

Thousands of students to get a taste of manufacturing in Southeast Michigan

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Automotive Education Metro Detroit [More +](#)



Oakland County

Students from Oakland Schools' Technical Campus in Royal Oak take a look at the assembly process at auto supplier Henkel North America's plant in Madison Heights during Manufacturing Day last year.

- Students will get behind-the-scenes look at local manufacturing plants
- Manufacturing Day is a nationwide effort to expose students to career opportunities
- More than 130 metro Detroit businesses will host students for tours

More than 130 metro Detroit businesses will take thousands of high school students behind the scenes for Manufacturing Day on Friday.

Manufacturing Day was launched in 2012 as a nationwide initiative to change the public perception of mass production and inspire the next generation of manufacturers, according to its [website](#).

"It's an opportunity for students who may be interested in skilled trades to see what it's like to work in an environment like that," said Steve Huber, Oakland County's marketing and communications officer for economic development. "Many folks have thought of manufacturing as being unsophisticated, a dirty job if you will. I think it opens eyes for many students who want a good career and can do really cool stuff."

More than 2,100 students will tour 40 businesses in Wayne County, 2,000 students will visit 59 businesses in Macomb County and 500 students will tour 35 companies in Oakland County, according to respective county officials. The events are also open to the general public to learn about careers in manufacturing.

“Manufacturing is a big component for this region’s rebirth economically,” Wayne County Executive Warren said in an email. “Evans People trained in manufacturing skills create the workforce which is a top priority for companies that want to move into Wayne County and for those companies here that are looking to expand.”

In Detroit, Innovations Hub will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its **new 100,000-square-foot R&D facility**. Students will get to tour the state-of-the-art lab on the site of the Institute for Advance Composites Manufacturing Innovation and Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow.

Michigan Economic Development Corp. has pledged \$25 million in grants to IACMI and LIFT, two research programs funded in part by the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Manufacturing Office and U.S. Department of Defense respectively, an MEDC news release said.

"The R&D efforts at IACMI and LIFT play a vital role in exploring the possibilities of the next stage of manufacturing," MEDC CEO Jeff Mason said in a statement. "Recognizing the expanding range and new types of work in manufacturing is essential as we communicate the employment potential and aim to inspire the next generation of talented manufacturing workers."

Elsewhere in Southeast Michigan, COE Press Equipment will give Chippewa Valley High School students a tour of its assembly, machining, R&D and sales facilities in Sterling Heights. Deshler Group will host more than 50 students for an interactive tour at its Livonia facilities. Hirotec America Inc. will host students at its Auburn Hills facility and Lear Corp. will host students at its Rochester Hills facility.

Michigan's manufacturing outlook

More than 600,000 Michigan residents work in manufacturing with about 249,000 in metro Detroit, according to the Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. The average hourly wage for production workers in Southeast Michigan was \$21.99 in August, the department reported.

Today's jobs will still be in demand by 2030, but will require different skills, according to a September study led by education company Pearson and innovation foundation Nesta. The study said one in five workers are in occupations that will shrink, such as agriculture, trades and construction, while only one in 10 workers are in industries that will grow, such as education and health care.

The researchers suggest employers redesign roles to balance technology and human resources, and develop talent because "the college degree has long been an imperfect signal for employment readiness and this is likely to become even more complex."

For more details on Manufacturing Day or to find an event, visit mfgday.com.