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MEDIA RELEASE

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Students Receive Golden Ticket to Pursue Career of Their Dreams *Scholarships awarded to Junior Achievement students*

Moline, IL - Two high school students received a “golden ticket” to help pursue their career dreams in advanced manufacturing. During Junior Achievement of the Heartland Board of Directors February meeting, Trent LeBarge, senior at Pleasant Valley High School and Dylan Webster, junior at North Scott High School were presented with a \$2,500 scholarship by John Riches, representing the Alcoa Foundation.

The scholarship opportunity was made available to students who attended the Junior Achievement High School Advanced Manufacturing Careers Expo at the John T. Blong Technology Center this past fall. More than 290 students from 18 area high schools attended. Junior Achievement developed the Expo to increase student awareness of career opportunities in the skilled trades. During the Expo students learned about different jobs in advanced manufacturing, the demand for these jobs and the education and training required to succeed in an advanced manufacturing career. Alcoa Foundation served as title sponsor of the event and provided the funding for the scholarships.

“Alcoa is proud to partner with Junior Achievement in helping our community develop our future workforce. Opportunities, such as JA’s Career Expo, provides students with career options that they may not be aware of. It also helps students understand the relevancy of their high school education and provides them with the next steps in pursuing a career in this industry,” stated John Riches, Manger of Community and Media Relations, Alcoa.

“The Expo opened my eyes to variety of careers available in advanced manufacturing. I’m still weighing my options on which career I want to pursue, but know that a job in advanced manufacturing is the right fit for me,” stated Dylan Webster.





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“Junior Achievement has been an excellent partner for our school. Being able to let our students experience all areas of the advanced manufacturing industry in one learning experience helps the students make informed decisions on what type of career they want to pursue and gives them the resources they need to take the next steps in their training,” Steve Pennekamp, Industrial Arts Teacher, North Scott High School.

The scholarship provided by Alcoa Foundation gives each student \$2,500 to apply towards their tuition for courses at the John T. Blong Technology Center.

“I have started taking courses at Scott Community College in diesel mechanics. This scholarship will help me finish my training as well as pursue a second degree in welding”, shared Trent LeBarge.

“Trent and Dylan represent our next generation of skilled workers needed to keep our local economy strong,” Riches commented. “The Quad Cities is reaching a critical point in workforce development with many workers planning to retire in the next 5 – 10 years. Alcoa Foundation will continue to work with Junior Achievement to provide the education needed to help promote these types of jobs locally.”

Video: See the JA High School Advanced Manufacturing Careers Expo in action and listen to testimonies from students, educators and industry professionals by clicking on this [link](#).