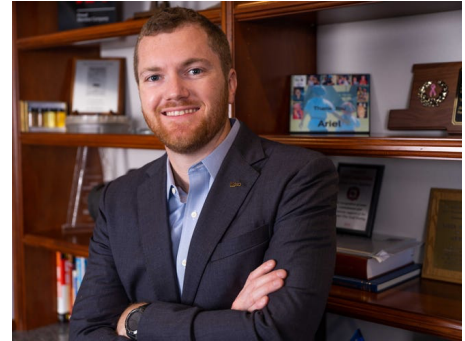


Our company's partnership with Stark State is a win-win for workforce development | Opinion

Alex Wright, President and CEO, Ariel Corporation

Today, the demand for skilled workers across Ohio is greater than ever, particularly in industries requiring specialized technical knowledge. At Ariel Corporation, we found a key learning and development solution through our 15-year partnership with Stark State College, one of Ohio's 22 community colleges.

Ariel is the leading manufacturer of reciprocating gas compressors in the global energy industry, and it does it right here in Ohio. Our employees are essential to our company's growth and success. That's why learning and development are bedrocks of our organization.



Our people deserve the opportunity to gain the technical skills they need to excel in their roles, build careers rather than jobs, and adapt to the advancements in the oil and gas industry. Plus, as demand for energy products grows, we need to strategically scale our team while bringing on new talent as staff retire.

To meet these objectives, we've fostered a longstanding partnership with Stark State. More than 550 of our employees have enrolled in the college's CNC precision machining and assembly programs. Employees new to our company, as well as incumbent workers advancing within our operations, are eligible to participate.

With Stark State, our employees are not only working with credentialed and qualified instructors in a state-of-the-art lab, but they're also earning college credit toward a one-year certificate and potentially up to an associate degree.

Our belief is that our investment in education strengthens the loyalty of our employees, helps us to retain an upskilled and talented workforce, and upholds our legacy as a responsible, forward-thinking employer. Through these efforts, we're enhancing our workforce while reinforcing our reputation as a family-centered business that values its people. These learning and development opportunities help ensure a strong pipeline of knowledgeable team members ready to lead Ariel into the future.

Our company has also directly benefitted from Stark State's responsiveness, flexibility and expertise to tailor their programs to the needs of our company and industry.

Stark State educates our employees where we need them most, whether it's on site at our headquarters in Mount Vernon, our machining facility in Akron, or at the college in North Canton. We're able to adjust our enrollment to coincide with our business cycles. We can take advantage of cost-savings programs like Ohio TechCred, where employers can upskill their workforce through training providers like Stark State and receive reimbursement from the state upon completion.

Partnering with a community college like Stark State can enhance a company's workforce recruitment and development efforts, help increase employee retention and loyalty and close the skills gap. The cost-effective training available through these partnerships can help build a workforce with strong technical and problem-solving skills that contribute to continuous improvement, efficiency gains and innovation. For Ariel, these are critical factors in helping us maintain a competitive edge in the oil and gas industry.

Alex Wright is president and CEO of Ariel Corporation, a 3rd generation family-owned business serving the global energy industry since 1966.

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