

AVSI CNC Machinist Apprentice...now a Journeyman Machinist

March 30, 2019

On Saturday, March 30, 2019, Advanced Vision Systems Inc. (AVSI) hosted the graduation celebration of Mr. Kevin Smith. Kevin was the first applicant to enroll and complete AVSI's **CNC Machinist Apprenticeship Program**.

AVSI provides engineering support services to Government clients. In 2014, Kevin was working as a logistician, providing QA support services to one of AVSI's NSWC Indian Head customers. AVSI was also providing support to the Machine Shops located on NSWC's north and south campuses. That same year, AVSI also employed a senior-level machinist, Mr. Brian Galion and was looking to hire additional senior-level machinists. When Kevin called to speak with AVSI-President, Pennie Drinkard about working in the machine shop, Pennie knew that this could be the beginnings of building the machine-shop's pipeline.

Pennie had identified a gap in the government's process and procedures for replacing their aging workforce with skilled, educated, motivated individuals. NSWC continues to struggle with knowledge transfer, and attracting young, knowledgeable, qualified candidates. This is a result of poor planning and a lack of investment in the future.

AVSI's solution was to design and develop an Apprenticeship Program for CNC machinists. AVSI presented their design to the State of Maryland DLLR. The CNC Machinist Apprenticeship program was approved in late 2014. The Maryland-approved Apprenticeship program requires 8000 hours of on-the-job-training (OJT) and 144 hours (annually) related classroom training.



Pennie Drinkard, Kevin Smith, Jane Sinclair

Kevin was enrolled as an apprentice from Dec 2014 until March 2019. During those four and a half years, Mr. Brian Gallion served as Kevin's mentor. Brian saw Kevin through to the end and was there to celebrate with him. Ms. Jane Sinclair came to the celebration and presented Kevin with his Certificate of Completion from the State of Maryland.

"Kevin is now a certified Journeyman Machinist with the credentials to prove it., said Pennie. We are so proud of him." Kevin has since been hired by the Government and continues to support the machine shop as a government employee. We will miss Kevin, and are so encouraged by him, his hard work and focus on planning for future success. The success of the program has been admired by AVSI's competitor's and customers alike.