



# Strengthening skilled trades education in Northern Michigan

## New partnership keeps CNC training on track during construction of the Martin Jahn Technology Center

**WHEN RYAN SKOCY ENROLLED** in North Central's CNC training course, he was eager to expand his skill set. With a background in small engine repair, welding, and bridge port machining, he saw an opportunity to learn Computer-Aided Design (CAD) software for running a Haas CNC machine at Moran Iron Works.

For Alan Cortes, the program offered a way to refine his knowledge in design and machining. A former biotechnology student at Mexico's Institute of Biotechnology, Cortes had worked with a CNC machine in college but on a much smaller scale. Now, as a CNC program trainee at Moran Iron Works, he wanted to build his expertise in a real-world setting.

Thanks to North Central's partnership with the Industrial Arts Institute (IAI) in Onaway, students like Skocy and Cortes can continue their training while

the college builds the new Martin Jahn Technology Center on its Petoskey campus. Set to open in Fall 2026, the facility will serve as a hub for advanced



**Ryan Skocy adjusts the settings on a Haas CNC machine during hands-on training at the Industrial Arts Institute. Through North Central's partnership with IAI, students gain experience in CNC programming and machining while the Martin Jahn Technology Center is under construction.**

technology and skilled trades education. In the meantime, NCMC has relocated its CNC equipment to IAI, ensuring uninterrupted learning opportunities.

For Skocy, the experience has been valuable.

"The CAD drawing, seeing the correct way to structure the programs, is going to help me tremendously," he said.

He appreciates the hands-on approach of the course, where students not only design in CAD but also see their programs in action.

"Seeing what you program in CAD being run firsthand and having somebody knowledgeable to answer your questions helps a lot," Skocy said.

The 12-week CNC, CAD and CAM (Computer-Aided Manufacturing) training course is designed to give participants essential design-to-production skills, helping local businesses strengthen their workforce.

"This partnership offers incredible opportunities for individuals to gain



practical, high-demand skills right in their own community,” said IAI Executive Director Tamara Ward.

The training has reinforced Skocy’s career aspirations.

“My career goals are to just get better all the way around with the whole process, from CAD to running the machine,” he said. “The course supports those goals by giving knowledge and structure in CAD to make that happen.”

Cortes is also looking toward the future.

“I want to better my design skills and make more detailed structures. This course has helped me because we design more intricate parts than what I draw at work,” he said.

CNC training will continue through Summer 2026, operating at IAI and in NCMC’s Mobile Fab Lab until the Martin Jahn Technology Center is complete.

“This collaboration with IAI brings hands-on CNC, CAD, and CAM training to our region, helping individuals gain the skills needed for a successful future in manufacturing,” said CNC Instructor Jeff Montgomery.

With the demand for skilled trades professionals growing, North Central remains committed to providing industry-relevant training that connects students like Skocy and Cortes with hands-on learning experiences.

Through strategic partnerships and a forward-thinking vision, NCMC is ensuring that Northern Michigan’s workforce is equipped for the future of manufacturing. ▲



Ryan Skocy, Alan Cortes, and CNC Instructor Jeff Montgomery stand in front of a Haas CNC machine, where students continue hands-on training at Onaway’s Industrial Arts Institute.



Set to open in Fall 2026, North Central’s new 11,750-square-foot Martin Jahn Technology Center will be a flexible, state-of-the-art learning space dedicated to technology and skilled trades education.

The college’s \$22M CATEE project also includes renovating and expanding the Health Education and Science Center to a total of 15,775 square feet, with additional classrooms, clinical spaces, simulation labs, and resources to support the growth of the college’s nursing and allied health programs.





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WHAT: Take up to 10 NCMC college classes (around 30 credits!) that also count toward your high school diploma.

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—Zach Maendel '25,  
Former Dual-Enrolled Student



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