

Innovative Workforce Solutions Power Local Manufacturing Growth

Michael Hudec's family started R & G Springs 38 years ago. R & G Springs, located in Elgin, Ill., specializes in precision parts, such as precision wave springs for rotary seals, aerospace, nuclear power systems, and other applications.



Working in the shop on many repurposed or custom-made tools and presses, Hudec creates precise pieces by hand. He uses his skill and visually inspects every component to ensure quality throughout the shop.

R & G Springs started working with Elgin Community College in 2020 when the need for certain precision parts spiked due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The family-run business has since expanded its workforce by adding two interns from ECC, both have stayed on to become part-time employees. "I've learned so much here—from basic chemistry to physics—and seeing concepts from class applied in a technical setting has been great. I get to see [firsthand] how this [knowledge] applies in the industry," said ECC student and R & G Springs employee Adonis Garcia.

Hudec said, "What you learned at your internship, apprenticeship, or former workplace is what makes you valuable to your company."

R & G Springs has continued to leverage opportunities offered by ECC's Workforce Development and Continuing Education Division. Recent state and local grants obtained by ECC have helped the company chart a path forward to growth and success. "The OSHA training, the forklift training, the interns, all of that is funded for in part or whole by grants out there that are helping the community, put the skills in student's hands, and help out local businesses," said Hudec.



ECC's goal is to continue to offer expanded experiential or hands-on learning. In our apprenticeship program, 95 people completed over 68,886 hours of training in the classroom and at local businesses. Additionally, 35 interns worked a total of 2,978 internship hours. The Manufacturing Technology Center will allow ECC to continue to support local, small businesses like R & G Springs through increased access to skilled workers trained in the latest manufacturing technologies.

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ECC's powerful partners for the Manufacturing and Technology Center include:

- Local manufacturing companies
- Community Unit School District 509 secondary schools
- Local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) boards
- Elgin Development Group
- Illinois Manufacturers Association (IMA)
- Illinois Manufacturer Excellence Center (IMEC)
- Kane County Economic Development Corporation
- Illinois General Assembly
- Industrial Manufacturing Advisory Committee
- Industrial Maintenance Advisory Committee
- HVAC/Energy Management Advisory Committee
- Welding Advisory Committee