



## PARTNERING TO CREATE A ROBUST TALENT PIPELINE

*By Stephanie Roberts*



With the United States showing signs of a return to “normalcy” and the economy reopening, the war for talent is heating up. A challenge many businesses are experiencing is hiring, and it cuts across all sectors. What we’re seeing and experiencing now reiterates the importance of creating a robust talent pipeline.

We’re seeing employers get creative—far beyond (and earlier than) internships and college recruiting events—to attract skilled workers. Sullair is no exception. As one of the largest employers in Michigan City, Ind., Sullair partnered with Michigan City Area Schools in 2018 to develop the Compressed Air Academy. The Compressed Air Academy is a first-of-its-kind in the United States.

The Compressed Air Academy provides mechanically inclined high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of compressor operation. The two-year program teaches students all aspects of an air compressor, from operation to part identification to troubleshooting to repair. Students get hands-on experience with a ShopTek industrial air compressor in a shop setting. Before they even graduate from high school, students already have a door cracked open for a rewarding career right in their backyards.

The Compressed Air Academy welcomed its first students in the second semester of the 2018-2019 school year, and the program has grown ever since.

As Mr. Jeffrey Rochowiak, an instructor in the Compressed Air Academy, told Sullair in 2019, “What I envision for the future of the program is the success stories.”

Two years later, the success stories are coming to fruition.

This summer, two Compressed Air Academy graduates will join Sullair for its summer assembly program. The students will work on the assembly lines to produce portable and stationary compressors that will end up in facilities or on job sites around the world.

Following the success of the Compressed Air Academy, in May 2021, Sullair partnered with Ivy Tech Community College in its development of a new manufacturing lab. Sullair donated a Pneumatics Training Circuit Design system, which will provide college students with hands-

on, real-world experience they’ll use on the job—before they’re on the job.

“We commend Ivy Tech Community College and Michigan City Schools for the work they are doing to educate and train the workforce of the future,” said Brian Tylicz, Senior Vice President of Sales, Americas, at Sullair. “It will help maintain a steady pipeline of qualified applicants.”

By collaborating with educational institutions such as Ivy Tech Community College and Michigan City Schools, Sullair is proud to co-create a roadmap for the future of Northwest Indiana.

Tylicz added, “The work of our local educational institutions is creating a bright future for local employers like Sullair.”