



My overall experience with the apprenticeship program is very good. If it were not for the strong foundation that the apprenticeship provided I would not be where I am today. I would also like to say that I have and always will be a supporter of the apprenticeship because I believe it gives young adults an opportunity at having a career that they might not otherwise have.

I found out about the program sitting in my 9th grade principles of technology class. The first year trainer for Blum at that time, Tim Eldridge, gave a presentation and said if anyone was interested to let him or the teacher know. I wanted to go to college but knew that my parents had no way to pay for it. I would have to make my own way. I talked about the apprenticeship with my parents and we decided that it would be a great opportunity. I let my teacher and Tim know I was interested. They told me okay but I was in the 9th grade and I might change my mind before my junior year. I knew what I wanted and wasted no time. I visited my guidance counselor and set up my class schedule to match what Blum needed.

I started the program in June of 98 after completing the summer internship. My favorite two years of the program would have to be the 2nd and 4th. I liked the 2nd because I finally got to machine some parts that the company actually used and the 4th because I was specializing as a mechanic. Over the four years the apprenticeship allowed me to experience things I would not have otherwise. I competed in national competitions, was honored as apprentice of the year, and visited our company's home in Austria.

I graduated from the apprenticeship in 2002 and started my career as a mechanic. After a few years I had acquired enough experience that I was asked to be a primary mechanic on our companies Clip Top assembly machine. This afforded me the chance to revisit Austria as part of a team of mechanics. We were responsible for disassembly of the Clip Top line and Reassembly when it arrived here in the US.

I am currently starting my new position in engineering as a design technician and I am looking forward to furthering my career in this department.

Steve Wilson – Design Technician