

President's Community-Based Job Training Grants

Southwestern Michigan College

AWARD AMOUNT: \$634,677

AREA SERVED: Southwest Lower Michigan

INDUSTRY: Advanced Manufacturing

KEY PARTNERS AND LEVERAGED RESOURCES: \$1,038,313 in leveraged resources from four employer partners, one workforce partner, six education partners and two other partners

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS: Southwest Michigan is projected to have an increase in demand for skilled laborers in precision production technology. Southwestern Michigan College and the employers in the area collaborated to identify new curricula, program outcomes and training methods to meet the need for this type of skilled worker. The partnership determined the following factors as key barriers to the development of a new industry-focused training program: 1) The equipment currently used for training is outdated; 2) Recruiting qualified instructors is a challenge; and 3) The college has difficulty attracting qualified students into the new precision production program.

ACTIVITIES: The project will review objectives, curriculum, instruction, facilities and equipment against industry needs to improve the quality of instruction. In partnership with area industries, the college will undertake recruitment efforts by visiting high schools, hosting an annual summer camp, attending MIWorks! job fairs and informing employers of incumbent worker training opportunities. The project will install state-of-the-art equipment and faculty members will receive manufacturer training to ensure students are provided with the level of training necessary to directly enter the workforce upon completion of training. The project will sponsor advisory board activities, area instructor meetings and career awareness activities through the local school district. Instructors will attend annual workshops/conferences on manufacturing innovation to stay current with rapidly evolving technology. Five scholarships will be provided each year for students that do not qualify for other tuition relief. To encourage younger students into the field, the project will develop and market a summer camp.

PROJECTED OUTCOMES:

- Equipment and curricula will be updated to reflect industry needs;
- Community awareness of the training program will be enhanced through outreach efforts;
- 148 individuals will enroll in precision production technology programs: 84 will enter regular certificate or degree programs and 60 will enter a fast-track program;
- 80% of all matriculating students will obtain employment in precision production technology positions; and
- 20 students will attend a precision production technology summer camp.

