

NEWS RELEASE

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On-site UT MBA classes worked well for Delta's North Star Bluescope Steel

(DELTA, OH) Classmates often become close during the years of working towards the same degree.

But 23 University of Toledo graduates at a celebration on January 19 already had a lot in common before starting work on their MBA degrees three years ago: almost all of them worked at the same company.

"The culture of our facility is one where employees continue to grow and learn throughout their careers," noted Rich Menzel, Vice President, Human Resources at North Star Bluescope Steel in Delta, Ohio. Cost of tuition and books are covered, and core undergraduate college classes were offered on site for several years.

"About four years ago, a mechanical engineer and a couple others here approached us about doing an on-site MBA program," Menzel said. "We were very impressed with UT's flexibility, how they took advantage of the opportunity, and we worked out an incredible schedule."

The schedule offered one course at a time for eight weeks, meeting on Mondays from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. If employees had scheduling issues, they would do a shift exchange with another employee to work it out. Approximately 25 people, including six people from the area who did not work at North Star, started the program, and after three years, 22 people

graduated at the end of the fall semester. They are celebrating their achievement at a special dinner on Monday, January 19 at Central Park West Banquet Hall in Sylvania. (Program at 8 p.m.)

"The convenience was incredible," said Menzel, who is also a member of the North Star MBA Cohort. "I walked ten steps out of my office into the classroom, the books were brought out to us by UT, and I didn't get any bills since the company paid for it."

"The big picture is that the MBA program at North Star is an example of what we are trying to do so people become greater and greater assets to the company," Menzel said.

Doug Lange was Vice President of Finance at North Star Bluescope Steel when he enrolled in the MBA program because "UT made it so easy to get involved. I love when people are creative in addressing issues, and this is a pretty innovative program. UT was very accommodating."

The accommodations continued when Lange became Vice President of Finance for Bluescope Steel in Kansas City earlier this year. "I thought so much of what UT did, I said I'm not giving up on this program," Lange recalled. "The move to become a vice president of a multiple location business for BlueScope was facilitated by the classes I took."

With only two courses to go, and not wanting to deal with all the paperwork of transferring, he was pleased with the opportunity to remain part of the North Star cohort, still participating in the Delta, Ohio classes via the phone and video conferencing.

"What I learned at UT is invaluable for my everyday job," Lange said. "Thanks to UT for putting it all together and making it all work for us."

"We always say that UT's MBA classes are convenient and provide immediately applicable information. That was uniquely true at North Star Bluescope Steel," noted Dr. Thomas Gutteridge, Dean of the UT College of Business Administration. "We are excited to have served the Delta community through this innovative arrangement and welcome other opportunities to deliver our high quality MBA program onsite."

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