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Norfolk Area Homebuilders contribute \$30,000 to Northeast Community College program

NORFOLK The building construction program at Northeast Community College is the recipient of a large gift from the Norfolk Area Home Builders (NAHB) Association.

As a long-standing backer of the program, NAHB has committed \$30,000 to equipping the building construction program's lab area in the College's new Applied Technology building, proving its continued support of all the programs to be housed in the new facility.

The 66,613 square foot building, currently under construction on the north end of the Norfolk campus, will house building construction, electromechanical, electrical construction and control, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) programs and classes in wind energy technology.

The funds from the Norfolk Area Home Builders Association will be geared toward the purchase and installation of a dust collection system, as well as updated cabinet making equipment and other specialty wood working equipment.

The Norfolk Area Home Builders Association is pleased that Northeast Community College will be able to purchase specialty equipment that is used in the construction field, said Don Wisnieski, NAHB past president. The association has been a committed supporter of the various (Applied Technology) programs at Northeast and we are happy to be able to present this check for \$30,000 to be used toward the building construction program.

Wisnieski said the new Applied Technology building under construction on campus will offer more opportunities for students than what are available now. It is going to allow for high tech finish rooms, woodworking, and cabinet making areas that students will see once they enter the job market. I'm pleased the five programs will be housed in one building, because they all have direct ties to the construction field.

Wisnieski said he believes the new facility will lead to more job opportunities for students. We're starving for a well-educated workforce in this region. I myself am experiencing it today. I would hire 15 more people today if I could find them.

With this contribution, the Norfolk Area Homebuilders Association has contributed over \$80,000 to Northeast Community College over the past ten years. The funds have been raised through the association's annual Home and Garden Show held each spring at Northeast's Chuck M. Pohlman Agriculture Complex.

Lyle Kathol, dean of applied technology at Northeast Community College, said the Northeast's partnership with the Norfolk Area Home Builders has been a valuable collaboration over the years. The Home Builders have helped many students over the years with scholarships, have funded student educational experiences off campus that otherwise would not have been possible and have also provided employment opportunities through internship and full-time employment opportunities for graduates. This relationship has been invaluable to the program and students of the service area and beyond.

This substantial gift will ensure that the Northeast building construction program continues to have the equipment necessary to allow our students to craft the quality homes they build on campus every year, said Dr. Michael Chipps, president of Northeast Community College. We are extremely grateful to the Norfolk Area Home Builders Association for their long-standing support to the College as a whole, and to our building construction students in particular, many of whom are likely future members of the association. It is a wonderful way to give back.

The \$9.1 million Applied Technology building will include classrooms, faculty offices, labs for hands-on-training, lab support areas including a fabrication/tool room, storage areas, and a student lounge/study area to serve over 200 students. It is scheduled to open in 2015.

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