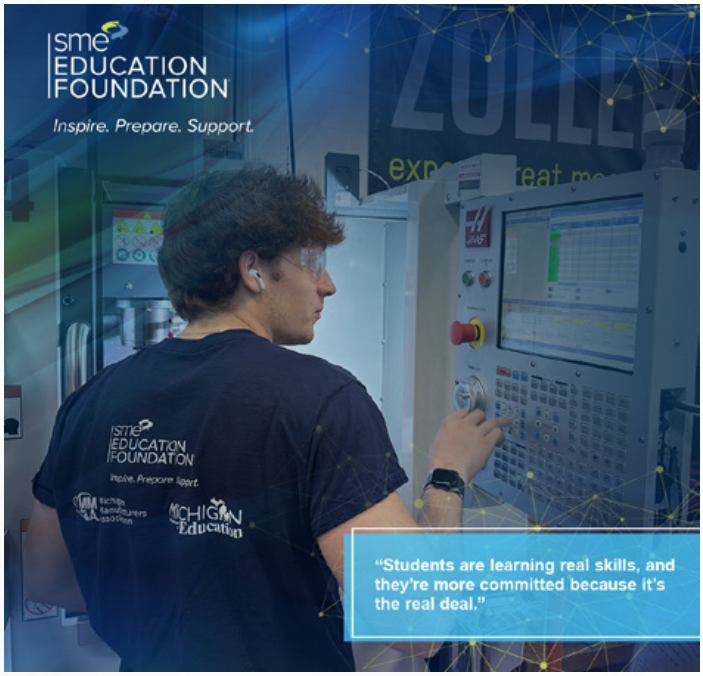
Success Stories (continued)

May:

Students Tackle Real-World Problems With Project-Based Learning

High school students don't usually get real-world experience like this. Working with customers. Managing projects. Solving real problems. With SME PRIME, they do. By bringing project-based learning into the classroom, SME PRIME connects students directly with industry, giving them hands-on experience that goes far beyond textbooks.

Read the full story →



June/July:

Exhibitor-Student Interactions Strengthen Talent Pipeline

SME Bright Minds Student Summits, hosted alongside SME manufacturing conferences and events, bring high school students face-to-face with the professionals shaping the future of manufacturing. At RAPID + TCT in Boston this year, René Cooper of Airgas and Jim Harrison of Lincoln Electric, helped make the student experience inspiring.

Read the full story →

Corporate Foundation Donors

The SME Education Foundation extends deep gratitude to the generous donors who make it possible for us to do what we do. Your support is the backbone of our mission, enabling us to offer life-changing opportunities to the next generation of skilled manufacturing and engineering talent. Together, we are shaping a bright future for students and the manufacturing industry.

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SME on the Move

Honoring Excellence in CTE

In January, the SME PRIME team traveled to the Michigan Career Education Conference (MICEC) in Grand Rapids to celebrate an outstanding achievement. SME PRIME educator Trent Trout of Saline High School was honored as the Michigan Association for Career and Technical Education (MI ACTE) Teacher of the Year, an accomplishment that reflects his dedication, impact and leadership in career and technical education.

Expanding SME PRIME: New Program Coming to Kansas

A new SME PRIME program is set to launch in McPherson High School in McPherson, Kansas, marking an exciting expansion of the network into the state. This addition will provide students with access to advanced manufacturing technology, industry-aligned curriculum and hands-on learning experiences. By bringing SME PRIME to McPherson, the program will help equip students with in-demand technical skills while strengthening pathways to postsecondary education and careers in manufacturing.

SME on the Move (continued)

Daniel Morgan Technology Center Launches SME PRIME

Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, the students of Daniel Morgan Technology Center in Spartanburg, South Carolina, will gain access to custom, cutting-edge manufacturing technology and training. "Launching the SME PRIME program at Daniel Morgan Technology Center is a major step forward for our students and our community. This partnership ensures our students gain access to the skills, technologies and real-world experiences that today's manufacturing careers demand," said Nikki Honeycutt, EdD.

Building Connections in Tennessee

Shelley Wooley, EdD, director of education programs at the SME Education Foundation, represented SME PRIME at the Tennessee Chamber Workforce Development Conference, where she engaged with state and industry leaders and explored opportunities for alignment with Tennessee's evolving workforce strategy. These conversations highlighted how SME PRIME can support statewide efforts to strengthen talent pipelines by providing students with hands-on manufacturing education and industry-relevant skills.

