

Integrated Systems Technology Employment Report



Dennis Clark

“The IST training program gave me skills that I did not previously have as a machinist. For me, the hydraulic, pneumatic and electrical systems training were the most helpful...I was totally retrained...which helped me get my new job.” (Dennis Clark, 2003)

Dennis Clark was laid off at a time that should have been one of his happiest moments – the day before his wedding. On February 7, 2003 Clark was informed by his employer, Walco Tool, that a major contract had been lost and Clark was the last of 10 people who were being laid off.

Exploring his options, Clark became aware of the IST program through Thomas Schildhouse, Cook County Manager of the President’s Office of Employment and Training (POET) at Prairie State College, where Clark’s new wife worked. Schildhouse was familiar with Clark’s background, and quickly began processing the paperwork to get him enrolled. Clark began the 10-week Integrated Systems Technology (IST) program at Moraine Valley Community College (MVCC) in Palos Hills, Illinois on April 7, 2003.

Unfortunately, soon after Clark began the program he became ill with pneumonia and missed two weeks of class. He was unable to graduate with his class on June 18, 2003. However, MVCC worked with Clark to place him in the next IST class so that he could make up what he had missed and complete the training. Clark became an official IST program graduate at the end of July 2003.

The Career Placement Center at MVCC assisted Clark with

development of his resume, and he began his search for employment. When exploring job opportunities on CareerBuilder.com, Clark found a position for a Maintenance Mechanic at Georgia Pacific. He applied online and received a call for an interview. It took only one interview and he was offered the position.

Georgia Pacific is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. The company has more than 400 locations and 61,000 employees in North America and Europe. Georgia Pacific is one of the world’s leading manufacturers of tissue, pulp, paper, packaging, building products and related chemicals.

“The IST training helped me get my job,” Clark emphatically explained. “I now use what I learned in class to work primarily with hydraulic and pneumatic systems. Additionally, I’m able to utilize some of the new electrical skills I learned.” Clark is also excited about a training program offered by Georgia Pacific. He will have the opportunity to participate in this program and to advance his salary by \$4.00 an hour.

As Clark explained, “The IST training program gave me skills that I did not previously have as a machinist. For me, the hydraulic, pneumatic and electrical systems training were the most helpful.”

When asked if he would recommend the IST training program to other dislocated workers, he replied, “Yes, I learned a whole lot. It really helped me. I was totally retrained with skills that I previously did not have, which helped me get my new job. And all the people I worked with at MVCC, POET, and the IETC were great!”

After Clark began his new job, Schildhouse continued to remain in contact with him. As Schildhouse explained, “We’re very proud of Dennis. When talking with clients about the IST program, I use Dennis as an example of how some people, even after facing many challenges in life, can find the silver lining in even the darkest cloud. Clark went through the program with flying colors, and he’s doing very well now. At POET, we reach out and support our clients no matter what problems arise, particularly when things happen that aren’t expected. We do whatever is needed to guarantee their success.”



National Center for Integrated Systems Technology

Illinois State University, 1802 N. Division St., Suite 603, Morris, IL 60450
Phone: 815.942.3180 ♦ Email: ncist@ilstu.edu ♦ Website: www.ncist.ilstu.edu

