

## How does a young cook become an engineer? This program helps youth define career opportunities



(from left to right, Brian Rhoades, Director of Sales, Fanuc Robotics, Mohammed Faheem, Manager, worknetNCC, Amanda Rothenburger, Youth Coordinator, workNetNCC, Jose Verduzco, MCIP graduate)

In the summer of 2011, the Illinois workNet Center of Northern Cook County (workNetNCC) launched a new work experience program that focused on showcasing manufacturing career opportunities to youths. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth program, “Manufacturing Career Internship Program” (MCIP), provided youth with a two-week Manufacturing Boot Camp that combined work readiness activities with on-site visits to area manufacturers, and ended with an Intern Job Fair. Youths were then matched to employers for a paid, eight-week internship. This program has been highly successful with 65% of the youths hired by their internship worksite.

Jose Verduzco, an MCIP youth program participant, learned about the services available through workNetNCC during an information session held when his current restaurant employer was closing its business. In March 2011, Jose began working one-on-one with his youth advocate to explore different career opportunities and to develop an employment plan. Although Jose successfully found two part-time jobs during this transition, he recognized that they were not long-term employment solutions.

Jose clearly demonstrated that he was a hard working, motivated individual, but was having trouble finding the right career path for himself. His youth advocate referred him to the MCIP program to expose him to a career in manufacturing. Jose enjoyed the Boot Camp, which gave him insight into the manufacturing industry and a preview of a manufacturing career.



[www.worknetncc.com](http://www.worknetncc.com)

**Click below to join the conversation with workNetNCC!**



Matched with Fanuc Robotics for his internship, Jose impressed his supervisor and co-workers with his eagerness to learn, and motivation to gain as much experience as possible. Upon completing the internship, Jose was offered a full-time position in the Shipping and Receive Department which he happily accepted. Jose is now exploring an Engineering Associates Degree program at Harper College. His goal is to take evening classes in the spring.

Jose stated “This internship was a great program. I feel that MCIP gave me a huge opportunity in life that I would never have thought possible. I would recommend it to everyone, it is life changing!”

Today, Jose feels that Fanuc Robotics is a great company to work for, and absolutely loves his job. He feels that they have taken an interest in his future and are encouraging him to get additional training. He is being trained on all aspects of his job and the company, and being mentored by many of the Fanuc Robotics staff. Jose said, “The guidance I’m receiving from Fanuc has put my brain is on over load with all this information, but I love it. The time I spend at work every day just flies by.”

Due to its overwhelming success, the Manufacturing Careers Internship Program is being expanded by workNet Northern Cook County. For information on the Manufacturing Careers Internship Program, contact Amanda Rothenburger at [arothernburger@worknetncc.com](mailto:arothernburger@worknetncc.com).



[www.worknetncc.com](http://www.worknetncc.com)

***Click below to join the conversation with workNetNCC!***

