

# PMA Member-Company Employee Becomes First Certified Press Operator

Landon Fleeger, of PMA member company Penn United Technologies Inc., Cabot, PA, was recognized as the nation's first NIMS-Certified Journey-level Press Setup Operator by the Honorable Emily Stover DeRocco and Thomas Dowd from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration; Steven Mandes, National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) executive director; and the NIMS Board of Directors. The ceremony took place at the NIMS Board meeting in Arlington, VA, on May 17.

Fleeger is the first press setup operator to receive this honor and only the second metalworking apprentice to complete a new competency-based apprenticeship system in which employees are tested against rigorous national industry standards on the job and in the classroom. This competency-based system replaces the traditional hours-based method and has been three years in the making as a result of a partnership between NIMS and the U.S. DOL.

Fleeger joined Penn United's medical stamping division in March 2004. He then entered the state-approved Press Technician Apprenticeship Program, completing more than 284 hours of formal training, 4000 hours of on-the-job-training, and proved his competence by completing four hands-on assessments and online examinations. He earned credentials in Metalforming Level I, Metal Stamping Level II: Operate Machines with Progressive Dies, Metal Stamping Level III: Set Up Machines with Progressive Dies, and Stamping

Level III: Parts Inspection and Quality Control.

In 2006, Don Stegner, a fellow Penn United employee, became the nation's first apprentice to obtain the NIMS credentials when he received his NIMS-Certified Journey-level Machinist Certificate from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



Landon Fleeger is congratulated during a ceremony in Arlington, VA. From left: Paul Huber, NIMS chairman; Emily Stover DeRocco, U.S. DOL; Landon Fleeger; and Chuck Guiste, Penn United Technologies.

"This new competency-based apprenticeship system is a great opportunity for companies to develop an effective training system for their press operator/setup technicians and tool and die makers," said PMA Educational Foundation Executive Director Dave Sansone. "These new apprenticeships provide value-added over traditional apprenticeships because the NIMS skill checks confirm the competency of the trainee at important benchmarks along the road to becoming a journeyperson. Landon Fleeger and Penn United are truly pioneers. Congratulations to both."

For more information about NIMS' apprenticeships, contact Dave Sansone at 216/901-8800 or dsansone@pma.org.

## Second Annual PMAEF Best Practices Symposium September 12-13 – Cleveland, OH

The PMA Educational Foundation's (PMAEF) second annual Best Practices Symposium, scheduled for September 12-13 in Cleveland, will bring together representatives from PMA's districts to learn about innovative career awareness and education programs being implemented in PMA districts across the country.

Cuyahoga Community College's Unified Technology Center in downtown Cleveland will host the event and a tour on September 12.

Attendees will experience a demonstration of a successful computer-based integrated learning system specialized to each student's learning needs. This program was funded through a PMAEF grant.

The event will return to PMA headquarters for the second day of presentations and breakout sessions. District officers and their area educators are invited to attend to discuss how similar programs may be developed in their districts. Contact Amy Thacker at 216/901-8800 or athacker@pma.org for more information.



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