Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Sept. 28, 2018

Kayd Riddle is getting a reputation. And it's reflecting back on Pickaway-Ross.

The senior in Tommy Collier's Precision Welding program was involved in making three benches during his junior year and shared photos with a family friend, Stacey McNichols.

Stacey, who oversees the Stages Family Inc. Veterans Benefit, was so impressed with Kayd's work that he asked him if he'd make a bench for the group's event in June.

Kayd asked Tommy if he could do it and Tommy gave him permission to work on the project at the end of the school year.

Kayd spent the last week of the year and the first week after school let out in the lab working on the bench.

"I created the design," he said. "Collier showed me the way to run the machines if I didn't know how to do something. But I did it all myself."

Kayd, whose home school is Logan Elm, is very pleased with the finished product.

"When I found the design to base mine on, it's exactly how I imagined it would be," he said.

Kayd isn't the only one who's proud.

"Obviously, I'm pretty tickled by what he was able to do at only 17 years old," said Chris Riddle, Kayd's dad.

Chris' pride is not misplaced.

"His fabrication skills are awesome," Tommy said of Kayd. "In the lab, he's like working with an adult. You tell him something needs to be done and he works until it's finished.

"He's going to do great things."

Kayd's bench was quite a hit at the benefit, as a group of 50 bid $10,400 for it.

The group then turned around and donated it to Veterans Memorial Park in Chillicothe.

This morning, a ceremony will take place to dedicate the bench.

Stacey said that during the auction, he wasn't sure how much the bench might raise.

"If we got $3,000, I would be tickled. But then we got started and it went to $3,000, $4,000, $5,000."

Stacey said he would love for this to be the beginning of a partnership between Stages Family Inc. and Pickaway-Ross to make something that can be auctioned at the benefit each year.

"We would be glad to build something if we know what they want and they gave us time to do it," Tommy said.

Dennis Franks is superintendent of Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center. He can be reached at dennis.franks@pickawayross.com.

Kayd Riddle, above left, made two Ohio State benches while a junior last year in Tommy Collier's Welding program. The bench he made for the Stages Family Inc. Veterans Benefit will be dedicated this morning at Veterans Memorial Park. Shown with the bench, above right, are Stacey McNichols (left) and Chris Riddle.