

Dayton Daily News

News article from our archives at DaytonDailyNews.com/archives

[Return to Document](#)

-
- **BYLINE:** Timothy R. Gaffney Staff Writer
 - **DATE:** November 26, 2006
 - **PUBLICATION:** Dayton Daily News (OH)
 - **SECTION:** Business
 - **PAGE:** C1
-

XENIA - On the shop floor of the **Custom Manufacturing Solutions Co.**, Jim Bishop's eyes light up at the sight of a new three-axis milling machine. CMS makes metal parts, but the control panel of this device looks like something you would expect to find in a nuclear power plant - a big computer screen with a touch pad and flashing lights.

It's called a Computer Numeric Control machine. CNC machines have revolutionized small manufacturing operations like this one- and the jobs they support.

A machinist uses machine tools to cut and shape metal into parts. A CNC machine is a computer-controlled device tool that can be programmed to make precision parts automatically. A CNC machine operator is responsible for setting up and running a CNC machine.

Bishop, a 27-year-old Cedarville native, learned machining at the Greene County Career Center. He finds nothing more satisfying than using a CNC machine to sculpt a hunk of aluminum or steel into an intricate part.

"I like what I do. Some people can't say that, but I honestly like what I do," he said Tuesday.

He also likes learning new skills, and that's what has made him the kind of employee companies like CMS are after.

Manufacturing in Ohio isn't dying, small shop owners say - but news of hard times in the big auto plants have cast a pall over the industry.

"We're at a time when the large companies continue to downsize, and it paints a very gloomy picture of manufacturing. I think for companies like ours, the future is very, very bright," said David Dysinger, president of Dysinger Inc., a Dayton precision machining company.

While big plants are geared to mass production, "We do custom jobs for a range of clients," Dysinger said. The nature of the work requires them to be more flexible, and as a result they've been able to respond to changes in the marketplace, he said.

Bottom line: Small manufacturing shops are thriving and hiring, but prospective workers need a repertoire of machining skills and the flexibility to learn new ones quickly.

"What we're really looking for are people who are crosstrained already, or (can) crosstrain quickly," said Dysinger, who is also past chairman of the National Tooling and Machining Association.

Bishop said he graduated from the career center at age 17 and has been a full-time machinist for 10 years. But he said a key to his success so far has been continuing to learn new skills.

He said he spent seven years with a very small shop where he had to learn to use a variety of machines. But he also took instruction books home, studying them to master the complicated CNC machines.

Now he's one of a few CMS workers employed in the Top Gun Tooling and Machining Academy, a program co-sponsored by Sinclair Community College's Advanced Integrated Manufacturing Center and the Dayton Tooling and Manufacturing Association, which represents 300 companies in an 11-county region.

Bishop said he wants to keep learning new skills to avoid falling into the trap of outmoded skills he's seen older workers in. He said formal training programs also offer another benefit: a certificate.

"I wanted something to verify I knew what I was talking about," he said. Tooling and machining a closer look

Pictured: Jim Bishop is a machinist at **Custom**

Manufacturing Solutions in Xenia.

Tooling and machining companies dot the region - the Dayton Tooling and Manufacturing Association represents some 300 companies employing 10,000 local workers in an 11-county region surrounding Dayton.

EXAMPLES OF HOURLY PAY RANGES

CNC turning center, operator only: Under \$10.49 to \$18.50

CNC turning center, set up and operator: \$11 to \$22.

CNC machining center, set up and operator:

Under \$10.49 to \$25. CNC programmer: \$15.51 to \$28.

CNC programmer, 4 or more axis: \$19 to \$26.

Source: DTMA survey, autumn 2006

MORE INFORMATION

Learn more about the work of CNC operators and related jobs at the U.S. Dept. of Labor web site

at: www.bls.gov/oco/ocos286.htm

About this series

This is part of an occasional series spotlighting jobs that are in demand in the Dayton region as well as the required skills or education. If you are aware of an occupation that has a labor shortage email us at bizxchange@coxohio.com.

Copyright, 2006, Cox Ohio Publishing. All rights reserved.

-
- **Staff photo by Bill Reinke**
-