

## Northeast Metro Tech students win award for Build-A-Bureau - funded by Camber Development and Dacon

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Wakefield, MA The junior carpentry class at Northeast Metro Tech won an Apex Award for best PR Campaigns, Programs and Plans for Build-a-Bureau. Build-a-Bureau is a pilot program funded by Camber Development and Dacon's Designed with Dignity philanthropy in which 32 students are constructing three-drawer bureaus for shelter children transitioning into apartments. This grant was given to mark the commencement of 800 Salem, a 238,000 s/f fully-electric flex warehouse facility in Wilmington.

Mass. has the third highest rate of homeless families after N.Y. and California due to economic decline and the right-to-shelter law. Currently 7,268 families are enrolled in the Commonwealth's

shelter system. Often children keep their clothes in trash bags, one of the dehumanizing aspects of furniture poverty. These bureaus represent permanency and for many it is their first new piece of furniture. The furniture is being distributed by Mission of Deeds, a turnaround organization where sheltered families can shop for household goods for free. Last year, 45% of their clients were children, many victims of domestic violence. They are currently aiding 10 children a week.

The Apex Awards is a national competition for communications programs in which 1,100 entries were evaluated across 13 categories. 93 PR initiatives were submitted for Campaigns, Programs and Plans. 'Build-a-Bureau: Harvesting Vocational Talent to Help Sheltered Children' was one of 12 programs nationwide given a Grand Award for this category. It was the only program submitted run by high school students. They were surprised with a ceremony marked by certificates and a breakfast made by the culinary class. For some students, this was the first award they have ever won.

Northeast Metro Tech is a spirited school of 1,250 students from 12 communities north of Boston that are educated in 17 career areas. The school receives over 1,500 applications yearly, of which 360 are selected based on performance. This is their first furniture program. Lauren Nowicki, chief communications officer at Dacon said, "Vocational schools are an excellent source for talent and leadership training. These students demonstrate how teenagers can actively contribute to solving societal problems. We thank our friends at Camber Development and Mission of Deeds for this group effort to aid underserved children."

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