



For Immediate Release:
May 10, 2016

BCTAL Receives Grant to Implement Nationally Recognized High-Tech Manufacturing Course

North Richland Hills, Texas – The Birdville Center of Technology and Advanced Learning (BCTAL) announced today that it is the recipient of a \$25,000 grant from Project Lead The Way (PLTW) to implement PLTW's Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) course, which will introduce more students to modern manufacturing and career pathways, and prepare them with knowledge and skills related to the advanced manufacturing sector. PLTW is a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K–12 students and teachers, and BCTAL joins more than 8,000 schools across the U.S. in offering PLTW courses to students. The grant was made possible by a generous donation from the Toyota USA Foundation.

"This is great news for our campus, its students, and the community," said Dr. Linda Anderson, Director of Career and Technology Education for BISD, and BCTAL principal. "Manufacturing is an important part of our economy in the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex and we are committed to helping prepare our students for success in highly-skilled positions in the manufacturing industry."

PLTW's year-long CIM course introduces students to the opportunities in a manufacturing career while teaching them about designing products for manufacturability, manufacturing processes, CNC machining, factory system modeling, automation, and robotics. Throughout the course, students also develop vital skills in problem solving, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and communication.

A 2014 Accenture study found that more than 75 percent of U.S. manufacturers face a moderate to severe shortage of highly skilled workers. To address this challenge, the Toyota USA Foundation announced in September a \$1 million grant to PLTW to give 40 high schools the opportunity to implement PLTW's CIM course.

"Toyota USA Foundation is deeply committed to supporting the next generation of America's leaders in mathematics, science, engineering, and environmental science, and we look forward to seeing PLTW – and the students and teachers they serve – make an even bigger impact in the years ahead," said Michael Rouse, Toyota USA Foundation president.

-MORE-

BCTAL is one of 20 schools selected for the 2016–17 school year; 20 more schools will receive grants for the 2017–18 school year. Selection criteria included schools with a strong commitment to engaging female and underrepresented minority students and the schools' proximity to Detroit, Michigan; Plano, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; Georgetown, Kentucky; Princeton, Indiana; St. Louis, Missouri; Buffalo, West Virginia; Jackson, Tennessee; Huntsville, Alabama; and Blue Springs, Mississippi.

Grant funds will help cover program expenses such as annual program fees, teacher professional development, and required course equipment and supplies.

“Project Lead The Way is excited to partner with the Toyota USA Foundation and BCTAL to grow the number of students who fully understand the high-tech, high-skilled nature of modern manufacturing,” said PLTW President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Vince Bertram.

For more information on Project Lead The Way, visit pltw.org or contact Jennifer Cahill, PLTW senior director of media and public relations, at jcahill@pltw.org or Russell Bywater, BISD's engineering teacher, at Russell.bywater@birdvilleschools.net.

About PLTW

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K–12 students and teachers across the U.S. PLTW empowers students to develop in-demand, transportable knowledge and skills through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. PLTW's teacher training and resources support teachers as they engage their students in real-world learning. More than 8,000 elementary, middle, and high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia offer PLTW programs. For more information on Project Lead The Way, visit pltw.org.

###