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For Immediate Release

**BOTSIQ ANNOUNCES NEW TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES WITH TOOLING U-SME
Online curriculum enhances high school manufacturing workforce development training**

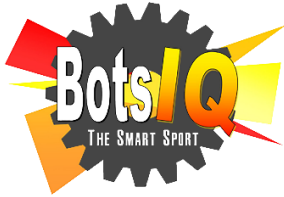
PITTSBURGH (August 28, 2018) – Starting this fall, southwestern Pennsylvania BotsIQ high school students will be introduced to manufacturing and STEM careers and given opportunities to formally complete coursework related to specific industry competencies. [Tooling U-SME](#)'s online manufacturing classes – employed by thousands of manufacturers and over 600 educational facilities across the United States – will be available to all BotsIQ students.

Through the partnership, BotsIQ Academy will provide participating teachers and students access to Tooling U-SME's online manufacturing training curriculum that aligns with industry standards and certifications. Courses were selected by a committee comprised of BotsIQ staff and teachers, regional manufacturers, workforce investment boards, post-secondary training representatives, and Tooling U-SME representatives. BotsIQ Academy will offer students a variety of classes, including applied mathematics, robotics, additive manufacturing, materials, and mechanical and electrical systems. Students will also develop specific competencies that can be used in the workforce. Teachers and students will be introduced to the curriculum at Teacher Professional Development Day in September.

“After receiving insightful feedback from last year’s participants, BotsIQ wanted to provide our students with more opportunities. Through BotsIQ Academy, we look forward to strengthening our students’ technical knowledge and skills and increase their understanding of manufacturing careers,” BotsIQ executive director Michel Conklin said. “To better support student learning, BotsIQ staff and teachers will be able to monitor students’ progress and success of each module through the online educational technology software.”

Once a student successfully finishes a class, he/she will receive a certificate of completion. Students will also have the potential for advanced placement in future testing or post-secondary coursework.

“Attracting and retaining the next generation manufacturing workforce is vital for the growth of the industry, and proper education and training aligned to industry needs will ensure this important demographic is equipped with high-level skills sought after by employers,” said Gretchen Schultz, director of workforce development, Tooling U-SME. “Through Tooling U-SME, BotsIQ students will have access to industry-leading curriculum that will prepare them for successful manufacturing career pathways.”



When surveyed, 88% of current BotsIQ students expressed interest in or planned to explore a manufacturing or STEM-related career. More than 70% of participants plan to continue their education in a trade training program, apprenticeship program, or two-or four-year degree program. With the addition of BotsIQ Academy, students will begin their training in high school and transition easily to a training or education program with some coursework completed.

For more information about SWPA BotsIQ, visit www.botsiqpa.org.

About Southwestern Pennsylvania BotsIQ

Southwestern Pennsylvania BotsIQ is a manufacturing workforce development program of the Pittsburgh Chapter National Tooling & Machining Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. The program is affiliated with the National Robotics League and is managed by New Century Careers. Faced with an aging manufacturing workforce, The Pittsburgh Chapter National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA) spearheaded efforts to bring a national student robotics program to the region. Local manufacturers and educators joined forces to launch BotsIQ with just six schools in 2005. SWPA BotsIQ is 10 times its original size and boasts its own fan base and alumni returning to lend support as volunteers. More than 5,000 students have participated in the program since its inception.

About Tooling U-SME

Tooling U-SME delivers versatile, competency-based learning and development solutions to the manufacturing community, working with thousands of companies including more than half of all Fortune 500® manufacturing companies, as well as 600 educational institutions across the country. Tooling U-SME partners with customers to build high performers who help their companies drive quality, productivity, innovation, and employee satisfaction. Working directly with hundreds of high schools, community colleges, and universities, Tooling U-SME is also able to help prepare the next generation workforce by providing industry-driven curriculum. A division of SME, an organization that connects people to manufacturing solutions, Tooling U-SME can be found at toolingu.com, facebook.com/toolingu or follow [@ToolingU](https://twitter.com/ToolingU) on Twitter.

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