

# S. Western students could save local firm thousands

## ■ Students in technology program propose solution for McClarin Plastics.

By **STEVE MARRONI**  
Evening Sun Reporter

The innovation and fresh perspective of young outsiders is worth quite a bit to a business.

For McClarin Plastics in Hanover, it's about \$94,000 over five years.

Eight students from South Western High School took part in the program Adventures in Technology. In a few short

months, they were tasked with finding a solution to a problem McClarin has been trying to fix.

"They came into our facility to find a problem to solve," said McClarin project engineer Tim Dietz. He worked closely with the students as they developed their solutions.

In McClarin's fiberglass facility, workers use sheets of cardboard to catch the fiberglass resin falling to the floor. The plant was incurring quite a bit of cost in

cardboard. About \$33,000 per year, as a matter of fact.

The students worked to find a solution, and presented their findings to the company Thursday.

Students taking part in the program were Jennifer Dewberry, Emily Jannotta, Dan McKinsey, Tyler Seabolt, Greg Miserendino, Drew Snyder, Mike Yanavitch and Christina Sharkey. They spent many hours researching, meeting, comparing prices and talking to experts.

Over the past couple

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**CHRISTINA SHARKEY**  
Program Participant

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months, the students studied several alternatives to cardboard. They tried tarpaper, but estimated that would cost the company more money a year than cardboard. Then, they came up with another idea –

instead of laying something down to catch the particles, spraying the floor with a protective coating may work more efficiently.

They researched it, and decided on two products. One is a polyethylene coating, and the other is a product called Muscle Gloss, which is epoxy-based. Both are far cheaper and, Snyder said this would be a first-time use for Muscle Gloss in a fiberglass plant.

Muscle Gloss, the students figured, would cost \$7,004 per

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## Students

year, and polyethylene would come with a \$5,978 annual cost, both of which are significant savings.

And the findings are something the plant will seriously consider. Plant manager Tim Carbaugh admitted he was skeptical at first, but the numbers work.

"Cardboard is a huge cost," he said. "If we can get that cost down at all, we'll look into it."

He hopes to work with students again on another project.

Lisa Dennis, South Western's school-to-career coordinator, offered the project to students with various career interests that might tie into a project like this.

Most are interested in business, technology, human resources and information, and they range from sophomores to seniors.

Dietz said with talk of manufacturing jobs on the decline, he was glad to see a group of students interested in the profession. They saw all the different aspects of manufacturing, from the business end to technology to the factory floor.

Adventures in Technology is sponsored by several companies and is chartered by the state and federal government to assist manufacturing. It is locally affiliated with Mantec Inc. The program began four years ago as a resource to assist manufacturers in being more efficient, productive and competitive in a global marketplace, said vice president of Mantec Rob McIlvaine.

Working with high schools and connecting them to local plants is one facet of the program.

Miserendino, 17, has always been interested in engineering, and jumped at the chance to take part in this project. It sparked an interest in the business world, he said.

"I learned a lot about managing my time," he said. "It's a good way to get to know the business world." It was a chance to get out of the classroom and learn about his future profession, he said.

"This is exactly what I want to do," said Sharkey, 16, about how this project fits her ambitions. "I learned about the inner workings of business and how to be efficient."

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