

Mt. Olive Manufacturing Donates \$5,000 to Support Technical Education In Morgan County



Morgan County, Ind. -- Steve and Lisa Langley, owners of Mt. Olive Manufacturing, announced a new financial commitment of \$5,000 to Northwood Elementary School's technical and mechanical education programs through the establishment of a new fund at the Community Foundation of Morgan County (CFMC) entitled, "Project Lead the Way." Northwood Elementary is part of the Mooresville Consolidated School Corporation. The Langley's believe that experience-based education at an early age creates the necessary contact children need with technology and mechanics. This familiarity fosters skill development and a greater interest in continued education in secondary and post-secondary work-force education in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).



This project is the nation's premier STEM program, and is currently being utilized at Mooresville High School and Paul Hadley Middle School. Northwood is the first local elementary school to begin PLTW programming. Elementary PLTW programs focus on different concepts for each grade level and include topics such as robotics, space, building concepts, and matter.

The Langleys visited Mrs. Elizabeth Hathaway's first grade class to learn what the students had done with the program. Several students explained their Three Little Pigs project, in which they utilized creativity and basic building principles to create their own straw, stick, and brick houses. The students admitted that no matter what they did, the straw house basically looked like "a nest" and the "brick" (using sugar cubes) house was far superior at holding up against the "big bad wolf" (a hair dryer).

"We're trying to inspire the future builders and makers," said Steve Langley. "It's all about inspiring kids to learn to work with their hands as well as with computers to create. Down the road, we hope to see these kids in technical trades at Mt. Olive or elsewhere. Their experience starts right here."

This gift comes after the success of the generous donation of \$30,000 the Langley's made last year to provide scholarships awarded in 2014 for one male and one female recipient at both Mooresville and Martinsville High Schools, as well as a grant to Mooresville High School to enhance its Career and Technical Education Department. Steve Langley, president of Mt. Olive Manufacturing, has a long-standing commitment to the Mooresville Consolidated School Corporation, graduating from Mooresville High School in 1981. His mother, Nina Langley, retired in 2005 after a 20-year career in education, teaching both at Northwood and Neil Armstrong elementary schools in Mooresville. Langley is pleased to give back to a school system that provided him with the educational foundation his career is now founded on.

Last year, Mt. Olive Manufacturing's owners were approached by Mooresville High School teacher A.J. McAdams with the idea that the local business might be interested in supporting the efforts now underway at Mooresville High School to improve their STEM Program. The financial support provided by Mt. Olive Manufacturing has made a tremendous impact on the ability Mr. McAdams and other Mooresville High School faculty have to utilize the type of equipment and technology needed to facilitate an advanced learning environment. A.J. McAdams said, "To watch these students be so creative is amazing. They are so great at taking these projects where they have to think and experiment so they can manufacture a product."

In 2009, the Langleys moved their manufacturing plant to Mooresville, and while they prefer to hire locally, they have had a difficult time finding local workers with basic machine/tool, mechanical, and electrical skills required to build, set-up, and maintain our production tooling and machinery. The Langleys hope that by financially supporting early technical education, as well as high school education, they will facilitate a reemergence of vocational trades and shop classes.

"Steve and Lisa have a clear record of inspirational and financial support for increased educational experiences in technological and mechanical learning," commented Larry Bryan, CFMC Director of Development. "The Langley's are making a conscious decision to introduce basic technological and mechanical skills into a young person's education before high school, which we hope will lead to a great interest later in life."

Additional information is available from the Community Foundation of Morgan County at www.CFMOnline.org.