



News release

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**Construction begins on Fire Protection
training structure**

Construction began Friday on two structures which will help Gateway students receive hands-on training to properly perform an important firefighting procedure.

Work to two 12-by-20-foot roof vent props – one each in at the Kansasville and Caledonia fire departments -- culminated seven months of preparation by Gateway and several other community partners who stepped forward to make the training structures possible.

All the partners and Gateway staff were on hand Friday morning at the Kansasville site -- located adjacent to the Kansasville Fire and Rescue headquarters -- amid the footings, lumber and other materials to celebrate the beginning of construction.

“It’s a great day, demonstrating community partnership leveraged to build this structure. Together we are ensuring the Fire Protection Technician students learn necessary skills for a safe and successful career,” said Gateway President Bryan Albrecht.

The Wisconsin Technical College System requires use of these structures as part of the certification training and testing process in roof ventilation procedures.

“Each district seeking to perform this certification is required to have one of these roof vent props,” said John Dahms, instructor/coordinator of Gateway’s Fire Protection Technician program.

Students will train on the deck using a saw without a blade to mimic venting a roof during an actual fire. Roof ventilation helps control the fire by venting heat and smoke out of the building.

“This is an important procedure for students to master,” said Dahms. “Students will be helped greatly in their training because of these two new vent props.”

The state provided a \$5,300 grant for materials for the Kansasville site structure. Gateway leveraged that money through its area partners to buy enough materials for two sites -- Kansasville as well as Caledonia, where the other Gateway training site is located.

Local partners also stepped forward to donate \$20,000 in labor costs for each site. That included a local Boy Scout who assembled volunteer workers to assist in building the units as part of his Eagle Scout achievement requirements.

Peter Scherrer, president and CEO of Scherrer Construction Co. Inc., brought in staff expertise and knowledge from his company to help oversee construction and expediting of the project. He also helped bring in students from

the Burlington High School Construction Career Academy to work on the structure, gaining hands-on training.

“The academy is always looking for projects, and this seemed like a great opportunity,” said Scherrer. “This project was a win-win for everyone.”

Partners in building the structures include Scherrer Construction Co. Inc., Wanasek Corporation, Reineman’s True Value Hardware, Clinton’s Home Building Center, and the Burlington High School Construction Career Academy.

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the challenging needs of students, employers and communities.

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