

# MITCHELL TECHNICAL COLLEGE **FOUNDATION**

Volume 3



**BE THE BEST.**



# The Foundation of the Foundation

The Mitchell Tech Foundation was established in 1999 by board members Chris Paustian, Gopal Vyas, Pat Clark, Keith Bartels, Ed Olson, Bob Mueller, and Greg Kohlenberg. The Foundation serves as the fund-raising arm for Mitchell Tech and is dedicated to four key areas of support:

- Building Scholarships
- Building Programs
- Building Endowments
- Building Relationships

Foundation board members include MTC alumni and business leaders in various industries. Members meet four times per year to help advise Mitchell Tech on the four pillars. Current MTC Foundation board members include:

**Mike Sprang**  
Chair  
TSTM Inc.

**Trent Dowling**  
Vice-Chair  
Dan Foss Trucking

**Terry Sabers**  
Treasurer  
Retired

**Nicole Gerlach**  
Avera/Brady

**Stacy Giblin**  
Northwestern Mutual

**Cagney Effling**

**Jay Spaans**  
Douglas Electric Cooperative

**Mike Pogany**  
Black Hills Energy

**Devon Russell**  
Precision Ag Director  
Mitchell Technical College

**Mark Wilson**  
President  
Mitchell Technical College

**Jared Hofer**  
Ex-Officio  
Chief Financial Officer  
Mitchell Technical College

# Issue Highlights



4-5

Grads On The Go



8-9

Former Computer Systems Technology Student Has Never Been Happier



10-11

Family Totals Seven Degrees from MTC

If you are a graduate of Mitchell Technical College, we hope the education and experiences you received here are serving you well. If you are a friend of Mitchell Tech, we welcome you and look forward to great partnerships in Mitchell Tech's future! The Mitchell Technical College Alumni Association and Foundation are working together to make Mitchell Tech graduates the best they can be!

The intent of the Mitchell Technical College Foundation is to assist the College in this endeavor through individual and corporate philanthropic measures. These gifts will assist in student scholarships and bring the latest equipment and expert faculty to the classroom.

We would appreciate your consideration in making a donation to the Mitchell Technical College Foundation today. You can donate in many ways, and we will work with you to meet your objectives.

This publication is published annually by the Mitchell Technical College Foundation, 1800 E. Spruce St., Mitchell, SD 57301 and distributed to alumni, parents, students, and friends of Mitchell Technical College.

**ON THE COVER:** Mitchell Tech students taking a break in-between class in the Campus Center.



**WAYS TO HELP**

Scan with your phone's camera app to support MTC students.

[mitchelltech.edu/donate](https://mitchelltech.edu/donate)

# M MITCHELL TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOUNDATION

The success of our Foundation and the service we provide to the students of Mitchell Technical College (MTC) is the direct result of the commitment shown by those who support the Foundation and invest in the future of the industries our programs support.



Mike Sprang

It is my honor to serve the Mitchell Technical College Foundation as its chairperson. I have served on the Foundation since 2018 and assumed the chairperson role in July of 2023. Working with our Foundation staff and other board members, we monitor and build key areas of support for our highest priority, the students of MTC. We work to build scholarships, build endowments, and foster relationships with donors. We provide program support for all areas of instruction and assist in acquiring needed assets for MTC instructors to continue to provide industry-leading experiences for our students. We work to continue the success of MTC and its Foundation.

The number of new Foundation donors, the number and value of new scholarships and endowments continue to grow. We utilize available programs from the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Build Dakota, and our industry partners to create additional resources for students. Our 1st Annual Alumni Cornhole Tournament in April of 2024 was a huge success, funding an additional 60 MTC scholarships thanks to the support of the sponsors and participants. The Women for Success @Tech continue their work to support the needs of female students and have created 6 new scholarships in the past year.

All investments in MTC magnify our ability to "Best The Best." A monetary donation, a gift of equipment or products, a student visit to your business, or a commitment of your time – everything you offer creates opportunity and enhances the educational experience for our students.

