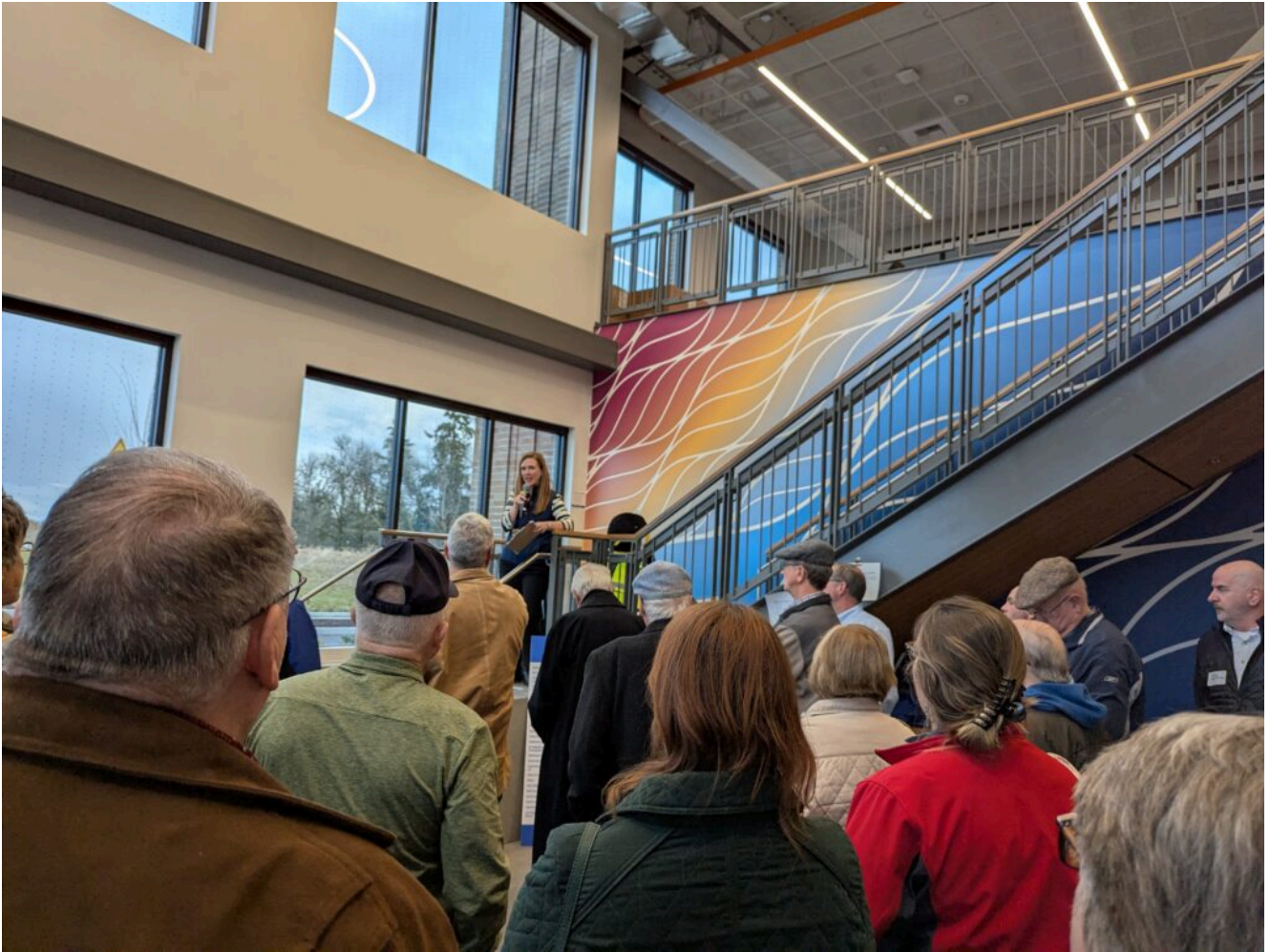


Rotarians tour the Advanced Manufacturing Center



Rotarians from Clark County at the Advanced Manufacturing Center in Ridgefield, WA. *Photo credit: Kathy Chennault.* Rotarians from around Clark County joined Clark College Foundation and Clark College for a tour of the new Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC) at Boschma Farms on February 4. Located just east of the Ridgefield Junction, the building will welcome its first general education classes during spring term. The Advanced Manufacturing program is under development.



