

In 2024, the SME Education Foundation continues to inspire, prepare and support the next generation of manufacturing and engineering talent. Across three distinct programs, we collectively engage nearly 12,000 students every year. Below are the highlights from the first quarter, summarizing our journey to create a diverse, skilled, and innovative workforce.

## SME Education Foundation Stories in *Manufacturing Engineering*

Every month, the SME Education Foundation features one of its programs in *Manufacturing Engineering* magazine distributed to 75,000 subscribers. Below are the three featured stories from the first quarter.

### January:

Meet students Vanessa Ng and Mohammad Mohammad from Westmount Secondary School. Their experience at SME's CMTS event in Toronto was eye-opening and a transformative step in their journey toward a career in manufacturing. From leading the Westmount EV Race Team to exploring cutting-edge technologies, they represent the innovative spirit and potential of young minds in manufacturing. [Read more about their journey and the impact of the SME Bright Minds Student Summit](#) →





# SME Education Foundation Stories in Manufacturing Engineering (continued)

## February:

We highlighted Cohen McGee from Constantine High School, a Michigan SME PRIME student whose journey was inspired through CTE classes and an apprenticeship program. His dedication to STEM has led him to an enriching path with the SME PRIME program at Three Rivers High School, in partnership with a dynamic apprenticeship at AAM - American Axle & Manufacturing. Cohen's aspirations, and the skills he's garnered through SME PRIME and his apprenticeship, exemplify the vibrant future of manufacturing. "It's been an eye-opener," he says. [Read the full story →](#)



## March:

Meet Abe Francis, an 18-year-old from Sacramento who received a scholarship from us. Through the SME Bright Minds Student Mentorship Program, he has been mentored by Erica Bell, vice president of the SME Education Foundation Board of Directors and the vice president of regulatory compliance and sustainability at HARMAN International, a Samsung subsidiary with global headquarters in Michigan. Abe says this mentorship throughout his freshman year at Sacramento City College has been valuable in areas such as internships, time management and communication with engineers. As part of the SME Education Foundation's Community of Scholars, Abe also receives complimentary SME membership, access to Tooling U-SME education, and promotional opportunities. [Read more →](#)





# New SME Education Foundation Donors

The SME Education Foundation is grateful to the many donors who support our programs. We wouldn't be able to provide life-changing opportunities to the next generation of skilled manufacturing talent without these partners.



**Perkins Malo  
Hunter Foundation**





# SME Education Foundation on the Move

The SME Education Foundation team is always on the move. Our team travels to meet with schools, students, and donors to advance the next generation of manufacturing and engineering talent. Here are some highlights from the first quarter:



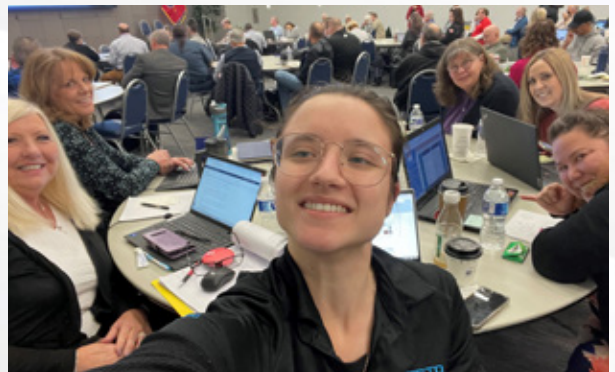
Our visit to the FIRST Robotics Competition in Rochester, New York, underscored the enduring legacy of our scholarship programs. Catching up with Julia, an Albert E. Wischmeyer Scholarship recipient now thriving as a manufacturing engineer, reminded us of the great impact of donor generosity. Partnerships with organizations like FIRST continue to inspire and engage young minds in robotics, manufacturing and automation.



The SME PRIME team traveled to various locations in the first quarter of 2024. They attended the Michigan Career Education Conference (MiCEC) to present an informational session for Michigan schools interested in applying for one of the new SME PRIME awards, followed by site visits to Georgia SME PRIME Schools, and the launch of 17 new SME PRIME schools in Michigan. These engagements provided valuable opportunities to connect with educators, students, and industry partners, further advancing our mission to inspire and prepare the next generation of manufacturing and engineering talent.



As part of our student engagement activities and leadership of the SkillsUSA Additive Manufacturing Competition, the SME Education Foundation team joined the annual gathering of SkillsUSA Technical Chairs. This meeting served as a vital forum for learning and preparation ahead of the SkillsUSA National Competition, scheduled for this summer in Atlanta. Together, we explored the 113 diverse contests offered, exchanging insights and expectations for the upcoming event, paving the way for enriching experiences and opportunities for participating students.



# SME Education Foundation In the News

The SME Education Foundation continues to be featured in numerous media outlets. Below are the features from the first quarter.

## WBNG 12 News:

Unadilla Valley High School students gained hands-on experience in robotics and more, thanks to the SME PRIME program. “That is not something we could afford ever on our own, but now we have access for the students to have experience upon graduation,” praised technology teacher William Rexroat. [Read more →](#)



## Forest Park Review:

SME PRIME school educator April Senase’s recognition as the “2024 Outstanding Manufacturing Educator” and her receipt of the “Award of Meritorious Service” illustrate the profound impact educators have in guiding students toward manufacturing excellence. “These awards show that I am on the right track and bring positive recognition to the Proviso community,” Senase remarked. [Learn more →](#)



## IOScholarships Podcast:

In our recent guest podcast episode, we discuss breaking down financial barriers for students pursuing STEM careers. SME Education Foundation Vice President Robert Luce, and Maria Fernanda Trochimezuk, founder of IOScholarships, share insights on empowering underrepresented students through scholarships, highlighting how these efforts are shaping a diverse future in engineering and manufacturing. [Tune in for more →](#)





# Other Happenings

Below are additional noteworthy activities and engagements from the first quarter at the SME Education Foundation.

## Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day

This February, we celebrated “Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day,” a vital initiative to explain engineering careers to young women. With women constituting just 34% of the STEM workforce, our efforts focused on showcasing how engineering shapes our world. Through the SME PRIME® program and other initiatives, several thousand female students have been empowered this school year, marking a step toward closing the gender gap in STEM.



## SME Education Foundation 2023 Annual Report

2023 was a record year for the SME Education Foundation as Student Summits, SME PRIME and the Scholarship program delivered impressive results. [Read the full report](#) →

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