



BRANDON ABLEMAN



POST CONSUMER BRANDS | NORTHFIELD, MN

DUAL TRAINEE SUCCESS

MN DUAL TRAINING
GRANT PROGRAM

MECHATRONICS
TECHNICIAN

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Minnesota Dual Training Grant awards up to \$150,000 in grants to employers utilizing dual-training models. The grant reimburses employers for costs associated with related instruction resulting in industry-recognized degrees, certificates, or credentials. The dual-training model pairs on-the-job training with formal related instruction to foster skilled employees and enhance company culture.

Dual trainees may benefit from up to \$6,000 a year from the Dual Training Grant. Dual trainees can participate in dual-training programs for up to four years through the grant.

- ✓ Advanced career from operator mechatronics maintenance technician
- ✓ Balanced full-time work, college classes and home life
- ✓ Earned Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Mechatronics Engineering Technology at South Central College

Brandon Ableman, 30, of Faribault jumped on the opportunity to advance his role when he heard Post Consumer Brands was promoting from within. “I was working as an operator at the time and felt motivated to move up,” said Brandon, who was one of the two candidates selected to receive hands-on training as a maintenance technician apprentice.

As part of the apprenticeship, Brandon began taking classes at South Central College to earn his AAS Mechatronics Engineering Technology degree. The Dual Training Grant covered his tuition for the degree, and he was able to maintain his full-time work schedule that included on-the-job training. His classes were thoroughly aligned with mechatronics maintenance technician tasks, which made learning the new role easier. “It was a huge advantage for me to serve as an operator first,” said Brandon. “I was already familiar with the equipment and language. The background knowledge was very beneficial.”

Brandon said he was thankful for the Dual Training Grant, as he didn’t need to take out any student loans. He graduated in spring 2020 and became a maintenance technician 1. Now, he is a mechatronics maintenance technician 2 and feels proud of his career advancement.

“Working in maintenance, you see different things everyday. It’s a lot more troubleshooting and requires in-depth knowledge,” he said. “It is a lot of hands-on work, but it’s rewarding because you are working on tasks that use your skills to keep everything running.”

Brandon said he would recommend taking advantage of the Dual Training Grant, as it is a smart pathway toward building an advanced manufacturing career. “If you would have asked me ten years ago about going back to school, my answer would have been different,” shared Brandon. “But earning this degree and building my career at Post has been a great experience.”