Angela Torretta, *above*, of Clark College Foundation welcomed the Rotarians: "Clark College at Boschma Farms exists due to community demand. The college has been in conversation with individuals and organizations in Clark County who have shared the need for a local training center to provide skills to the current and future advanced manufacturing workforce."

Next, Amy Easton, president of the Rotary Club of Greater Clark County, stood on the steps of the AMC and greeted her fellow Rotarians: "This is a unique opportunity for all seven Clark County Rotary clubs to come together, foster collaboration, and celebrate our shared commitment to supporting education and strengthening connections within our community."

Jay Schmidt, board chair of the High-Tech Council and Clark College's Advanced Manufacturing Advisory Committee, paraphrased Dr. Terry Brown, Clark's vice president of

instruction: "This building will be a great place for experiential learning."

Then the Rotarians divided into groups for a guided tour of the state-of-the-art building. They toured the classrooms equipped with the latest advanced manufacturing technology, the light-filled general education classrooms with high ceilings and tall windows, the quality assurance lab, the computer lab, and the collaboration spaces. They also toured conference rooms and other spaces that will be available for the community to rent for meetings, community groups, and other events.

The tour ended in the impressive high bay—the heart of the building. Here students will learn the fundamentals of advanced manufacturing, which is a network of automated technology designed to produce products with high efficiency in manufacturing processes, while reducing lead times, materials, and manufacturing defects.



Will Zander, *above far left*, director of the new Advanced Manufacturing program, stood in the enormous high bay and pointed out the equipment to the Rotarians.

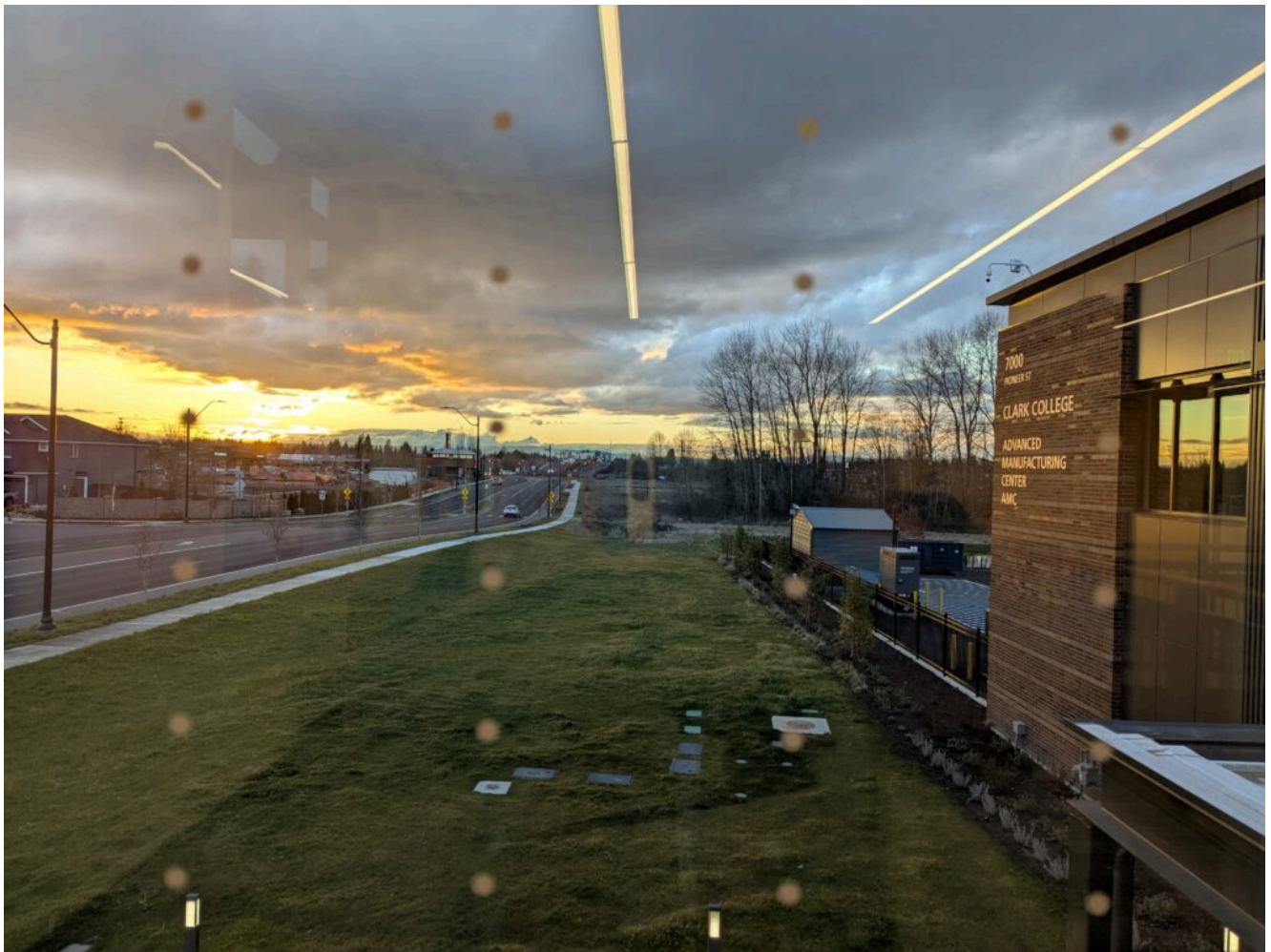
In the next 10 years, the region of southwest Washington and northwest Oregon anticipates a shortage of 1,755 advanced manufacturing technicians. Designed with input from industry partners, this high-bay, and the entire Advanced Manufacturing Center, is where students will gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to step into an in-demand career and meet the growing industry need.

