



Northwest Iowa
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NEWS RELEASE

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Caterpillar Corporation Bring Heavy Equipment Simulators to NCC

October 23-24 students at Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon, IA, had the opportunity to meet with Andrew Cardinal, Account Manager with Caterpillar Corporation, and learn on four new heavy equipment computer simulators. The simulators were the bulldozer, wheel loader, scraper, and excavator.

Cardinal said, "I usually work directly with Caterpillar Dealers or I bring these types of simulators to big expos like the Con Expo in Las Vegas or the Bauma Expo in Munich, Germany. I have brought these simulator trainers to only two or three schools across the United States. Every school or business that does heavy equipment training has an ultimate goal to train on these types of machines. They are safer, more fuel efficient, and there is less damage to the actual machines so they save money on repairs."

Cardinal continued, "Some of the other great things that these simulators provide to the school are four more seats for students to learn in. If the students can have more opportunities and time in different machines it makes them more marketable as potential employees. Another benefit is instead of having over one million dollars wrapped up in equipment these simulators would cost about \$100,000."

Students from the Heavy Equipment Program along with students from the Diesel Technology program were able to try out the simulators. Justin Grover, Heavy Equipment student from Independence, IA, said, "Training on the simulators is great. We get to practice on these and learn how they operate before we go out on the real thing. We also don't have to wait for the equipment to come back from the field, we can jump in these and start learning right away."

Jordan Benz, Heavy equipment student from Melvin, IA, commented, "This is great for us to learn before we get into the workforce. This is part of the reason I chose NCC; they have the best program offered anywhere for heavy equipment. The instructors make sure you have the best training and they teach you on the latest technology. There is a lot of information they teach you that you would never pick up on your own. The simulator is much more realistic than I thought it would be. It is actually very close to what it is like operating a machine in the field."

Roger Solberg, Heavy Equipment Instructor, said, "The simulators have a lot of benefits for the students and the College. First of all, the students get a real-life experience in these simulators. The cabs that they are sitting in are replicas of the actual cabs of the machines they are simulating. They have the same seat, controls, and visuals, both front and rear views, as being in the real thing. I can't be with the students in the actual machines in the field 100% of the time. The simulators keep track of everything that the student does and gives me a report that says what the student did well and where they might need some additional training and improvement. Another major benefit is the savings of fuel. Operating one of the actual machines can cost up to \$10.00 an hour in fuel. Students can train all day long and there is absolutely no fuel cost."

Solberg continued, "The students love this type of training. Students are very used to this type of technology. It's actually a lot like playing specialized video games with the benefit that they are learning important skills for their future. Yesterday I had students down here (in the lab) starting at 2:00 in the afternoon and they didn't leave until after 8:00."

For more information on this program or any programs at Northwest Iowa Community College, contact the Admissions office at NCC by calling 712-324-5061 or 800-352-4907 or emailing studentservices@nwicc.edu. Or, check our website at www.nwicc.edu.