NEIT AND EMPLOYERS WORKING TO CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP

New England Tech has always stayed informed of labor market needs when developing new programs and curriculum. Now more than ever, the college continues to keep a pulse on the requirements of area employers to ensure our students learn the skills they need to become contributing members of today’s workforce.

To that end, the Career Services Department at New England Tech, continues to maintain long standing relationships with employers. The college extends an invitation to all types of companies and organizations to visit our campus and speak to students and graduates through career fairs, recruiting opportunities, and class presentations.

Over the past few weeks, General Dynamics/Electric Boat (EB), MEDITECH, Inc., and Sensata Technologies, (formerly Texas Instruments) have been on campus to discuss their future job openings and the technical knowledge and skills candidates need to be successful in these positions. Representatives from EB conducted four information sessions where students and grads eagerly listened about the future hiring ramp-up for various skilled occupations at the North Kingstown, RI site and for engineers and designers at the Groton, CT facility. Applicants from NEIT’s broad range of technology programs will be sought to work for EB.

Medical Information Technology, Inc., or MEDITECH as it is more commonly known, is interested in hiring NEIT graduates as well. This company has been a leading software vendor in the health care informatics industry for over 41 years. They serve the information needs of health care organizations worldwide. Neil Teixeira, a 2001 NEIT graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems, was on hand to interview applicants for full-time information technology positions beginning in January. MEDITECH has seven offices located throughout Massachusetts and one in Atlanta, Georgia.

Sensata Technologies is a $1.5 billion global industrial technology company. Last month, Sensata representatives from the Massachusetts division, were on campus to make presentations to students in Mechanical Engineering, Electronic Systems Engineering, and Electronics Engineering Technologies. The students were given an overview of the company learning about its history, products, and the job skills necessary for employment at Sensata. The company is a leader in the development, manufacture, and sale of sensors and controls offering a wide range of customized products for mission-critical applications in aircraft, automotive systems, and electric motors.

Today, manufacturing in Rhode Island is alive and well, but employers are in desperate need of skilled, technical workers in the fields of information technology, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering. Manufacturing jobs now require highly-skilled, technically trained employees. NEIT offers programs in all of these technologies and most recently introduced a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering Technology in response to the needs of regional employers. This program is a unique blend of two traditional fields of study, electronics and electrical, where students master the skills needed for this fast-growing industry.

It is important to convey to Rhode Island educators that there is a critical shortage of highly skilled workers in the manufacturing arena so they, in turn, may guide their students to careers in this industry. As part of the annual fall conference of the RI School Counselors Association held at NEIT on October 18, 2012, an employer panel was created to inform the more than 60 elementary, middle school, and high school counselors about the manufacturing technology opportunities here in R.I.
The panel was moderated by Pat Blakemore, NEIT’s Director of Career Services. Panel members included Caroline Petrucci, Senior Human Resources Director at Tiffany & Co. in Cumberland, RI; Joseph Devine, owner of Bridge Technical Solutions in East Greenwich, RI; and Peter Fox, Northeast Regional Business Development Manager, at Rovisys, in Marlborough, MA. The school counselors learned about the technical skills these employers are seeking as well as the challenges they are facing in filling job openings.

Pat Blakemore stated, “We are seeing an increase in internships and requests for our grads in the areas of information technology, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and electronics. Employers in today’s high tech manufacturing industry are seeking technicians to work in engineering, field service, automation and controls, industrial controls, and energy management. These areas illustrate that New England Tech is doing its part to help close the skills gap by offering programs that address employers’ needs.”

The Career Services Department offers several career fairs throughout the year affording companies, agencies, organizations, and branches of the military the opportunity to come to our campus and network with NEIT students and grads. Our annual Technology Career Expo is scheduled for March 7, 2013, and exhibitors are already reserving their space!

Keeping abreast of labor market trends and needed technical skills is critical to program development and course curriculum at NEIT. As a result, for decades the college has utilized Technical Advisory Committees for each technical department. Members of these committees are representatives from business and industry that seek NEIT graduates for employment. Department chairs and faculty meet with their full committee or individual committee members several times throughout the year on technical curriculum issues. Through the committee members’ input, NEIT can ensure that programs and courses are meeting the needs of the workplace.

For more information on any of NEIT’s technology programs, call the Admissions office at 1-800-736-7744, or 401-467-7744.