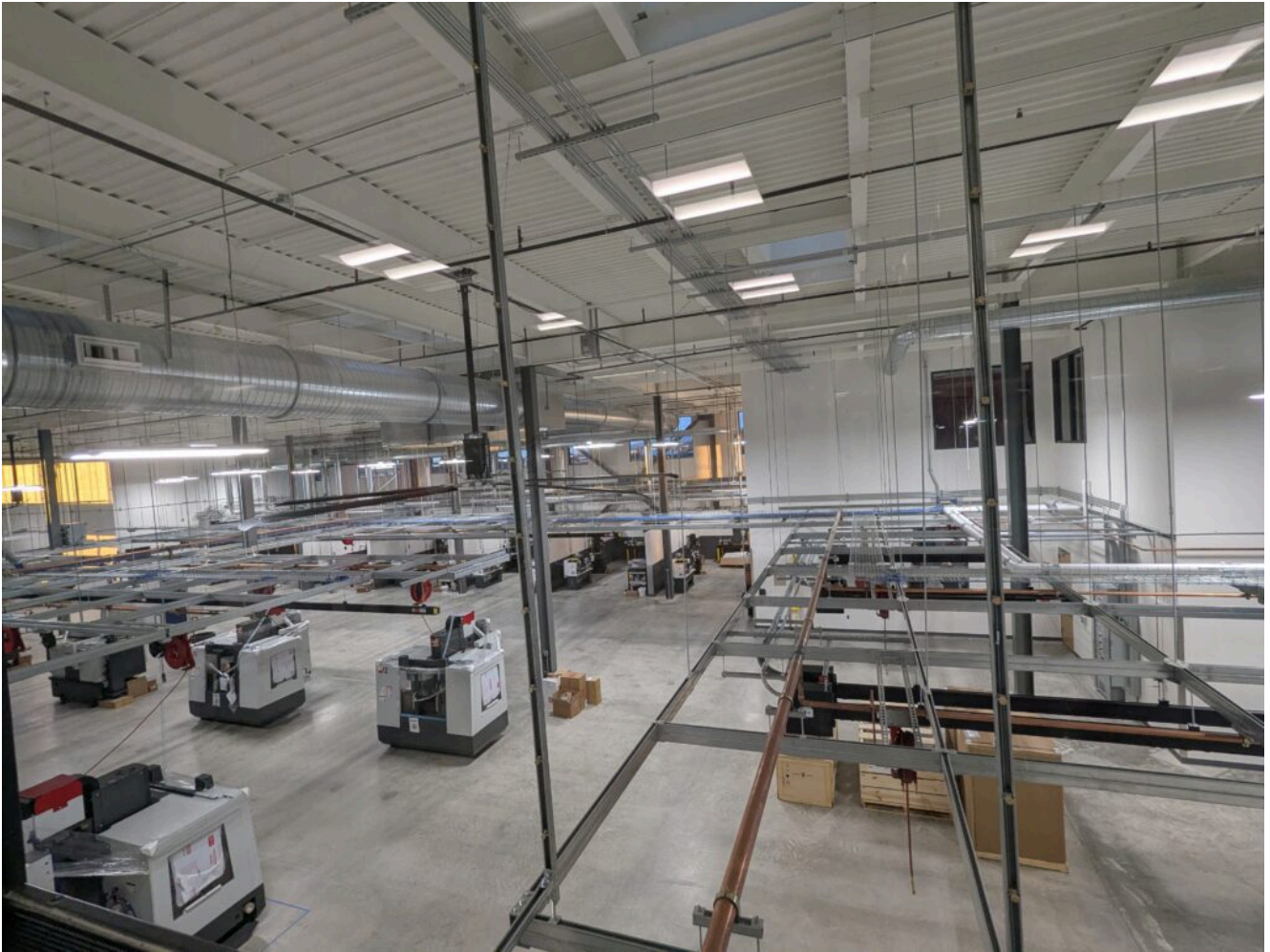
Soon, Clark College's Advanced Manufacturing Center at Boschma Farms will be a hub of experiential learning that will train the workforce for tomorrow.

