



# Eastern-in-the-News



## EASTERN WELCOMES WOODMARK'S DONATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTOR

**Moorefield — Aug. 20—** Eastern WV Community and Technical College got not only a shot in the arm, but a whole arm itself last week, as a local manufacturer donated a major piece of teaching equipment to the college's Technology Training Center in Petersburg. American Woodmark made the formal presentation at the Center during a brief ceremony, as Eastern's Board of Governors opened its meeting Tuesday, August 14.

"It's a material handling robot arm, meant for carrying and moving heavy product or pallets," said Charles "Skip" Landes, Eastern's new Instructor for Advanced Technology. The arm can lift 27 pounds of material and weighs nearly three tons itself, he said.

The college welcomed both Landes and the robot at the ceremony.



During a brief ceremony at the Eastern WV Community and Technical College's Technology Training Center in Petersburg August 14, American Woodmark formally donated a material handling robot to the college's electromechanical program..

**FROM LEFT:** Faron Shanholz, past Chair of Eastern's Board of Governors; Paul Gall, American Woodmark's South Branch Plant Manager; the Robot Arm; Eastern President Chuck Terrell; Charles "Skip" Landes, Eastern's new Instructor for Advanced Technology.

"When we're able to develop great working relationships with employers like American Woodmark, who hire a large number of people in our community," noted Charles "Chuck": Terrell, Eastern's President, "and then they see the value of what we're doing, teaching hands-on skills with technology, it becomes a great example of industry and education working together. American Woodmark's donation of a robotic arm to Eastern's electromechanical program and Technology Center, it's just outstanding."

For their work “behind the scenes” in arranging the donation, Terrell credited Paul Gall, Plant Manager for American Woodmark’s South Branch plant, Landes, Ward Malcolm, Eastern’s Dean of Career, Technical and Workforce Education and Faron Shanholz, past chair of the college’s Board of Governors.

“I think I speak on behalf of Ward and everyone else involved,” the President emphasized, “when I say that we really appreciate American Woodmark’s gift.” He estimated the value of the used equipment at “around \$150-thousand.”

With a piece of equipment that big and technologically complex, “it’s a major lock-out, tag-out area,” noted American Woodmark’s Gall, who made the presentation on behalf of the wood products manufacturer.

Because of occasional computer glitches, Landes explained, even after the operator programs a particular action into the robot, it can sometimes seem to act with a mind of its own. And when that occurs, a safety hazard can result.

“Students will be able to learn and practice how to program the arm,” Landes said, “but they’ll do it from a safe distance.” To prevent accidents, the college might need to house the robot behind a mesh cage.

Although Eastern’s Malcolm indicated that the arm might not play a direct role in any of Eastern’s current academic or technical programs, he pointed out that “programming of robots and uses for robots, both big and small, are virtually endless.

“For example, the poultry industry is looking at using them to trim meat from chickens. The auto industry is famous for using robot welders, assemblers, and painters. Then there is also homeland security.”

Malcolm added that “fixturing could become part of our program, where students would learn to design and build the fixtures that pick up items, hold the paint gun, or aim the welder.”

Eastern’s new Advanced Technology Instructor, also foresees the development of new high-skill training programs for which the robot will prove in the future to be a valuable learning tool. And he should know. As project engineer for American Woodmark, Skip Landes led the design and procurement of robotics, automated manufacturing machinery and high tech finishing equipment installed at the company’s fully automated South Branch production plant in 2005.

Landes enjoyed long experience in manufacturing as production manager, project engineer and plant engineer, a career that followed schooling at WVU, and serving in the Air Force during Vietnam as a crypto-graphic communications technician. He recently retired from American Woodmark after 31 years with the company, the last 15 as project engineer.

Since 2010, Landes has taught for Eastern as an adjunct instructor, and he received an appointment as fulltime faculty this August.

For more information about Eastern’s financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education, call toll free: 877-982-2322; or check the College’s website: “[www.easternwv.edu](http://www.easternwv.edu)”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, and fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.