Manufacturing:
From the Assembly Line to Programmable Logic

Fifty years ago, industrial manufacturing meant massive assembly plants mostly located in the Midwest "rust belt." Jobs were plentiful, and wages were good. But things changed. Many of those jobs disappeared, shipped overseas or replaced by more efficient automation.

Yet, all is not doom and gloom. The old processes have given way to new technologies and new approaches. Flexible robotics and computer-controlled equipment are taking over the repetitive, monotonous and dangerous jobs of the past, while creating a need for well-trained workers to program, run, maintain and troubleshoot these devices.

Advanced manufacturing, as it is now called, starts with an idea, something you can't get from machines. People are needed to come up with innovative and efficient ways of doing things, and this is creating opportunities in high-skilled areas of design and engineering.

Madison College offers advanced manufacturing training both on campus and in the community in robotics, programmable logic controllers and computer-aided design as well as hybrid vehicle technology and maintenance.

Since its beginning, the college has partnered with area manufacturers and businesses to identify and provide the skills needed to stay on the competitive edge. Technology, and the skills needed to work with that technology, will continue to evolve, but high quality training will remain key.

Trained technician with robotic arm

"Students expect instant access to technology and information. We want to meet their expectations while providing them with hands-on skills for success."

– Jeff Minter
Automotive Technology instructor