Michigan Tech Hosts Steel Day

Michigan Technological University hosted its first annual Steel Day on Tuesday, 15 October 2013. The event was made possible through the AIST Foundation Kent D. Peaslee Junior Faculty Award, which was granted to Paul G. Sanders, assistant professor of materials science and engineering at Michigan Tech. Sanders is the inaugural recipient of the award, which grants US$35,000 per year, renewable for up to three years.

Michigan Tech’s Department of Materials Science and Engineering, the Advanced Metalworks Enterprise, and the student professional society Materials United worked with the university’s Career Services to organize and publicize the event.

As part of Dr. Sanders’ proposal, Steel Day was created to engage students who might be interested in pursuing a career in the steel industry by welcoming representatives from Gerdau, Nucor Corp., ArcelorMittal and Cliffs Natural Resources to the Michigan Tech campus. More than 200 students attended the event.

The day began with a cookout with interactive displays for the students to visit in the Dow Building atrium. In the evening, a panel of industry experts answered questions and talked with students in the Memorial Union Building.

Some of the questions students asked included:

- How has the steel industry changed over the past 20 years?
- What kinds of jobs do engineers have in the steel industry?
- Do you hire co-ops or interns?
- What kind of safety programs do you have in your mills?

Brad Jonas, metallurgist at Nucor Corp., said he told students although they may not have thought about the steel industry for a career, many types of engineers are needed in the field.

Jim Turnquist, director of career services at Michigan Tech, said the first-ever gathering of steel industry representatives, separate from Michigan Tech’s career fair, was created to highlight the growth of the steel industry and because many students may not realize the career potentials in the industry.

Video from the event can be found on the AIST YouTube channel, at youtube.com/AIST186.