

Owen, Stephanie

**Page: Basic Information**

**Nominator Information**

Please provide your information as the nominator of this partnership.

**Your Name**

Owen, Stephanie

**Email Address**

stephanie.owen@nwfa.org

**Title**

Education & Member Engagement Director

**Employer**

National Wood Flooring Association

**Phone Number**

8004224556

**Your Relationship to the Partnership?**

Education Director for NWFA

**The Partners: Business & Industry**

Please provide basic information on the business and industry organizations involved in the partnership.

**Business/Industry Partner 1**

**Business/Organization Name**

National Wood Flooring Association

**Address**

111 Chesterfield Industrial Blvd.  
Chesterfield Missouri 63005 US

**Website**

[www.nwfa.org](http://www.nwfa.org)

**Main Career Clusters within Industry**

Other

**Point of Contact**

Stephanie Owen

**Title**

Education & Member Engagement Director

**Email**

[stephanie.owen@nfwfa.org](mailto:stephanie.owen@nfwfa.org)

**Business/Industry Partner 2 (if applicable)****Business/Organization Name**

Middle Tennessee Lumber

**Address**

240 Gum Branch Road  
Burns Tennessee 37029 US

**Website**

<http://www.midtnlumber.com/>

**Main Career Clusters within Industry**

Manufacturing

**Point of Contact**

Wayne Lee

**Title**

**Email**

**Business/Industry Partner 3 (if applicable)**

**Business/Organization Name**

**Address**

**Website**

**Main Career Clusters within Industry**

Education & Training

**Point of Contact**

**Title**

**Email**

**Provide information on any other additional business & industry partners not listed above. Also, please use this opportunity to briefly explain the unique roles of these businesses in the partnership (if there are more than one involved.)**

The Partners: Educational Institutions & Programs

Please provide basic information on the educational institutions and/or programs involved in the partnership.

**Education Partner 1**

**Educational Institution/Program Name**

Clarksville-Montgomery County School System

**Address**

621 Gracey Avenue  
Clarksville Tennessee 37040 US

**Website**

<http://www.cmcss.net/>

**What type of institution is it? (If a program, where is it offered?)**

High School

**Point of Contact**

Charles Bumpus

**Title**

Structural Systems Instructor

**Email**

Charles.Bumpus@cmcss.net

**Education Partner 2 (if applicable)****Educational Institution/Program Name**

East Hickman High School

**Address**

115 Murphree Avenue  
Centerville Tennessee 37033 US

**Website**

<http://hickmank12.org/east-hickman-high-school/>

**What type of institution is it? (If a program, where is it offered?)**

High School

**Point of Contact**

Keith Boehms

**Title**

CTE Instructor (Architecture & Construction)

**Email**

keith.boehms@hickmank12.org

**Education Partner 3 (if applicable)****Educational Institution/Program Name****Address****Website**

What type of institution is it? (If a program, where is it offered?)

**Point of Contact****Title****Email**

**Provide information on any other education partners not listed above. Also, please use this opportunity to briefly explain the unique roles of these educational institutions/programs in the partnership (if there are more than one involved.)**

Both Hickman and Clarksville high schools attended a Manufacturing Day event at Middle Tennessee Lumber. The instructors, Charlie and Keith, have since worked with NWFA & MTL to coordinate participation and training in their classroom activities.

**Page: Support Information**

### **1. What problem was this partnership developed to solve?**

National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA) member Middle Tennessee Lumber (MTL), located in Burns, Tennessee, has struggled in recent years to fill critical positions within its lumber manufacturing facility. MTL is a small, family-owned business located in a rural area with a limited pool of job candidates. Knowing this was a problem for other NWFA members as well, the NWFA partnered with MTL to develop a program for Manufacturing Day.

Manufacturing Day is an annual celebration of modern manufacturing during which businesses invite members of their communities – including students, educators, business people, media, and politicians – to their facilities in an effort to educate them about career opportunities in manufacturing. The purpose of the event is to fill local workforce vacancies, promote skills training, and establish relationships with local schools to develop skilled tradespeople.

### **2. What steps were taken to get the partnership started?**

MTL has been very involved with NWFA's training programs for wood flooring professionals. These programs have been in existence for 30-plus years, but no such program has existed for students or non-professionals. As part of its on-going efforts to address this trades gap, NWFA approached MTL to help develop a pilot program for Manufacturing Day that NWFA could then make available to all its manufacturing members.

NWFA worked with MTL's ownership and technical staff to plan a tour of its facility, set up a hands-on training area where students could work with a variety of tools used in wood flooring, and develop a series of career paths – with accompanying skills requirements and pay scales – that outline different career opportunities within the industry. NWFA also contacted local school districts and invited educators and students to attend.

