



County of Mercer
Workforce Development Board
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WDB Advanced Manufacturing Committee
Mercer County Administration Building – Room 212
October 20, 2016 at 2:00 pm.

Present: Virgen Velez, Scott Needham, John Hagemann, Sally Nadler, Ray Vaccari, Mary Smith-Jones, Maribel Duarte, Cathe Doolan,

Advanced Manufacturing Chair: Scott Needham opened the meeting at 2:15. No minutes were reviewed and introductions were made.

A. Local Plan Discussion and Areas of Focus

Virgen Velez explained the Regional Plan and the framework for the Local Plan. Information gathered from these discussions with all of the WDB Committee's will not only help in writing the Plan but also determine and guide the direction of the WDB over the next 4 years. This week Virgen had very informative meetings with the Mercer County Technical School, the WDB Healthcare Committee and the WDB Literacy Committee. Recurring themes from these meetings are:

1. Realization that the workforce area partners must do a better job at communicating. There are many great programs offered but the WDB doesn't find out about them until they have already begun. The WDB needs to be involved at the planning stage of the process not just at the end.
2. The WDB needs more new members who can be sponsors in getting employers involved.
3. Staff members need to be more knowledgeable of the programs and opportunities that are available for people coming to the One-Stop for training.

Sally Nadler, who is on the Gender Parody Group at SETC, added that staff should also become more knowledgeable of the displaced homemaker network which is another entity to keep in the loop.

B. Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials

Mary Smith Jones from Mercer County Technical School outlined some of the advanced manufacturing programs offered at the school.

1. Machinist Program through partnering with KNF Neuberger. They are applying for funding to purchase more equipment in order to expand. Working with KNF Neuberger and TRANE to identify employees that need more skills training. At completion the student receives a transcript and a certificate of Completion issued by the school. There is no State Licensure yet.
2. They offer customized programming for employers through a 4-year Apprenticeship Program.
3. Next year they expect to open the Home Owner Construction Program to meet community needs.

One of the changes with WIOA is increasing credential attainment. The State expects 50% of people in training programs this year to receive an industry valued credential. That number is expected to go up to 80% over the next few years. Discussion focused on which credentials are currently available and identification and exploration of what credentials employers see as valuable for the local area needs in the advanced manufacturing area.

1. National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certification for machinists.
2. ACT National Career Readiness Certification for Soft Skills.
3. North American Technician of Excellence (NATE), MCTS prepares the student to take NATE in the 4th Year of training.
4. Environment Protection Agency- EPA Refrigerant Credential received at the end of training is recognized as valuable to an employer.
5. MCTS classes mostly serve youth but we will need to serve more adults and that would require the programs have twilight or evening hours

Other programming ideas under discussion that would be valuable for the local area were:

1. Partnering with employers to identify incumbent worker training needs. Suggestion that while the employer can pay the worker wage to let them know they can look to the One-Stop for training dollars.
2. Basic Skills Remediation for an employer's incumbent workers can be supplied through the One-Stop and other One-Stop partners.
3. Pre Assessments of Skills Gaps for incumbent workers to identify training needs.
4. It would be helpful for the committee to obtain a list of all the manufacturers in the State. This list is available from the O*Net and also on the LWD website. This list can be broken out by NAICS Code (North American Industry Classification System).
5. Development of an Advanced Manufacturing Career Center in Mercer County (ex. Camden County Community College). Mercer County Community College is in the process of building an advanced Manufacturing Program. Until it is fully up and running MCTS and MCCC have an articulation agreement for some apprenticeship and manufacturing programs i.e. HVAC combines an education 4-year program that includes hands on training and theory. At completion students receive an Associate's Degree, are prepared to take the State exam for licensure and receive the EPA Refrigerant Card credential.
6. There is a need to increase Apprenticeship programs by local area employers. For an employer to set up as an apprenticeship they need to go through the US Department of Labor. The paperwork involved beginning with an application, developing a curriculum, and the overhead of the reporting requirements can be very burdensome to a small employer. The Talent Network can be the sponsor for any employer who is interested in applying.

C. Expanding High Quality Employer Driven Partnerships

The Committee talked about the importance of outreach and connecting to the youth population. One idea was the possibility of a Vocational Fair for youth with presentation on some of programs the Talent Network is doing to educate the youth that there are numerous good jobs in manufacturing that have the potential to earn a decent and livable wage.

Ray spoke on a number of events that are can bring career partners together.

1. Targeted Industry Partnership (TIP) program that provides grant funds to manufacturers. There will be a Meeting at Middlesex County College on October 26, 2016. The NJ TIP membership has 60 people and 20 manufacturers.
2. Eric Mayner, from the Talent Network, did a hands-on demonstration program this summer for 200 youth that focused on careers in advanced manufacturing. It was suggested he be invited to the next meeting.
3. "Build a Better Design Competition", Michael Marchettie would be the contact person. Ideally Ray would like to see this in the Trenton School system.
4. "Ambassador Programs", this program is designed to educate youth ambassadors who will go into the school to connect with other young adults to talk about careers in manufacturing.
5. The Picatinny Arsenal will host 3D Printer R-Lab Industry Day on November 29, 2016.

Next Advanced Manufacturing Committee Meeting Date:

Plans for a special meeting to review in more detail items used in the framework of the Local Plan scheduled for November 14, 2016 at 2:00 at a meeting place yet TBD.