



Featured Student: George Minick

A soft-spoken man, George Minick has traveled the globe clad in U.S. Navy dress blues, and navigated the conservative world of corporate banking in button-down shirts.

Yet, he's never been happier than in his present occupation as a Master Gunsmithing student at PGS, where the standard attire is casual clothes and safety gear.

"At the end of the day, it's great to actually see the result of my efforts, when I take a block of steel or wood and make it into something useful," said George.



George placing a final touch on one of his custom stocks.

"We're learning how to use hand and power tools, as well as welding, soldering and machine tool techniques. It's a great cumulative experience – every day we come in and learn something new," he said.

George entered the U.S. Naval Academy after high school, and then embarked on a five-year tour of duty. After his discharge, George's computer skills led to a satisfying career with a global financial firm as a project manager.

"On weekends during the last few years, I became interested again in shooting, a hobby I had not pursued since college," George said.

As he reconnected with the sport, George decided to look into a career change incorporating his passion for firearms and things mechanical with his creative drive. "I found PGS on the Internet and was excited to learn they were located in Pittsburgh," he said.

George will graduate from the 16-month program at PGS in late fall as a "Sporting Arms Ordnance Technician"™ (SAOT™) with a Diploma in the "Master Gunsmithing Program."™

His wife, whom he met in Japan, works locally for a major university and is very supportive of George's new career. After a few years under his belt as a professional Gunsmith, George would like to try combining his computer skills with the firearms industry, perhaps in the manufacturing process itself and definitely in website design.

In fact, George has his own website to update family and friends on his ongoing education and projects.

"It illustrates the best thing about Gunsmithing, taking an old, rusted-out firearm and turning it into something 'like new' – so nice the original owner wouldn't even recognize it. What a great ability to possess, and I can't wait to use it when I graduate."

Graduate Spotlight



A recent recruiting trip to school brought home 1975 PGS graduate Don Baughman, Manager of Technical Operations for Krieghoff International's Ottsville, PA location.

"Coming to PGS was one of the best things I've ever done," he said. "Every day, I look forward to coming into work." Don has worked continuously in the Gunsmithing field since graduation, both self-employed and for others. Krieghoff crafts fine hunting and sporting guns.

First-Rate Equipment a Priority

Committed students, top-notch instructors and state-of-the-art equipment are certainly required ingredients for developing future Master Gunsmiths.

The last one is an ongoing, substantial investment of PGS resources to make sure students have the highest quality equipment so they can perform the highest quality work.

According to PGS Instructor Jim Smith, the last few years have seen numerous upgrades and improvements.

“We’ve purchased three milling machines (two with digital readouts), an 8” jointer, two floor drill presses, six gear head lathes, numerous lathe attachments, two forges, a TIG welder, a heat treatment furnace, and a new stock drying room with temperature control,” said Jim.



Instructor Jim Smith demonstrating a procedure on one of the new milling machines to Nicholas Moraitis, now employed at Wilson Combat.

A newly designed reloading bench, hardwood tops on benches, new reamers and a variety of tools, jigs, fixtures and accessories still doesn’t completely list the round of upgrades still ongoing.

“In the instruction area, we’ve purchased new books and videos for our library, digital and video cameras for recording student work, and a new video camera system for easier student viewing during lectures,” added Jim.

Other additions like new lockers, high output lighting, an attractive stock wood display area and a staff member in the financial aid department may not directly result in better

craftsmanship, but it sure makes the education process easier and more pleasant for the hard-working PGS students!

A Few Words About Financial Aid

Most students who pursue education after high school need help to finance their studies. Federal and state grants (which do not have to be repaid) and federal Stafford (student) and PLUS (parent) education loans with competitive interest rates are common sources of financial aid for PGS students.

Once accepted at PGS, our financial aid administrator will help students through the financial aid process, which begins by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Another helpful website for students is www.studentaid.ed.gov, designed by the Department of Education to help students from the admissions process to repaying their loans.

Some students may also be eligible for veteran education benefits and state vocational rehabilitation training grants from their home state. Check with our financial aid administrator to see what types of financial aid for which you may qualify.



Be one of the many PGS graduates who left their day job to pursue their dream job in the Gunsmithing field. Contact PGS today!

Interested in learning more about Pennsylvania Gunsmith School? Look over the web page, www.pagunsmith.edu and contact us at PGS@PAGunsmith.edu or phone at 412-766-1812. School visits are welcome. Please schedule yours in advance so we can serve you better!

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