### **3. Describe how the partnership was designed to support high-quality CTE.**

NWFA worked with MTL to develop a tour of MTL's lumber manufacturing facility, and developed an outline of the skills and/or training required for each position within the facility. These included foresters, loggers, truckers, lumber buyers, warehouse managers, inventory managers, forklift operators, sawmill operators, kiln operators, mechanics, lumber graders, finishers, packagers, and office staff. Care was taken to highlight positions that included specific skills that would appeal to a wide variety of interests, including drafting, electronics, mechanics, computer programming, management, etc. This ensured that students with varied career aspirations could envision their skills being employable within their own community.

NWFA then worked with local school districts to research their skilled trades programs. Educators and students from local middle and high schools were invited to attend, along with vocational training administrators and curriculum developers.

During the tour, each function within the mill was presented in detail. Attendees were educated about the position, the role of the individual within that position, its relevancy within the operation, and the required training and skills for the position. At the conclusion of the tour, attendees participated in a presentation that explained the entire operation, its potential career paths, the current demand for each path, and the average pay scales for each path. This information also was provided on handouts the students could take with them.

Students then participated in hands-on training with industry professionals. There were four learning stations related to wood flooring: pneumatic nail guns, custom staining, large sanding machines, and large buffers. Each student had an opportunity to try each station to learn how each process or machine worked, and to ask questions about anything they had seen or experienced during the event.

The event concluded with industry swag for each student: tee shirts, carpenter's pencils, safety glasses, etc.

**4. What were the results of the partnership? What was innovative about the partnership or its output? How did it benefit students and the community?**

Seven schools attended the event, totaling approximately 100 students and educators in the local community. One educator, Charles Bumpus, the Structural Systems/Carpentry Instructor at Montgomery Central High School, in the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System, brought his entire class of approximately 50 carpentry students.

Mr. Bumpus and his students were particularly engaged in the event and asked a lot of questions about the mill operations, particularly its flooring mill. As a result of these conversations, MTL ownership discovered that Mr. Bumpus and his students routinely engage in the construction of a mobile classroom each year, but had been outsourcing the flooring installation as it was not a part of their curriculum. MTL committed to providing flooring for the projects, as well as volunteer instructors to teach the students how to properly install wood floors. Less than one year later, two training events have been held, with plans to expand the program. Talks also have taken place about establishing paid on-the-job internship positions at MTL for students enrolled in the Structural Systems/Carpentry Program.

In addition, this past December, 70-plus career and technical educators from 34 counties in the middle Tennessee area visited Mr. Bumpus and his students to see the program in action in an effort to implement similar programs in their own schools. Both NWFA and MTL attended the event to explain how their participation in Manufacturing Day had helped to establish this relationship, and to provide resources for implementing such an event in their own communities.

East Hickman High School was also in attendance at MTL's Manufacturing Day. MTL has worked with Keith Boehms of East Hickman High School to conduct two basic hardwood installation sessions at the end of 2017.

**5. What were the lessons learned during the process of building the partnership? What would you have done differently?**

Because this was a pilot program, we had no idea what attendance would be. Some schools arrived with just a dozen or so students, while others arrived with several dozen. It was not possible to keep the larger groups together as certain areas of the mill were space constrained, and hearing the presenters over the loud equipment would prove difficult for larger groups. Although earplugs were available for each attendee, in the future, the use of audio earphones would be more useful and allow students to be more participatory during the actual tour.

We also conducted the mill tour in sequence, as each function lead into the next. This meant that some students had to wait to begin the tour. In the future, it would be helpful to have a stand-by activity available at the start of the tour to occupy those students not currently participating in the tour.

**6. Is this partnership sustainable? How do you anticipate it will change in the coming year(s)?**

The partnership definitely is sustainable. MTL has made a long-term commitment to the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System and East Hickman High School to provide wood flooring and wood flooring installation instructors for their Structural Systems/Carpentry Program. MTL also has committed to provide the same level of commitment for other schools in the middle Tennessee area, particularly those that attended the event hosted at Mr. Bumpus' school this past December.

NWFA plans to use this success story as an outline for developing a turn-key program that other NWFA members can implement in their own communities as well.

**7. How long did it take to create this partnership?**

Less than 6 months

**8. How large of an investment did the businesses and other partner(s) involved make in this partnership (time and money)?**

Development of this partnership took a rough total of one week's dedication throughout a three-month time span. NWFA worked collaboratively with MTL to develop the pilot event, as well as the on-going training support within the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System.

The investment was minimal. NWFA and MTL both have full-time on-staff people dedicated to training and skills development programs. Time investment of these individuals equated to approximately \$3000. Cash investment primarily included the cost of travel and hotel for NWFA staff, as well as the tee shirts and other items that were provided for attendees. These costs amounted to approximately \$ 4000.

**9. Would you or an associate be willing to present a session at an ACTE event about this partnership?**

Yes