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The Pitsco Idea Shop

Pitsco Education sponsors innovative community space in Pittsburg's Block22

PITTSBURG, KS (November 5, 2020) – Pittsburg State University and Pitsco Education – partners in progress – have formed an innovative and educational community resource, The Pitsco Idea Shop, which is celebrating its grand opening on November 6, 2020, in downtown Pittsburg, KS.

The Pitsco Idea Shop is part of Block22, an initiative of PSU to revitalize the downtown area while also expanding the university's reach and resources. Along the lines of a makerspace, the shop houses a plethora of resources such as the latest power tools, 3-D printers, large-scale printers, and design/CNC capabilities, equipping innovators with everything they need to think, make, and innovate.

Entrepreneurial resources such as marketing consultation and software development assistance are also available at Block22.

PSU Chief Strategic Officer Dr. Shawn Naccarato, who led the development of Block22 on behalf of the university, hopes the facility provides long-term benefit to Pittsburg. “Hopefully, we’ll have more individuals who want to open their own businesses, come up with a new product, and expand job opportunities. We want to provide this to everyone regardless of location or socioeconomic background.”

Pitsco Product Development Specialist Bill Holden has been involved with the planning, setup, and operation of The Pitsco Idea Shop. “We want to give community members access to tools they might not have in their garage or in their office,” Holden said. “This would be for prototyping a product idea or just creating something for their own use such as a wall plaque. We also have tools for creating 3-D-printed objects. We have printers for outputting large format prints up to 45 inches wide.”

Initially, architects and developers were focused on providing a resource for university students and community members. When Pitsco became involved, this focus expanded to include middle school and high school students. “By partnering with Pitsco, it opened an avenue for us to reach that Grade 6-12 group, which we otherwise might not have found,” said Naccarato. “The Idea Shop is the last piece that



completes the vision of the entrepreneurial ecosystem we are creating here. If we want to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem and a culture of innovation, we need to start before they come to university.”

A CO₂ dragster competition for Grades 6-12 is part of the grand opening. Students built CO₂-powered dragsters after school and on weekends prior to participating in the Idea Shop’s first competition, which is sponsored by Kansas Manufacturing Solutions.

“Our motto is ‘Think. Make. Innovate.’ and that’s exactly what this competition for students is all about,” said Matt Frankenbery, vice president of education at Pitsco and a PSU graduate. “The greatest success stories – including Pitsco Education – all begin with an idea.”



Among the dignitaries expected to participate in the grand opening are Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, Secretary of Commerce David Toland, Pittsburg Mayor Dawn McNay, CEO of Kansas Manufacturing Solutions Tiffany Stovall, Pitsco founder Harvey Dean, and Pittsburg State University President Steve Scott.

Highlights/Multimedia:

- **[Click to Tweet:](#)** Partners in progress, @pittstate and @pitscoed, have formed an innovative and educational community resource, The Pitsco Idea Shop. Pitscoideashop.com
- **Learn more about The Pitsco Idea Shop:** Pitscoideashop.com
- **Learn more about Pittsburg State University:** Pittstate.edu
- **Learn more about Pitsco Education:** Pitsco.com

Pitsco Education is the leading provider of hands-on K-12 STEM solutions. STEM education prepares learners for the future through the integration of science, technology, engineering, and math concepts using relevant hands-on applications to connect school, community, and work. Our various products, activities, curriculum, and solutions promote positive learning experiences and continued classroom success.

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