



Jon Cavin- MSU IAC, Class of 2002

IAC Alumni Making a Difference

Jon Cavin learned a lot from his 5 semesters with the IAC, and he took it with him into the "real world." After graduating from Mississippi State University in 2002 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, Jon headed to Albemarle Corporation (a manufacturer of specialty chemicals) in South Carolina. He is a mechanical maintenance providing technical support to the process engineers as well as working on cost savings, capital projects, and equipment upgrades; failures; and improvements and analysis. Jon has garnered some tremendous cost savings for Albemarle by addressing the issues associated with nitrogen consumption. Through leak survey analysis and repair as well as education programs to raise the awareness of nitrogen costs, Jon and his team were able to save over \$250,000 last year. Along with the reduction in nitrogen consumption is a focus on steam and compressed air conservation that can be expected to garner more cost savings in the years to come.

Another project that Jon is working on is a planning and scheduling program to increase maintenance productivity. The goal is to improve the planning and organization of maintenance work in order to minimize idle time or unplanned jobs and to maximize efficiency. Jon's efforts have already made a drastic positive impact on the size of the backlog list, moving from a backlog of several months in 2003 to a current backlog list of around two weeks.

Whether it is reduced nitrogen consumption, compressed air conservation or improved maintenance schedules, the common denominator to success is the experience and knowledge gained at the IAC. IAC assessments teach students a broad range of skills regarding cost savings, energy efficiency, and productivity-improving techniques "These skills were invaluable" says Jon on how his IAC experience allowed him to hit the ground running in his career. A career, he says, that was jump-started by an IAC experience that gave him an edge with prospective employers who took note of his valuable exposure to industry and equipment as well as the recommended cost savings assessments listed on his resume. As Jon has noted, "Companies are constantly looking for ways to cut costs and streamline processes, especially under the recent economic conditions. The experience from IAC work teaches engineers to analyze processes and equipment in order to do just that, and employers definitely take note of it."