

Hgtn.'s Learning Center growing

HCCSC and community celebrate groundbreaking addition to the LC

By
**LAUREN
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The ground was broken
on Thursday, March 4, at
The Huntington County
Community Learning Center
(LC).
A \$4.5 million addition

slated to wrap up in Sep-
tember, is now underway.
"We are doing an expan-
sion of our current facility,"
explains Huntington County
Community School Corporation
Superintendent Chad Daugherty.
"We will be going from

29,306 square feet to
49,784 square feet. So, we
are adding on 20,478
square feet to help out with
our programs for career
and technical education
(CTE).
According to its website,
the LC is home to half of

the CTE programs of Hun-
tington North High School
(HNHS), as well as the
only location for WorkOne
Northeast, Ivy Tech Commu-
nity College and Impact
Institute in Huntington
County.
The LC also has an of-

fice for Huntington Uni-
versity and is home to the
Huntington County 4-H
Robotics Team.
Currently, 145 HNHS
students per day take ad-
vantage of the LC, says
Daugherty.
He says those students

are enrolled in programs
such as automotive, certi-
fied nursing assistant
(CNA), criminal justice,
emergency medical techni-
cian (EMT), precision ma-
chining or welding, or are
taking part in an internship.
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Since 2016, the LC has
offered a slew of CTE pro-
grams for HNHS students,
as well as continuing edu-
cation opportunities for
community members.

At that time, Daugherty
says, the Huntington com-
munity came together to
raise over \$1.4 million,
funding the expansion of
the school corporation's
former vocational/technical
building.

Daugherty says that ex-
pansion "planted the initial
seed."

"We feel like we have
reached our limits with the
program since 2016," he
explains, "and expanding
this is going to allow our
programs to be even bet-
ter."

Currently, the LC weld-
ing bay is 900 square feet,
says Daugherty. When the
expansion is complete, the
welding area will grow to
2,900 square feet. Daugherty
says this will grow the
program from 12 welders
to 22 welders, "so we are
very excited about that."

The LC's CNC machin-
ing program "will get a
new shop, (and) they will
be getting some new equip-
ment," he adds.

The Learning Center's
Director Tiffany Drummond
was instrumental in a
grant award received
from the Don Wood Founda-
tion (formerly known as
the 8020 Foundation
Trust), says Daugherty,
which will help purchase
new equipment for the pre-
cision machining class.
The \$202,512 award will
purchase one computer nu-
merical control (CNC)
mill, one CNC lathe and
six manual lathes.

Also expanding will be
the classroom area for the

criminal justice class,
which will have a new area
for simulators.

Further, the Huntington
County 4-H Robotics team,
which now shares a space
in the LC with precision
machining, will have their
own room dedicated solely
to robotics once the expan-
sion is complete.

"Also, we will be
bringing over our alterna-
tive school that is currently
housed in the Dyer Build-

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that," Daugherty says.***

ing - that we are paying to
rent," adds Daugherty.

"This is not going to im-
pact only our students, but
it is going to impact the
workforce here in Hunting-
ton," says Daugherty of the
expansion.

"If we would like to at-
tract any new businesses or
industry into our commu-
nity they are going to look
and say, 'How are you
going to train your work-
force?' and right here we
have a nice model."

"We can train people in
welding, industrial mainte-
nance and precision ma-
chining."

Daugherty says HCCSC
is excited to provide the
opportunity to give skills
and expertise to not only
HCCSC students, but also
community members.

"This is an investment
not only for our students
but into our community
and we feel very passionate
about that," he explains.

Daugherty says the im-
proved LC will have a
computer lab that will be
accessible by students and

incoming workers, or stu-
dents taking classes after
school hours.

"We are very blessed to
be able to do that," says
Daugherty.

Right now, he says 33
HNHS students are taking
advantage of internships
and 35 students taking ad-
vantage of being in a co-op
through the LC.

"That is your work-
based learning," he ex-
plains.

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becoming more popular.
Not only does it give
students the skill and ex-
pertise by going out and
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but it also builds those
networks. These students
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"Not everybody goes to
college, and we need peo-
ple - a skilled workforce."

With the completion
date for this project slated
for September, Daugherty
says the corporation is now
scheduling to utilize the
improved building next
fall.

"It looks like we are
going to be able to meet
our deadline," he says.

"I know there was some
concerns about getting ma-
terials, but we feel like
we're okay. We got ahead
of this a little bit. There
may be a delay here or

there, but we still think we
can meet that deadline of
the middle of September."

"We are hoping it's
going to go as planned,"
Daugherty says there are
"a lot of people behind the
scenes that have helped
make this (expansion) hap-
pen."

"You can have pro-
grams, but you have to
have a great instructor."

"We feel like we have
really, really good instruc-
tors over there."

And you have to have
somebody to oversee it, to
monitor it, somebody to
advocate for those pro-
grams, and our director
Tiffany Drummond has
done a phenomenal job,
and we wouldn't be where
we're at today without her
leadership over there."

"Drummond does a phe-
nomenal job of making
sure our programs are
good, and our instructors
are teaching all the stan-
dards, and giving our stu-
dents all the skills and
expertise that they need to
earn a certification."

"We are trying to make
sure we are giving the peo-
ple the skills needed to be
successful, and actually, to
be able to help our work-
force here in Huntington,"
Daugherty concludes.

"It's a collaboration be-
tween everybody - private,
public and also the school
corporation."

"It's been a great part-
nership."

Barton-Coe-Vilamaa of
Fort Wayne is architect for
the expansion, and Hager-
man, Inc., also of Fort
Wayne, serves as construc-
tion manager.

More information is
available at www.HuntingtonLearning.org.