

Erie County Technical School Students Build 12-Foot Vacuum

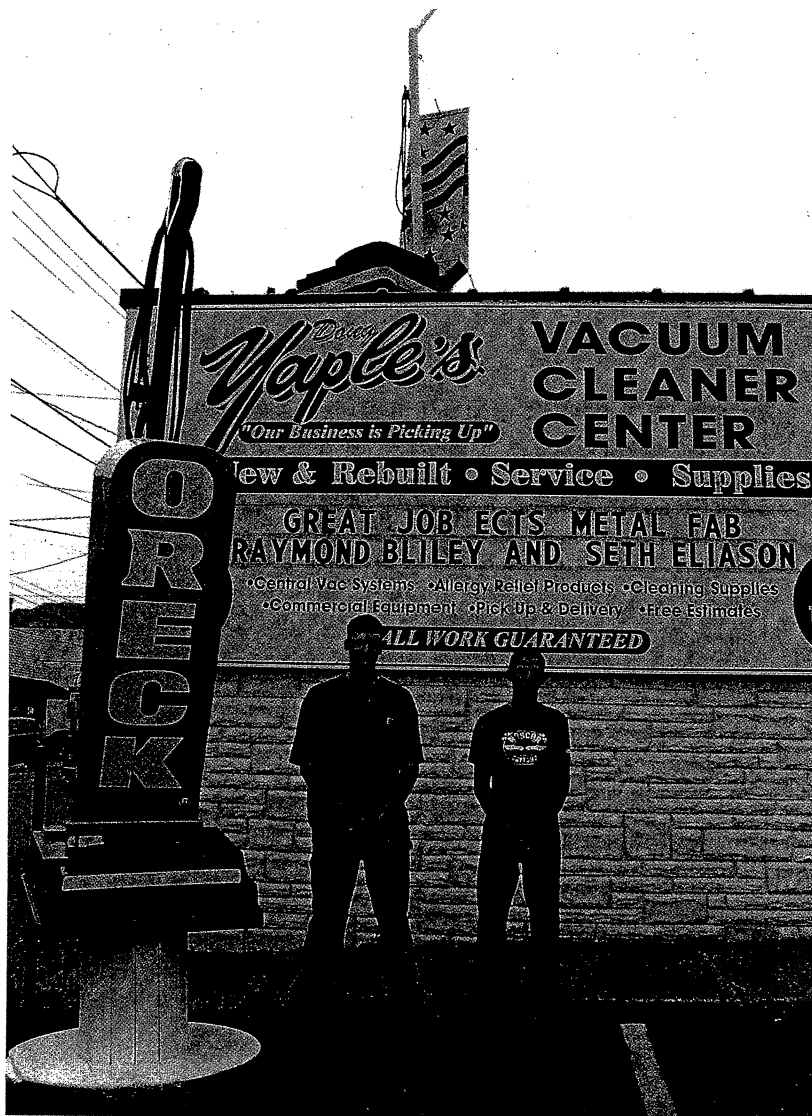
Two students in the Metal Fabrication class at the Erie County Technical School (ECTS) recently manufactured a 12-foot metal vacuum cleaner, a replica of a four-foot Oreck. Raymond Bliley and Seth Eliason from Seneca High School, who will enter their senior year in the Metal Fabrication program at ECTS, were selected earlier this year to take on the monumental project. Now, the 400-pound vacuum is on display at Doug Yapple's Vacuum Center, located at 3341 Buffalo Road in Wesleyville, PA.

The idea was initially conceived several years ago when Doug Yapple, owner of Doug Yapple's Vacuum Center, moved his store to a new location.

"When I relocated my business I thought that having a very large vacuum on display on the rooftop of my building would help my customers identify the new location as well as grab the attention of passersby. It worked so well then, I decided to add a second display for those traveling from the opposite direction," noted Yapple.

The project, funded by Yapple's Vacuum Center, took several months to complete.

"Yapple gave us an Oreck vacuum to use as a model. We first had to measure the example and scale it up to the proper ratio to make our own working blueprints. Our goal was to produce a vacuum three times the original size of our model," explained Eliason.



Raymond Bliley and Seth Eliason

"Using various gauges of steel we sheared and formed each different part. The parts were welded and bolted together and then sanded to look like one solid piece," added Bliley.

"This project required us to utilize everything that we've learned in our Metal Fabrication lab. It was good practical experience for us and it will be fun to drive by the store and see our work on display," concluded Eliason and Bliley.

"The Erie County Technical School students did a great job and should be proud of their accomplishments," said Yapple. "Once the vacuum was completed, I sent it away to be powder coated and then had a local sign specialist paint to look like the Oreck brand. It's on my store rooftop now and I'm already receiving compliments on my latest and greatest promotional and directional display piece." ❖