We invite you to visit our campus to learn more about how you can be involved in the excitement at Mitchell Technical College. Thank you for your contributions, your trust, and your continued support.

Sincerely,

Mike Sprang  
MTC Foundation Chair  
Director of Sales, TSTM Inc.  
1981 Electrical Construction & Maintenance Alumnus



Faith

Mitchell Technical College Alumni  
Legacy and Freshman Scholar

Geospatial Technologies



MITCHELL TECH



# M Grads On The Go



**Dominic Tucker** ▲

**Background:** Graduated from Brandon Valley High School in 2022 and is a member of the Army National Guard, 155th Engineer Company of Parkston, serving as a Horizontal Construction Engineer. Dominic grew up the oldest of seven children.

**MTC Program:** Graduated with a degree in Architectural Design & Building Construction in May 2024 where he was a Double Edge Scholar sponsored by Deffenbaugh Homes.

**Why MTC?** Dominic toured the Parade of Homes in Brandon for years as a kid and was fascinated by the craftsmanship and architecture of the luxury homes. He wanted to be part of that industry, so began working toward his dream in high school. He researched schools and liked the fact that Mitchell Tech offers a program where students learn every aspect of construction, including computer aided drafting (CAD). The Double Edge Scholar program was also a big draw.

*Mitchell Technical College graduates are finding success in the classroom and in their chosen fields, thanks to relevant coursework, knowledgeable instructors and programs that emphasize in-demand skill sets. These benefits, combined with affordability and a state-of-the-art campus in Mitchell, allow students to “be the best” in industries ranging from engineering technology and health sciences to construction and manufacturing and everything in between.*

**Highlights:** Being involved with student organizations including his roles as President of the Student Veterans Organization, Vice President of the Student Representative Board and Student Ambassador. Dominic was also chosen to be a commencement speaker for the Class of 2024.

**Career Path:** After graduation, Dominic began working as a foreman at Deffenbaugh Homes and will continue working there for the next three years as part of the Double Edge Scholarship program. He is enrolled in the Fall 2024 Entrepreneurship program at MTC with the goal of owning his own construction business someday.

**Grad Advice:** Make as many friends, relationships and partnerships as you can because you never know when that network of people might help you in your life, or when they might give you the opportunity to help them.



## Cathy Stahl

**Background:** Grew up in Pierre and graduated from T.F. Riggs High School in 1997.

**MTC Program:** Graduated with a degree in Medical Laboratory Technology in 1999. Her love of science and problem-solving led her to this program.

**Why MTC:** Mitchell Tech had the two-year program she wanted, only two hours from home.

**Highlights:** Mitchell Tech had phenomenal instructors and hands-on training. Cathy made lifelong friends at Mitchell Tech and has fond memories of her time on campus.

**Career Path:** Cathy worked for 23 years at Avera St. Mary's in Pierre as a medical laboratory technician and then decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Medical Laboratory Science in 2019. She attended the University of North Dakota and graduated in December 2022. Her mom became ill in 2022 and she began working PRN at the hospital in order to care for her. Her need for more regular hours led her to a position as an environmental microbiologist for the state of South Dakota in April 2023. She continues to work in this role today.

**Grad Advice:** There is a need for people in the medical laboratory field. If you enjoy science and being engaged with research and innovation, this is a very rewarding career. Don't shy away from it—new safety standards are in place and the technology will blow your mind.



**Cordell Buchmann** ▲

**Background:** Grew up in Parkston and graduated from Parkston High School in 2020. Always loved building things and being outside and became interested in construction while working on small projects in a family friend's carpentry shop.

**MTC Program:** Graduated from the Architectural Design & Building Construction program in 2022 and earned an A.A.S degree in Entrepreneurship from Mitchell Tech's Entrepreneurship program in 2024.

**Why MTC:** Mitchell Tech is close to Cordell's hometown of Parkston and offered the program he wanted.

**Highlights:** Cordell enjoyed having access to great instructors in the shop and in the classroom. Most memorable for him was his second year of hands-on construction, building the Mitchell Tech home on site and then moving it to a new location and constructing an addition.

