

# Representative Jim Banks

## Innovation Forum and Showcase

### Chad Dodd Testimony

Jay County demonstrates how employers, the community, and educators can work together to fill the skills gap.

In 2014, the John Jay Center for Learning, our adult education center, & the Jay School Corporation assembled a group of local manufacturers to discuss their needs. After this meeting, the Jay-Blackford Manufacturing Academy was created at our high school and our neighboring high school to the west.

The goal of this academy was to provide employability skills, certificates or credentials, and internship for high school students and adults pursuing jobs in advanced manufacturing.

In 2016, Industries from Jay and Blackford Counties, the John Jay Center for Learning, and Jay County and Blackford High School created the Jay-Blackford Manufacturing Council. This group collaborated to create an employer driven career education program in advanced manufacturing.

Through this council, employers have chosen the curriculum, the instructor, the equipment, and future trainings for their current workers and our high school seniors. Our county government has also provided local workforce training dollars to help pay for necessary equipment.

This experience allows its participants to attain stackable certifications, approved by our local industry that can result in an associate's degree. This collaborative group insures we are teaching the right skills to the right people at the right time.

To date, this program has seen 47 adult students from eight counties, two of which border Jay County in Ohio. What started out as two counties collaboration has developed into a regional training hub.

In 2017-18, JCHS educated 115 students, roughly 12% of its population, in advanced manufacturing. 26 of those students were seniors and 25 of those students earned an industry certification or dual credits through our state community college system. Starting in the 2018-2019 school year, Jay County High School seniors will attend the John Jay Center for Learning to complete the first level of SkillsTrac certification alongside adult workers, which will lead directly to employment in our local industries and continued education in the SkillsTrac program.