

News Alert

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National Manufacturing Institute Teams with Manufacturers Association of Florida and the Employ Florida Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing to Prepare Students and Working Learners for Careers in Advanced Manufacturing

System Will Educate and Train a Quality Workforce to Keep Florida Manufacturing Strong

Tallahassee, Florida, March 2, 2011--The Washington, DC-based Manufacturing Institute announced a partnership with the Manufacturers Association of Florida and the Employ Florida Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing to begin deployment of the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System in Florida. Through the alignment of educational and career pathways, this large-scale effort is intended to prepare students and working learners for high quality jobs in manufacturing.

The partnership is supported by a grant from Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based private foundation dedicated to expanding access to and success in education beyond high school. The Foundation supports projects nationwide that help increase the proportion of Americans with college degrees and the necessary credentials to enter the workforce.

With better access to community college programs that offer industry-recognized, nationally portable credentials, students and workers in Florida can receive the quality education and training needed to respond to the demands of local manufacturers, who depend on talent-driven innovation for survival and growth in the competitive global marketplace. Support from The Manufacturing Institute and Lumina Foundation positions Florida as one of 18 states receiving private, independent funding to establish the Manufacturing Skills Certification System as the statewide standard for manufacturing education.

“Florida manufacturers employ more than 300,000 individuals with higher annual wages and benefits than other industries. Supplying these businesses with the 21st century talent to fill those jobs is integral to their sustainability and our state’s economic security,” said Al Stimac, President, Manufacturers Association of Florida.

“We need to engage more young people and transitioning workers in learning skills that translate to high-quality jobs in our economy,” said Manufacturing Institute President Emily DeRocco. “By deploying the Manufacturing Skills Certification System as stackable credentials in Florida colleges and other institutions of higher learning, we will be offering new pathways to employment and advancement in manufacturing, which is a mainstay of the state’s economy.”

Implementation of the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System will build college programs that prepare students and transitioning workers with entry-level skills necessary to succeed in all advanced manufacturing careers, such as electronics, medical device and equipment manufacturing, and metal fabrication. The skills certifications included in these educational programs address personal effectiveness competencies, foundational academic competencies, general workplace skills and manufacturing industry-wide technical skills. Applied science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills are included in the system.

The national skills system organizes individual certification programs designed and validated by ACT, Inc., the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council, the American Welding Society, the National Institute of Metalworking Skills, and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers into educational pathways with “stackable” credentials leading to an associate’s degree.

“The Manufacturing Institute has created a national solution to drive manufacturing education reform to meet the needs of Florida manufacturers and the new realities of the students and working learners they seek to employ,” said Nancy Stephens, Executive Director, Manufacturers Association of Florida. “Integrating these industry skills certifications in our colleges’ and higher learning programs of study will dramatically improve how we prepare individuals for manufacturing jobs. We will better meet the needs and learning styles of our students and working learners to enhance and accelerate our delivery of a manufacturing workforce for Florida, equipped with advanced, 21st century skills.”

As a part of the grant activities, The Manufacturing Institute, the Manufacturers Association of Florida, and the Employ Florida Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing will convene a series of discussion forums between manufacturers, educators and policymakers this year entitled “Educating and Certifying Florida’s Manufacturing Workforce.” The first discussion forum is May 19 at Daytona State College, the second is June 15 at the State College of Florida, and the final session will be held in conjunction with the Manufacturers Summit and Global Marketplace on November 30 at the Hyatt Regency Orlando Airport Hotel.

“Partnering with The Manufacturing Institute to expand the existing industry certification aligned programs at K-12, Technical Centers, Community and State Colleges, and workforce training programs will enable Florida manufacturers to find the talent as high skilled as the high-tech medical devices, electronic components, and consumer goods that they make,” said Dr. Eric Roe, director of the Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing. “We have done an exceptional job linking college credit with national certifications for the entry-level employee. Linking our pathways to higher level credentials and national standards will provide opportunities for high-skill, high-wage manufacturing careers for even more Floridians.”

For more information about the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System, visit: <http://institute.nam.org>. For more information about the Manufacturers Association of Florida and the upcoming discussion forums, visit www.mafmfg.com. For more information about the Employ Florida Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing, visit www.banner-mfg.org.

The Manufacturing Institute-

The Manufacturing Institute, the non-partisan 501(c) (3) affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers, delivers leading-edge information and services to the nation's manufacturers through its National Center for the American Workforce and its National Center for Manufacturing Research. The Institute focuses on developing human capital strategies through education reform and workforce development, conducting applied research to provide critical information to public policy makers on challenges and opportunities for today's industry, and advancing the innovation capacity of manufacturers operating in a global market. Visit institute.nam.org.

Manufacturers Association of Florida

The Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF) is a trade association whose mission is to improve the business climate for Florida manufacturers. MAF focuses on workforce and education, taxes, international trade, safety, and environmental regulation issues. In that regard, MAF works with manufacturers, agencies, legislators, educators, and other professionals to bring about positive change for Floridians.

Employ Florida Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing The Banner Center for Advanced Manufacturing, serves as the link between industry, academia, and workforce development. It provides curriculum and training, as well as certification resources and support for the continuation and expansion of Florida manufacturing. Based at Polk State College, this collaborative system serves as the statewide resource center for creating a unified workforce education and training system to meet the talent development needs of Florida's advanced manufacturing industries.