**Career Path:** After graduation, Cordell worked for a year at Van Laar Construction in Sioux Falls. He graduated from the Entrepreneurship program at MTC in 2024 and the program “kicked the door open” for his plans of owning his own business. Cordell started his remodeling business in March 2024. Revival Construction specializes in home remodeling and additions, decks, garages, and the professional installation of windows, doors, and siding.

**Grad Advice:** Don't be afraid to try new things; just get your toes wet and then dive in. Nothing will happen if you don't try.



# Cornhole Tournament Supports MTC Legacy Scholarships



Bags were flying, spectators were cheering and \$25,000 was raised for Alumni Legacy Scholarships during the first annual MTC Alumni Cornhole Tournament, held April 2024 at the Mitchell Corn Palace.

The inaugural event was well attended, with 45 teams and 150 people gathering to socialize and enjoy food, games, and a silent auction. While the focus of the cornhole tournament was raising funds for legacy scholarships given to incoming children, grandchildren and siblings of Mitchell Tech alumni, a secondary goal was bringing alumni and the community together to celebrate the affordable, quality college education available in Mitchell.

## Tournament Winners:

**1st Place:** Dylan Bollock (MTC Alum) and Tyler Earls

**2nd Place:** Linda Bollock (MTC Alum) and Julie Christenson

**3rd Place:** Pryce Anderson (MTC Alum) and Les Dupuy

With a year of success under our belts, plans are underway to make next spring's event even bigger and better. Organizers say there will be new "amateur" and "competitive" brackets and more community involvement. If you are interested in being a sponsor or entering a team, contact Sheryl Plagmann at 605.995.7119 or [sheryl.plagmann@mitchelltech.edu](mailto:sheryl.plagmann@mitchelltech.edu).



Teams competing in the tournament were required to consist of at least one Mitchell Tech alum.





# A Hart for Good - Mitchell Tech Grad Is Invested in Helping People



Teresa Hart has never been happier.

She's a proud mom, a successful business owner, a community leader, a generous philanthropist and a fierce advocate for women. While there have been challenges in her life, Teresa admits she is a stronger, more resilient person because of them. She speaks candidly about her struggles and her successes, acknowledging a deep appreciation for the people who have helped her along the way.

One of those people is Peggy Schleich, former head of Mitchell Tech's Computer Systems Technology program and a past advisor for SkillsUSA.

"Meeting Peggy was a pivotal moment in my life," says Teresa. "Her guidance through SkillsUSA and her mentorship at Mitchell Tech gave me confidence and helped me become a better public speaker. I am so grateful for everything she taught me."

*Teresa Hart*

In addition to gaining a mentor and lifelong friend, Teresa earned a degree in Computer Systems Technology in 1996 and graduated with zero student debt—one of the reasons she is an advocate of Mitchell Technical College today.

"I met so many people and learned so much while I was there," she says. "My education reinforced my love for computers and gave me valuable business skills, but I soon discovered I needed something more. I wanted to help people, too."

After exploring different career paths, Teresa's search for something more led her to upload a resume to Monster.com in 2006. To her surprise, she received an interview request from Edward Jones, a financial advising company.

*"I met so many people and learned so much while I was there."*

"I had no experience in the field, but when I walked in the door for my interview, I knew I had found my calling," she says.

Teresa earned her Series 7 and Series 65 licenses and worked as a financial advisor at Edward Jones for seven years, growing her expertise and her client base. While she enjoyed her job, she still felt something was missing.

"Eventually I realized I didn't want to work for anyone else. I had ideas of my own and wanted to expand my services and build collaborations," she explains. "I wanted more."

Teresa took the leap into entrepreneurship in 2013 when she opened the doors to Hart Financial Group in Mitchell.

"It was a scary time. I was working to put food on the table as a single mom and trying to build a business from scratch," she says. "There were times when I wanted to give up but my three kids kept me going. Looking back, I am amazed I did it but I am so glad I did."

