



**News release**

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**Kenall Manufacturing CEO keynotes Gateway  
graduation ceremony**

Jim Hawkins, CEO and owner of Kenall Manufacturing, encouraged graduates at Gateway Technical College's Associate Degree and Technical Diploma Commencement to become the leaders they were meant to be, through self-reflection, persistence and integrity.

"Leadership takes many forms and is not always obvious," Hawkins told the 373 students who participated in the ceremony. "Let me tell you from my experience a few ways you can lead and make the world a better place.

"In my business, experienced people doing the right things together achieve great things and make the world a better place to live."

Hawkins encouraged graduates to be courageous, unafraid of failure, accept responsibility for their actions and surround themselves with people who are honest and expect the best from them.

"The story of so many great people is not how many times they fell down – but how determined they were to get up," Hawkins said.

The ceremony recognized 840 prospective candidates for graduation from Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016 and Summer 2016 semesters. An estimated 373 participated in the ceremony.

“For some of us, this may be our second chance to be on the correct career path and Gateway is the catalyst to make a wrong right,” said Class of 2016 Student Responder Vicki Zirbel, the Elkhorn Campus Ambassador and graduate of Gateway’s CNC Production Technician diploma program.

“We are thankful to have our family and friends here to celebrate with us as graduates this evening. Hard work, dedication, hours of studying for mid-terms and finals – sometimes through tears and frustrations – you were there for us, sacrificing and making our education a priority.”

Other commencement highlights included the presentation of the 2016 Gateway Technical College Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award, which was awarded to John Kiel.

Kiel is a 1982 graduate of Gateway’s Fire Science Technician associate degree program. He practices law at the law office of John B. Kiel, LLC, in Salem.

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.