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The Erie County Technical School (ECTS) introduced Plastics Technology into its curriculum for high school students five years ago. At this time, the program was only available to students in their senior year but has since been expanded to include a three-year path. As the program grows so does the need for continually updating and expanding equipment and supplies in order to provide the highest quality training for our students. ECTS has been fortunate over the years to receive numerous donations of materials and equipment from local manufacturing companies. As noted in the October SPE, we are grateful for these contributions and for all of our partners in business and industry.

The Plastics Technology lab has recently received another valuable equipment donation. The latest addition is a Conair MXR-250 Sprue Picker, compliments of Plastikos, Inc.

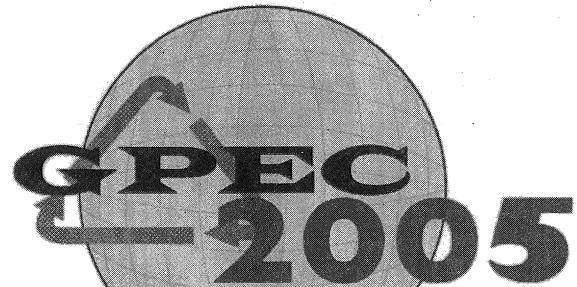
"We would like to thank the owners and management at Plastikos for the very generous donation of the Conair Sprue Picker," noted Frank Paparelli, Plastics Technology instructor. *"We are going to mount it to the stationary platen of our Sumitomo SH100C Injection Molding Machine in January. Once in operation, students will learn how it's used to remove the plastic sprue and runner from the moveable portion of a mold upon ejection. After removal of the runner, they can see how it drops the plastic runner system into either an upright or auger-grinder. This coupled with a small vacuum loading hopper that we have will not only give them a great exposure to some of the automation equipment used in the plastics industry, but will also enable them to see the effect that this equipment has on reducing the overall cycle time and reduced material handling. In addition, it will give them a better idea of how a manufacturer sets up their machinery for automatic production. It will also help to impress upon them the worth of this type of apparatus, the value of labor-saving technology and the importance of technical education in enabling someone to maintain and operate such equipment,"* continued Paparelli.

Mr. Bill Fogleboch, vice president/general manager of Plastikos, said he'd rather see equipment such as this go for training purposes rather than collecting dust in a storage room. *"We found the need to replace our Conair Sprue Picker with a more updated robot*

to better meet our manufacturing needs," said Fogleboch. *"The old model still had a great deal of functional value, particularly as a training tool so we decided to donate it to the Erie County Technical School. Students in Plastics Technology will benefit by learning how to make the sprue picker operational as well as how to operate the equipment."*

"We like to offer our assistance whenever possible because we recognize and value the training that ECTS offers young people. Students who complete the Plastics Technology program will be prepared to enter a position in the plastics field without a lot of additional on-the-job training. They will graduate having learned the basic fundamentals of operating an injection molding machine and have a solid basis in which to start a career in the plastics field," added Fogleboch.

High school students who are interested in the Plastics Technology program will have an opportunity to visit the lab and ECTS during recruitment week, January 5-13. Ninth grade students from 11 Erie County sending school districts will visit the school as well as three different technologies of their choice. Recruitment week culminates with an open house on Thursday, January 13 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. ECTS cordially invites our partners in the community along with students, parents and other interested participants to attend. All 19 technologies will open their classrooms for tours and questions. Various labs will offer student exhibits and demonstrations. **Come meet the faculty and staff, tour the school and learn more about all the exciting things going on at ECTS. For more information call 864-0641, ext. 350.**



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