American Welding Society Foundation Awards Grants to Five Schools

Miami, FL, June 11, 2020: The American Welding Society congratulates five recipients of the Spring 2020 Welder Workforce Grant, awarded through the AWS Foundation. Each school was presented with a reward of up to $25,000 to recognize their commitment to improving the welding industry through education. The recipients are Airport Community Schools – Carlton, MI.; Chippewa Falls High School – Chippewa Falls, WI.; Paso Robles High School – Paso Robles, CA.; Somerset Community College – Somerset, KY.; and Ida High School – Ida, MI (Detroit Section Grant).

The AWS Foundation is dedicated to building the welding workforce by providing grant funding to secondary and post-secondary welder training facilities that seek to enhance and improve their welding education programs. Needs vary among the grant recipients, but all acknowledge that the funds will help improve the quality and functionality of their welding programs.

Chase Dowler, Welding Instructor at Airport Community Schools, indicated the money awarded would be used to help fund the addition of a CNC Plasma Table and metal processing equipment. Chippewa Falls High School will use the funds to increase and enhance their welding equipment and capacity of existing laboratory space to support the full completion of the AWS SENSE Level 1 Certificate Program.

While each school agrees that they applied for the grant to expand their welding equipment and tools, they also recognize what the funding could do for the future of their students.

"I applied for this grant because I want to connect students to the welding industry that might otherwise dismiss this as a viable pathway for life," said Justin Pickard, Agriculture Department Chairman at Paso Robles High School. "I want to reach out to our community, targeting populations of students that are under-represented in our high school program and offer them a way to "break the ice" into welding with a low impact/ virtual experience."

Elaine Kohrman, Director of Grants at Somerset Community College, has similar sentiments. She said that there are multiple job opportunities for students who complete the welding program within the region and that the grant will help meet the needs of the local industry and make welding education more accessible and affordable for students.

Since 2017, more than $850,000 in Welding Workforce Grants have been awarded. For more information on the AWS Foundation grant program for welding schools, please contact John Douglass at jdouglass@aws.org, or phone (800) 443-9353, Ext. 212. Or visit www.aws.org/workforcegrant.

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About AWS: The American Welding Society (AWS) is a multifaceted, nonprofit organization with a mission to advance the science, technology, and application of welding and allied joining and cutting processes worldwide, including brazing, soldering, and thermal spraying. Headquartered in Miami, Florida, and led by a volunteer organization of officers and directors, AWS serves 70,000 members worldwide and is composed of 22 Districts with 250 Sections and Student Chapters. For more information, visit the Society's website at http://www.aws.org.

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