Today Hart Financial Group is a thriving business that takes pride in helping people navigate their financial and wealth management decisions. Teresa takes a personal approach to all her clients and utilizes her life experiences to help others overcome financial obstacles.

"I've been there," she says.

Hart Financial Group has grown in a way that allows Teresa to support her local community and generously give back, something she learned growing up in the small town of Wessington in a family of five kids (she's a twin).

"We were involved in everything. In a small town, you pitch in where you're needed—and you're always needed!" she laughs.

Her passion for pitching in has helped Teresa launch new opportunities in Mitchell, including:

- Intro to Handguns, a women-only course on handgun safety
- 100 Women United, an organization that offers area women an opportunity to support community non-profits through \$100 donations and a shared vision. Teresa is one of the local founders.
- Hart Financial Galentine's Event, a free evening for single women that allows them to come together and enjoy a night out with dinner and entertainment

Hart Financial Group is proud to sponsor local organizations and events, and Teresa offers support to groups such as The Millionheiress Club, where she serves as an economist and helps guide conversations about investments and the stock market.

"I love Mitchell," she says. "I am a huge collaborator, so anything I can do to help my community or enrich the lives of the people living here, I'm in. The more I pour out, the happier I am. And I intend to be really, really happy."



# Alumni Family Totals Seven Degrees from Mitchell Tech



Scott and Chantelle Kirsch joke that their fifth-grade teacher is the reason they ended up together.

“We were always squabbling with each other in class,” says Chantelle. “Our teacher made us face our desks toward each other and we had to try to get along.”

The tactic must have worked. The couple began dating as freshmen at White Lake School and were married in 1992, just one week after Scott’s graduation from Mitchell Tech.

“Mitchell Tech was close to home and offered the ag business degree I wanted,” says Scott. “I took classes with a dozen other students and we had

access to some amazing one-on-one instruction. I still stay in contact with my instructors today.”

## The Mitchell Tech Difference

After the wedding, the couple moved onto the Kirsch family farm in White Lake and began expanding the business. Today, Scott helps manage approximately 900 head of cattle and 3000 acres of corn and hay. In addition to farming and ranching, Scott and Chantelle have been co-owners of the Platte Livestock Market since 1999. While Scott was attending Mitchell Tech, Chantelle was earning an elementary education degree from the University of South Dakota but admits her heart was always with Scott.

“I can’t remember any of my professors, but I got to know every one of Scott’s instructors. I’m even friends with Myron Sonne on Facebook,” she says. “I was just a number at USD, but Scott had a really personal education at Mitchell Tech and it made an impact on me. In the end, it impacted our entire family.”

## A Family Tradition

Of the Kirsches eight children (all boys), five of them have degrees from Mitchell Tech. The Kirsches have totaled over a decade on campus and there are still two sons at White Lake School.

“Mitchell Tech has really changed over the years,” says Scott. “Today it feels like a small, modern university. The boys had access to more technology than I ever dreamed of, and all those new buildings are state-of-the-art. Even the name has changed!” Scott and Chantelle had the foresight to purchase a home in Mitchell years ago, giving each son a place to live while in school while renting out the extra rooms to other Mitchell Tech students.

“The expenses add up in a family full of boys,” explains Chantelle. “There’s the food, the laundry, vehicles, hunting, and they have all been involved in sports. At one time we had kids on eight different baseball teams! It can be a very busy life.” It’s a life the Kirsches fully embrace.

“We grew up in big families so we were open to having lots of kids,” explains Chantelle. “I was content with all boys, but Scott really wanted a girl so we kept trying. It all worked out just the way God planned.”

## Counting Blessings by Degrees

As Chantelle talks about the similarities and differences in her sons, she offers a glimpse of each individual including degree choices and career paths:

**Caleb** graduated in 2012 with a degree in Power Line Construction and Maintenance. His degree launched him into a rewarding career that includes numerous specialized qualifications and the opportunity to travel all over the United States building transmission lines and participating in storm restoration projects. After nearly a decade on the road, he took a position with Basin Electric in Gettysburg to spend more time with his wife Leah and their two sons.