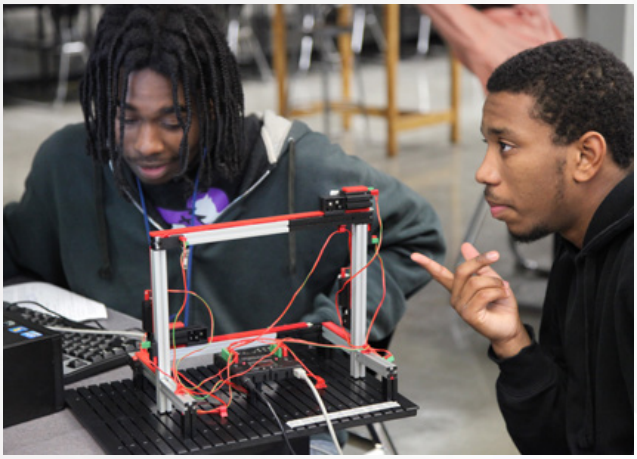
A New Chapter in Maritime Manufacturing

In 2024, SME partnered with BlueForge Alliance and the U.S. Navy to introduce maritime manufacturing pathways for students and help address critical workforce gaps. As part of this effort, members of the SME PRIME team visited Petaluma High School in Petaluma, California. An early member of the SME PRIME network, the school will soon receive a comprehensive SME PRIME curriculum that was developed over the past several years.

SME on the Move (continued)

Sharing SME PRIME's Impact in Ventura County

Christian Jensen, director of institutional giving at the SME Education Foundation,, shared the success and impact of SME PRIME with the Manufacturing Workforce Board of Ventura County in Ventura County, California. His presentation highlighted how the program equips students with in-demand manufacturing skills, strengthens school-to-career pathways, and builds meaningful connections between educators and industry partners.



Seeing SME PRIME in Action at East Jackson High School

Students and staff at East Jackson High School welcomed Celena Mills, state director of the Office of Career and Technical Education in Michigan, for a visit highlighting the impact of the school's SME PRIME program. Students demonstrated the hands-on skills they've developed in their coursework, walking Mills through projects and equipment that reflect their growing expertise.

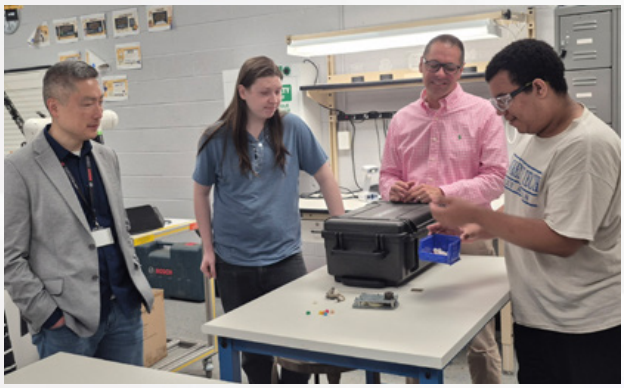
SME PRIME Launches in Ludlow, Kentucky

We were thrilled to celebrate the SME PRIME program at Ludlow High School, a milestone made possible by the generous support of the Charles L. Shor Foundation. The celebration brought together an incredible group. U.S. Rep. Warren Davidson of Ohio, U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky, students and educators from Ludlow High School, and local manufacturing industry leaders were in attendance. All were united around one goal, investing in the future of American manufacturing.

SME on the Move (continued)

SME PRIME Takes Center Stage at SME FUSION

SME PRIME was in the spotlight at SME FUSION in Nashville, where Shelley Wooley of the SME Education Foundation led a panel on building a stronger talent pipeline in Northern Kentucky. Panelists Gerry Otto of the Charles L. Shor Foundation, Kristy Ensell of Kentucky's Ludlow High School (LHS) and Nancy Spivey of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce discussed how industry leadership, philanthropic investment and employer engagement are closing the skills gap, building on a new partnership between the Charles L. Shor Foundation and SME Education Foundation to bring SME PRIME to LHS.



SME PRIME Students Showcase Skills

Students and staff at Ypsilanti High School welcomed the SME PRIME team and Kent Hung, executive director of the Bosch Community Fund, for a hands-on look at the program in action. Students showcased the advanced manufacturing skills they've built through SME PRIME, made possible in part by the Bosch Community Fund's ongoing support of the SME PRIME Sustainability Fund. This fund helps SME PRIME programs nationwide continue giving students access to cutting-edge manufacturing technology and education.

SkillsUSA

The SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference brings together some of the brightest young talent in the country to compete across hundreds of skilled trade and technical competitions. This year, 102 students from 35 states, ranging from middle school to post-secondary, were tasked with designing and 3D printing a precision attachment system for a standardized glider launch platform, inspired by real-world aerospace engineering principles. Using Stratasys 3D printers, students printed nearly 800 parts over the course of the competition.

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