Students visit helicopter facility for Manufacturing Day

18 engineering students gained a high-flying education at Leonardo Helicopter last week.

Taking flight: Students and staff from Benjamin Franklin High School visited Leonardo Helicopter last Friday.
Leonardo Helicopter (formerly AgustaWestland), 3050 Red Lion Road, last Friday celebrated Manufacturing Day by welcoming 18 students from Benjamin Franklin High School’s Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology.

The students learned about Leonardo by watching a video, touring the facility and listening to Tom Lyons, a vice president who heads human resources. They ended the day by eating lunch.

Lyons explained that the Philadelphia division of the Rome-based company does $4.5 billion in business each year. Helicopters are delivered all around the world.

On the tour, Anuj Singh, Leonardo’s manager of testing and assembly, described the company as a “giant Lego factory,” only with expensive parts.

Singh told the young people that Leonardo employees are trained to work “smart.”

The tour guide showed the students the company’s warehouse, which contains up to $70 million in inventory, including everything from engines to bolts, screws and brackets.

The students also got to see all the parts of an aircraft, along with the company’s tool room, assembly line and test flight line.

Teacher Pete McDermott, a Mayfair resident, helped plan the trip.

Among those who attended were state Rep. Martina White; Jonathan Todd, of the city Department of Commerce; Teri Grumbrecht, membership director at the Greater Northeast Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce; Jeff George, an aide to City Councilman Allan Domb; and Tom Holroyd, an aide to Councilman Bobby Henon. ••