**Jacob (Jake)** graduated in 2015 with an Agricultural Business degree and the goal of returning to the farm to help his parents. A born

planner, he uses his degree to help streamline operations and find new ways to increase profits. In addition to his role on the farm, he owns his own business selling net wrap and twine. He is married to Monica and has three children with one more on the way.

**Jesse** grew up with a love of farming and graduated in 2017 with a degree in Diesel Power-Ag Power Technology. He started his career as a diesel mechanic and was also the head yard man at Platte Livestock Market until 2023. He bought an acreage a few miles away from his parents where he lives with his wife Jonica and his son and operates a business calving out heifers for area farmers.

**Seth** spent a year at Iowa Western College playing baseball and then transferred to Mitchell Tech. He graduated with a degree in Precision Ag Technology in 2019 and a degree in Business Management in 2020. After graduation he took a position as a rail inspector where he continues to work today.

**Nolan** attended Mitchell Tech as a Double Edge Scholar and graduated in 2023 with a degree in Heating and Cooling Technology. He intended to work in the industry despite his love of agriculture, but when a position at the Platte Livestock Market opened, Nolan seized the opportunity. He began working as the full-time yard man in 2023 and will be getting married later this year.

The three sons who do not have degrees from Mitchell Tech include Beau, Kiner and Winsor.

**Beau** was born with a heart condition and struggled through two heart attacks before and after his senior year of high school. Beau’s faith inspired him to attend a year of Catholic seminary school, but he decided to leave the seminary after discerning he’d like to marry someday. At age 20, he is currently working for area farmers while he considers a path for the future.

**Kiner** is a sophomore in high school and hasn’t decided on a career path yet, but criminal investigation is on his radar.

**Winsor** is in fourth grade and is doing his best to follow in the footsteps of his seven older brothers in the classroom, in sports and in life.

“We are so grateful for all the opportunities Mitchell Tech has given our boys and the instructors who have helped shape their lives. We won’t push the last two to get a Mitchell Tech degree, but of course we would be thrilled if they did!” says Chantelle.



# Seasoned Instructor Brings a World of Experience to ECM Program



**Layne Hantke**  
Electrical Construction & Maintenance  
Program Director/Instructor  
Mitchell Technical College

Layne Hantke isn't just a program director and instructor at Mitchell Technical College. He's also a graduate with degrees in two different programs and decades of life experience in the electrical, communications, and construction industries. His broad knowledge translates into a classroom experience that is both engaging and challenging.

Layne grew up in Pukwana and graduated from Chamberlain High School in 1991. He moved to Fort Lauderdale after graduation to build swimming pools until he joined the Navy "after driving past a recruitment office" in 1993.

"I had a fear of heights and electricity, so I chose to go into the Seabees, the Navy Construction Battalion. I then went through a program much like the Power Line program at Mitchell Tech. I served in the Navy for seven years. After the Navy I came back to South Dakota to earn my Electrical Construction and Maintenance [ECM] degree from Mitchell Tech," he says.

After graduating with his ECM degree in 2004, Layne relocated to San Diego and worked for Helix Electric, one of the largest electrical contracting companies in the nation. When projects became scarce in 2008 due to the recession, Layne joined the in-house construction crew at Qualcomm and continued working for Qualcomm and a subsidiary called Media Flow for four more years.

In 2012, Layne and his wife Jenn moved back to South Dakota to raise their kids and be closer to their family.

"I decided to try a different career and enrolled in Mitchell Tech's Automation Controls/SCADA program," explains Layne. "After graduation in 2014, I worked for Design Solutions & Integration [DSI] in Sioux Falls where I helped build and test automation panels all over the country."

Layne was on a DSI job in Texas a year later when SCADA instructor Josh Renken encouraged him to apply for a job as an ECM instructor at Mitchell Tech.

"This was a job I really wanted," he says. "They needed someone immediately so I rushed back for the interview, got hired, and started my new job the next week."

Since 2015, Mitchell Tech's ECM program has continued to evolve with advanced technology and online automation. Approximately fifty students enroll each year, graduating into a workforce filled with opportunity.