All seven Rotary clubs in Clark County were present:

- Rotary Club of Greater Clark County

- Rotary Club of Vancouver
- Rotary Club of Vancouver Sunrise
- Rotary Club of Battle Ground
- Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal
- Rotary Club of Lewis River
- Rotary Club of Three Creeks





Left: The AMC features dots on the glass to keep birds from flying into the windows. *Right:* The heart of the building is a two-story or “high bay” area for students to learn advanced manufacturing with state-of-the-art equipment.

Q & A with Amy Easton, president, the Rotary Club of Greater Clark County



Jay Schmidt from the High Tech Council gives insight on the purpose of the building to the Rotarians. Photo: Clark College/Maureen Chan-Hefflin

It was Amy Easton's idea to offer Rotarians a tour of the AMC.

Q: *Why did you decide Rotarians should tour the AMC?*

AE: Rotarians are deeply committed to supporting education, workforce development, and community engagement, so when I learned about the new Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC) at Clark College, I saw a great opportunity for all seven Clark County Rotary clubs to come together and experience this transformative project firsthand.

The AMC represents a major investment in technical education and job training, which aligns with Rotary's mission to foster economic development and strengthen communities. I wanted our members to see how this facility will prepare students for in-demand careers, and how Rotary can continue to support initiatives that create lasting impact in our region.

Q: *When did you reach out to the Foundation?*

AE: I first connected with the Clark College Foundation last summer to explore the possibility of organizing a tour for Rotarians. From the start, the Foundation was enthusiastic about the idea, and we worked closely to coordinate an event that would give Rotarians an inside look at the facility before it officially opens to students. The collaboration was

fantastic, and we're so grateful to the Foundation for helping make this event happen.

***Q:** What do you think about the Advanced Manufacturing Center and Clark College having a presence in Ridgefield/North Clark County?*

AE: The Advanced Manufacturing Center is a game-changer for Ridgefield and North Clark County. It not only expands Clark College's reach but also creates new opportunities for students, local businesses, and the workforce in this growing region.

By providing hands-on training in advanced manufacturing and skilled trades, the AMC will help bridge the gap between education and industry, ensuring that students graduate with the skills needed to succeed in high-demand careers.

Having this state-of-the-art facility in Ridgefield means that local students and employers alike will benefit from a stronger, more connected pipeline of talent, boosting economic growth in North Clark County and beyond.

Learn more:
<https://www.clark.edu/about/visitors-guide/getting-to-clark/bo-schma/>

Photos not credited: Clark College/Susan Parrish