

2021-2022 GRANT RECIPIENT REPORT

Paul Lynch Pennsylvania State University – Behrend

KENT D. PEASLEE JUNIOR FACULTY AWARD AND STEEL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Lynch continued his work on two modules under the Steel Curriculum Development Grant and worked with Penn State Behrend's Materials and Manufacturing Group to host a variety of events and activities for students. Plant visits and career fairs provided opportunities for students to network with those in the industry.

The Materials and Manufacturing Group (MMG) at Pennsylvania State University – Behrend hosted seven virtual general body meetings during the 2020–2021 school year. Given the virtual format of the meetings coupled with virtual club recruiting showcases held at Penn State Behrend, new membership and attendance at the general body meetings significantly declined from years prior. The belief is that students will come back and become highly involved in the group only if they are being presented with career, scholarship and educational opportunities and have a reason to get involved and come to meetings.

During non-COVID times, the general body meetings provide student members with a meal, updates on upcoming scholarship opportunities, manufacturing internships, co-op and job postings, announcements of upcoming local American Foundry Society and AIST dinner meetings, manufacturing tours and career fairs.

Throughout the year, Lynch traveled to companies to visit MMG students working at steel manufacturing sites to foster relationships with the students and to help reinforce their interest in manufacturing. However, during the 2020–2021 school year COVID-19 travel restrictions prevented almost all company visits and plant tours.

An important part of making connections with steel companies and suppliers is attending technical conferences and meetings. The AIST Kent D. Peaslee Junior Faculty Award allowed for attendance at a number of virtual technical conferences and trainings during the 2020–2021 academic year.

A team of MMG students competed in the 2021 Steel Founders' Society of America Cast in Steel Thor's Hammer Competition. The students worked with PRL RegalCast in Cornwall, Pa., and Urick Ductile Solutions in Erie, Pa., to design and manufacture high-strength low-alloy steel hammers. The 2021 Penn State Behrend team won the grand prize for their engineering technical report for the 2021 Thor's Hammer Project. The team was also named runner-up in the Team Video Category. The Penn State Behrend team competed against schools from across the U.S. and Mexico. ◆

