

## Cataldo's Story: Working Towards a Final Product



Cataldo Kidd '14 has always been a "hands-on" type of person. So when he graduated from Everett High School and was searching for a college degree program, **Mechanical Engineering Technology** seemed like a great choice. "It's one of those unique majors where I can use both modern technology and my personal skill set to achieve a designated goal," Kidd said.

Like many Boston area students pursuing a technology degree, Kidd first attended a larger college, but left early, frustrated with the large class sizes and inaccessible faculty. It was at this point that he began to doubt his ability to finish his degree. Fortunately, a friend introduced him to Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT). Inspired by the college's student-centric approach, he made it a top priority to complete his college education. "I realized that most things worth doing take time and hard work and focus," Kidd said. "At BFIT, I also knew that I had the tools, support, and resources to succeed."

Kidd credits BFIT's education model for his success. "BFIT gave me the necessary hands-on experience with both manual and computer controlled machines," he said. "Smaller class sizes allowed me to learn more efficiently and receive extra attention." Kidd remembers that graduation felt like a tremendous accomplishment, but it was an even more overwhelming feeling when he got a phone call confirming employment shortly afterwards.

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Equipped with his BFIT education, Cataldo secured a job as a CNC Machinist for Paradigm Precision, an advanced manufacturing company that produces aircraft parts for companies such as GE, Boeing, Rolls Royce, and Volvo. With a strong technical background, Cataldo was able to jump right into a demanding full-time position. "On a day-to-day basis I am responsible for both rough and finish cuts on a Doosan CNC lathe," Kidd said. "I am also responsible for assembling finished parts right before they are shipped. My employer is definitely pleased with my knowledge in the field."

The Mechanical Engineering Technology associate degree program at BFIT successfully prepares students to work in the manufacturing industry. Students utilize SolidWorks software to generate engineering drawings and analyze fits and tolerances. They also learn to program and operate computer numerically controlled (CNC) hardware in an industrial environment. Students put all of this learning together to then design and build products and equipment themselves.

Highly-skilled technicians are in-demand to help engineers design and build new technologies. Kidd sees plenty of opportunity for his career. With a few years of work experience, he can become a manufacturing engineer. He's also excited about the future of the entire industry. "The greatest opportunity I see in the aerospace industry is the continuous effort to do the impossible," Kidd said. "We as humans are always pushing the boundaries in air travel and continue to make enormous strides. I'm excited to see what the future holds."