



9/3/2019

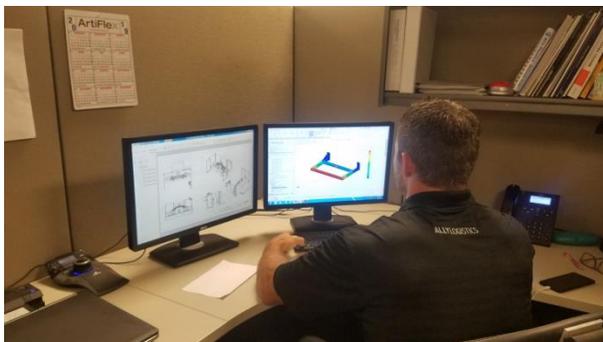
The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

On behalf of ArtiFlex Manufacturing, I would like to express our appreciation for the workforce development services provided by West Michigan Works! ArtiFlex Manufacturing operates in two states and servicing customers in three different industries; tooling, automation, and metal stamping. Tool making and automation integration are performed in Michigan while most metal stamping runs in Ohio. There are over two hundred people employed by our Michigan facilities.

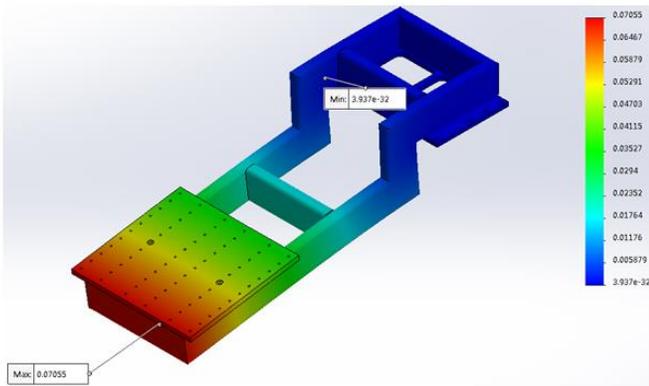
I connected with West Michigan Works! because we were seeking assistance to help recruit and retain highly-skilled talent. ArtiFlex has implemented practices to retain a skilled workforce in order to compete and succeed in the tool and die, stamping, and automation industries. We value the importance of employing highly-skilled individuals, providing current and skill-building training, and developing individuals to reach their potential. In 2019, ArtiFlex anticipated to spend nearly \$300K on training for our employees. With the help of Michigan Works! we were able to offset the cost by nearly one-third by receiving money from the Going Pro Grant. We were able to increase our talented workforce by hiring twenty people, onboard four new apprentices into the CNC Machining, Tool & Die, and Machine Builder programs, and provide 47 classroom trainings.

One of the most valuable classroom trainings for our automation division was SolidWorks Simulation/Finite Element Analysis (FEA). FEA is used at ArtiFlex to predict deflection and stresses in machine components. This analysis is often used when working with forces to determine if the equipment has been designed sufficiently to prevent excessive deflection (affecting accuracy of completed part) or to prevent excessive stresses (which could lead to machine failure). ArtiFlex had two mechanical machine designers formally trained on SolidWorks Simulation to perform FEA studies on designed equipment. Because of this training, our designers were able to use FEA effectively to prevent equipment failures, which saved ArtiFlex money. Additionally, continual development of our employees is fundamental for the retention of our employees, which is critical in today's market.



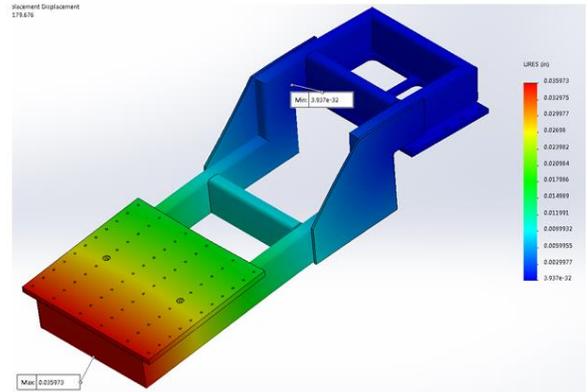
Mechanical Machine Designer using SolidWorks Simulation. The result of this FEA was a savings of over 2-3 weeks in assembly on our shop floor. The FEA took approximately 30 minutes to perform.

FEA with no side plates showing 0.070" deflection under load:



Simulated view showing deflection without side plates.

FEA with added side plates showing 0.036" deflection under load:



Simulated view showing side plates added for strength.

Partnering with West Michigan Works! is invaluable. The support we received from the Business Service Representative that was assigned to our company, Johnathan Walker, exceeded my expectations as he was knowledgeable and extremely helpful throughout the entire process.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn M. Hodack
ArtiFlex Manufacturing
Human Resources-Training and Development Specialist
616.459.8285