"I tell my students not to limit themselves or their thinking," says Layne. "They come away from MTC with transferable skills that allow them to work in any industry. They will continue to learn and grow every day. I still do!"

In fact, Layne just completed two MTC courses over the summer to help boost his skills.

"I enjoy problem-solving and being a part of new things. All the crazy jobs I held in the past led me to teaching, and teaching at MTC is the right fit for me," he says. "This is where I belong."

Layne commutes to Mitchell Tech from Sioux Falls, where he lives with his wife, Jenn, the Director of Clinical Services at Orthopedic Institute. The couple has a daughter, Alyssa, attending Mitchell Tech this fall to earn her Radiologic Technology Degree, and an eleven-year-old son, Zak.

# New Ag Power Diesel Lab Expands Opportunities on MTC Campus



For the second time in Mitchell Tech history, every classroom, laboratory and program is offered on one consolidated campus.

That fact was made possible last March with the addition of the new Ag Power Diesel Lab, a \$10 million facility that adds over 36,000 square feet of space to the Nordby Trades Center.

"The lab allows several programs to have their own dedicated space and benefits the Diesel Light Truck, Diesel Ag Power, Power Sports & Marine Technology, Agricultural Business, Agronomy, Animal Science, Precision Agriculture Technology, and Natural Gas programs," explains Devon Russell, program director and instructor for Precision Ag Technology. "We can now hold three different classes in the diesel lab at the same time and increase the number of students enrolled in these programs."

Some of the highlights of the high-tech lab include the ability to bring in larger pieces of equipment, such as sprayers and planters. Lab stations are outfitted with the latest technology and include lifts, dynamometers and exhaust removal systems suspended from the ceiling. The space also includes secure tool storage for Mitchell Tech students and allows each program to maintain tools on-site for student use.

"The lab is already making a significant impact by allowing Mitchell Tech to expand programs for high-demand careers. More students means more employees for area industries," says Russell. "Our industry partners are also taking advantage of the ability to hold employee trainings on our campus."

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Ag Power Diesel Lab was held on March 21, 2024, and was attended by hundreds of people including students, faculty, school district officials, industry partners, and state and local government officials. Funding for the project was made possible through a combination of private and state funds, allowing the building to be built without increasing student fees or incurring any debt to Mitchell Technical College.







# Ag Class of 1974 Supports Students and Each Other

In 1974, seventeen young men graduated from Mitchell Tech's Agricultural Production and Management program after learning all they could about farming and agriculture.

Fifty years later, twelve of those men returned to campus to enjoy a reunion organized by classmate Bob Banks. While 2024 commemorates a major milestone, the class gathering is a tradition that began after graduation.

"In the beginning, our class got together every time one of us got married. Then we just kept it going," explains Banks. "Two of us have passed away, but the rest of us stay in touch and try to meet often. It's unique for a two-year program to have a tight-knit class, but we all farm and have a lot in common. It's a good group of people."

In addition to camaraderie, the group shares a passion for supporting Mitchell Tech's Ag Program. During their fortieth reunion in 2014, they spent a weekend in Mitchell and were "blown away" by the MTC campus.

"We graduated from the original MTI building in town," says Banks. "Many of us had not been to the campus on East Spruce Street and it was a real eye-opener. We were so impressed with the technology and innovations. Mitchell Tech has continually updated its programs and continues to do so. It was exciting to see."

That weekend, the class decided they wanted to leave a legacy in the form of a Class of 1974 Scholarship. Members donate \$100 per year to support a \$500 annual scholarship. Today, the Class of 1974 Scholarship fund has grown to approximately \$7,000. This will allow the legacy to continue long into the future.

"Our group takes this opportunity to heart," says Banks. "Some of us have started making more substantial contributions, and we take pride and pleasure in reading the scholarship applications and choosing our recipient."

Activities for the fiftieth reunion included renting a party bus and taking a tour down memory lane.

