

Rockline Associates Earn Workforce Leadership Certificates from UAFS

Through a partnership between the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith and Rockline Industries, students at the company’s manufacturing facility in Booneville were able to take the first step in furthering their careers by receiving certificates of proficiency in workforce leadership from UAFS.

The employees earned the certificates by completing 12 credit hours of coursework in leadership-related topics, including supervision and human relations, focusing on producing quality goods, and eliminating wasted time and material through lean principles.

The program offered associates an education in leadership that complemented their technical knowledge.

“I work with people a lot, and being young and not having a lot of experience with that was challenging,” said Lauren Sanderson of Booneville, shift supervisor with Rockline and certificate recipient. “The human relations course guided me on the right way to approach people and how to treat various types of people differently.”

Keith Smith, general manager of the Booneville facility, came to UAFS a year ago looking for a program to help Rockline employees advance in the company. He was pleasantly surprised at how the university accommodated to the company’s needs through the workforce leadership certificate program.

“This program will help our associates move up in the company, and education and training is a big part of investing in our associates for the future of the organization,” Smith said. “It’s a priority of mine, and it’s a priority of this organization.”

“UAFS has gone above and beyond in supporting our objectives here,” he continued. “It’s a great relationship between industry and education and being able to support U.S. manufacturing into the future. And that’s what we need.”

All six certificate recipients plan on pursuing an associate degree at UAFS, and some, like Sanderson, have aspirations for a bachelor’s degree.

The courses were offered through the university’s Center for Business and Professional Development, which works with more than 100 employers both locally and statewide to provide training for their employees.

“We like to say that we build the people who build your business,” said Dave Robertson, director of the CBPD. “Investing in people is as important as investing in new facilities. It helps the company with their productivity and job satisfaction to know their employers are willing to invest in them. We are grateful to Rockline for the opportunity to help their employees and appreciate their commitment to their employees.”

Employees receiving certificates were:

Booneville: Josh Bynum, Cameron English, Kassandra English and Lauren Sanderson.

Magazine: Seth Ray Fox Sr.

Waldron: Padee Vue.

For more information on the workforce leadership program, contact Robertson at 479-788-7799 or dave.robertson@uafs.edu. For more information on employment opportunities at Rockline, contact Janie Wann at 479-675-1302.