

In 2007, several clients asked the Textile Technology Center at Gaston College to process fibers longer than 2 inches. The requests involved wool and alpaca as well as several highly technical fibers including carbon, Nomex and Kevlar. In the process of shopping for a spinning frame that would give us that capability, I met Marcel Deshaies of Carolina Specialty Inc.

We purchased an 8 position Modified Worsted System ring spinning frame from Carolina Specialty and began a business relationship with Marcel and his company.

Since that time, we purchased a rebuilt pin drafter and a “Carolina Carder” from Carolina Specialty, which added significantly to our capabilities. Carolina Specialty also helped us modify components of our short staple spinning system, which gave significant improvements in flexibility, safety and reliability.

In conversation with Marcel, the concept of developing a “community mill” course surfaced. We saw the need to teach some key textile manufacturing concepts and business principles along with the art. We also wanted to give individuals some “hands on” experience running the equipment. The Center applied for and received a grant from the Z Smith Reynolds Foundation to develop a curriculum and publicize the course. Marcel has been a part of the ongoing teaching for that program.

In short Carolina Specialty Inc. is a valued partner of the Textile Technology Center and our “go to” resource for equipment repair and modification as well as our partner in the continued growth of the Community Mill program.

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