After touring the MTC campus and the new Ag Power



*Pictured are twelve members of the Agricultural Production and Management program Class of 1974, and their class instructor. Front Row (L to R): Greg Boyle, Gaylen Backus, Gary Andersen, Doug Kazmerzak. Middle Row (L to R): Dwight Scott, Bob Banks, Ivan Bialas, Gary Konrad. Back Row (L to R): Instructor Myron Sonne, Tim Anderson, Randy Burnison, Kim Larang, Tom Nuhsbaumer*

Diesel Lab building, the bus made several stops including:

- The former MTI building, which is now the site for the new Mitchell High School, currently under construction
- The Corn Palace
- The location across from the Corn Palace where Charlie's Pizza was located (now the home of The Main Street Mercantile). Charlie's was the place where everyone gathered for a little socialization.
- The South Dakota Soybean Processors plant, currently under construction



*The Ag Class of 1974 and their guests toured the new diesel lab on the Mitchell Tech campus.*

A highlight of the reunion was the attendance of instructor Myron Sonne who retired from Mitchell Tech in 2010 after many years of service.

"Myron made an impact on so many students and was so motivational to our class. Through all these years of farming and economic challenges, every one of us from the Class of '74 continued to farm and be successful—some are very successful," says Bob. "It's been a quick fifty years but I don't think any of us would change a thing."

## Your Generosity Makes an Impact

In 2023, Mitchell Technical College was able to take advantage of an incredible match opportunity made possible through the State of South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).

"In essence, the GOED provided \$3 million towards the purchase of new equipment for our programs, with the caveat that Mitchell Tech invest \$1.5 million in equipment in order to receive the funds," says MTC Chief Financial Officer Jared Hofer. "This allows our college to spend \$4.5 million on new equipment over the next two years. We are grateful we were able to meet the match criteria and take part in the program."

Hofer explains the opportunity was made available to all four technical colleges in the state, but some colleges turned back a portion of their funding which allowed MTC to receive a higher amount because the college had the Foundation funds available to help cover the match.

"This is just one of the reasons why a visionary board of leaders established the Mitchell Tech Foundation in 1999. We were able to leverage around \$600,000 in Foundation funds to help us achieve the match, and donors can feel good that their money is earning an incredible 200% rate of return."

Most of the funds were spent in fiscal year 2024, which ended in June 2024, and the remainder will be spent in fiscal year 2025. Here is a list of some of the larger pieces of equipment purchased with the funds:

- Student construction tool sets
- Drones and GPS equipment
- A payloader, skid loader, semi-tractors and trailers
- Welding and welding lab equipment
- Ovens and kitchen equipment
- Motorcycle, ATV and boat motors
- A portable X-ray machine
- Energy field and road upgrades

Hofer explains that Mitchell Tech program directors keep an ongoing "wish list" of equipment needs. Equipment purchases are prioritized each year based on need and available funding.

"Even with the incredible generosity of our industry partners and programs like this one, our needs continue to outpace our resources. That being said, we are dedicated to growing our campus and leading the way for students seeking a quality, affordable education in South Dakota. We could not do this without our donors. They are absolutely vital to our success."





1800 East Spruce Street | Mitchell, South Dakota 57301

If you have a story idea that would be great for this publication, please send it to [foundation@mitchelltech.edu](mailto:foundation@mitchelltech.edu).



## Building a Legacy of Success, One Scholarship at a Time

Establishing a scholarship is a powerful way to make a difference in the lives of Mitchell Tech students and surrounding communities. Scholarships open doors to opportunities that can shape the trajectory of a student's future, offering the chance to pursue their passions and achieve their goals.

The support and collaborative efforts of alumni, donors, and industry partners amplify the impact of scholarships, ensuring that even more students have the resources they need.

Join us in our mission and together we can make a difference in the lives of students and continue *building a legacy of success.*



[www.mitchelltech.edu/foundation/make-a-donation](http://www.mitchelltech.edu/foundation/make-a-donation)



Or contact Sheryl Plagmann at 605.995.7119  
or [sheryl.plagmann@mitchelltech.edu](mailto:sheryl.plagmann@mitchelltech.edu)