

Fairfield County Students Spend a Day Job Shadowing at Dennis Corporation

March 1, 2007

Two Fairfield County high school students recently spent the day job shadowing engineers at Dennis Corporation, a full service engineering firm located in Columbia, SC. Taylor Wade and Andrew Drake, both juniors at Fairfield Central High School, enjoyed their experience at the engineering firm. Dan Dennis, President of Dennis Corporation, introduced the students to every division of the company so the students could understand the many facets of the industry. After being introduced to each division, the students spent individual time with each division manager, learning about the services of each division and their current projects.

After learning about each division, the students concluded their experience in a session with Mr. Tim Antley, Dennis Corporation's Construction Services Manager. Mr. Antley took the students to a job site and then showed them video of Dennis Corporation's role in the Fairfield County Road Improvement Program, a project that both students were familiar with being residents of Fairfield County.

Dennis Corporation was pleased to be able to share the engineering industry with these two students, especially since they reside in a county in which Dennis Corporation serves as the county engineer. Both students appreciated the experience and look forward to pursuing careers in engineering. Taylor Wade, who found the Civil Infrastructure division to be most interesting, stated, "It was a great opportunity to find out how a good civil engineering firm operates on a daily basis. [The experience was] very informative and fun. Now I know what's ahead in my future in this career." Andrew Drake also enjoyed his experience and found the traffic group to be most interesting because "they work on the roads I travel on daily." On his experience, Mr. Drake said, "This day gave me an opportunity to see if this work environment is one I might be comfortable in, in the future."

This job shadowing day was part of the Fairfield County School District's job shadowing program. The District has participated in the Groundhog Job Shadow Day program for many years. Instead of just shadowing on February 2, the School District has expanded the experience to allow the students and employers to choose one day throughout the month of February to participate in this program.

Miriam Sprott, the Fairfield County School District employee responsible for connecting the students to the employers, found Dennis Corporation through the Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce.

The program begins each year when the students work with their guidance counselors to determine a field in which they might be interested in working. After this decision has been made, Ms. Sprott contacts the Midlands Education and Business Alliance, of which Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce is a member, to find a business that matches the interest of the students. In Andrew and Taylor's case, the students were both interested in engineering, thus Ms. Sprott was excited to send them to a firm whose work is so prevalent in Fairfield County.

Overall, the day was a success for both the students and Dennis Corporation. Mr. Dennis stated, "It was a pleasure to host Andrew and Taylor for a day of job shadowing. I hope that the day gave them a better understanding of what lies ahead for them in their careers as engineers. Dennis Corporation is always happy to help influence and educate future engineers."



Mr. Tim Antley explains to the students the process of full-depth reclamation which was used during the Fairfield County Road Improvement Program.