

Good morning. I am Molly Dubble. I would like to thank Chairman Saylor, Chairman Grove and Chairman Harkins for the opportunity to speak this morning.

If it's okay, I'd like to share a short story with you. One day last summer, my husband and I had just finished dinner and were mowing the lawn. It was one of the first clear nights we'd had and our "to do" list was lengthy. After just fifteen minutes of mowing, a neighbor stopped by to visit with us. After an hour's visit we were finally able to return to the yard work. Another fifteen minutes hadn't even passed before the lawn mower broke down. It seemed inevitable; we just simply weren't meant to mow the lawn that night. It was one of those nights where anything that can go wrong, does go wrong. I'm sure you can think of a time when you had a similar experience.

It's in those moments when a farmer, broken down in the field, calls Wengers of Myerstown looking for parts or equipment in order to get back up and running. It's in those moments that the team at Wengers is able to do what it does best, help customers. Wengers of Myerstown is a family owned and operated salvage yard in Lebanon County that specializes in agricultural and construction equipment and parts. The organization also sells used motorcycles and operates a full-service machine shop. While it sounds like Wengers is a retail business, the true nature of the business is providing impeccable service to those in our community.

This focus on customer service has been critical to the success of the business since it was founded by my grandfather, Carl Wenger in 1947. Today, the business is jointly owned by Carl's seven children and nine of his 12 grandchildren. There are 15 family members engaged in the business's daily operations, which involve approximately 70 employees in total. I currently serve as an HR Generalist for Wengers of Myerstown, overseeing compliance, payroll, and the administrative work for The Wenger Foundation which is the charitable giving arm of The Wenger Family of Companies.

At Wengers of Myerstown we employ people in a variety of positions including tear down mechanics, warehouse workers, machinists, salespeople and administrative staff. As you can imagine, it is

vital for our shop employees to have the technical training needed to safely and efficiently operate machines and dismantle equipment. Not only do employees need to understand the equipment they're working with, but they also need to have a very keen understanding of the customers they work for. This includes things like understanding the cyclical nature of agriculture such as when it's time to plant and when it's time to harvest. It also includes things like understanding how commodity prices impact the ability of our customers to purchase parts and equipment.

We are confident that there is no better place for developing our workforce to meet these needs than in agricultural and technical education courses in our local schools. As a locally owned family business it is a source of pride to be able to share that our employees reside and are active in our local community. When we have openings, it is the positive reputation Wengers has in the community that helps to attract qualified applicants. We aren't one of the thousands of organizations recruiting on websites like indeed or zip recruiter. We're hiring people like Kenny, a recent high school graduate from across town. As a result, it is paramount to us that we continue to educate Kenny and those like him for the jobs and real world experiences that this industry can provide.

Recently The Wenger Foundation took a step to show those at our local high school the importance of agricultural and technical education. Yesterday the PA Chamber hosted a workforce summit at which Mike Rowe was the featured speaker sharing about the significance of technical education. We were able to send six of our local educators to the summit in order to learn more about those real world experiences that the young people in our community will face and how to prepare them for those experiences. A couple years ago a young man in our community was preparing to graduate high school and needed to decide what his next steps would be. He had been active in sports and the local agricultural programs, including FFA, but knew that he wasn't interested in a traditional four year education. Fortunately enough, our human resources team was able to connect with him

soon after graduation. Since joining our team in 2011, this young man has proven himself as a top salesman and has continued to advance within our organization. There are few people within our organization who can better meet the needs of our customers like this young man. He understands his customers and the equipment he deals with and it's stories like his that continue to remind us of the significance of agricultural education in our community. As our business continues to grow, we are regularly adding new positions and often find ourselves in need of quality applicants to fill those positions. It's imperative to us that these applicants have the type of solid foundation that can only be provided through agricultural education.