OhioTechNet

OhioHigherEd
Department of Higher Education

Partners in Training Ohio's Manufacturing Workforce

The Challenge

Manufacturing is the top private sector for employment in Ohio – and it is growing. To ensure manufacturing continues to thrive in our state, however, we must address a widening gap between the jobs available and the number of qualified applicants. The issue is compounded by a shrinking labor pool and rapid technological change, as baby boomers retire and industry integrates advances in automation, data technologies, the Internet of Things and more.

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> It is because of strong partners like Ohio TechNet that OMA felt confident in establishing workforce as an organizational statewide priority. Nearly every county in Ohio is impacted by Ohio TechNet's enhanced manufacturing training programs. OMA embraces the opportunity to connect employers to our Ohio TechNet partners.
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> Eric Burkland, *President* | The Ohio Manufacturers' Association
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Partnering for Solutions

To meet this challenge, manufacturers in Ohio have implemented industry-led sector partnerships in nearly every part of the state, facilitating collaboration among education, economic development, workforce development, and industry partners to address workforce gaps. Ohio TechNet coordinates higher education's efforts to support the workforce needs of manufacturers. We work closely with The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA), employers, government agencies and other stakeholders to create more pathways for in-demand careers and a robust, workforce-ready talent pipeline in Ohio.

We are a consortium of education and training institutions developing innovative new education and training strategies. By promoting efficiency and creativity through collaboration, Ohio TechNet has sparked the development of dozens of new or enhanced programs that have trained thousands.

Ohio TechNet launched in 2014 through a U.S. Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant to Lorain County Community College on behalf of a statewide consortium of 11 community colleges. Since then, our consortium has more than doubled in size and future expansion is anticipated.

Engaging Employers

To meet the hiring needs of Ohio's large, mid-size and small manufacturers, Ohio TechNet will continue to grow our statewide network of industry partners. Many of these manufacturers are helping to lead regional sector partnerships or are leaders in driving the OMA statewide workforce strategies. By becoming an industry partner with Ohio TechNet, employers can be part of designing the future of state education policies, help eliminate barriers, and play a more significant role in building a pipeline of skilled workers.

## Expanding Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Programs

Ohio TechNet partners have expanded registered apprenticeship programs and launched other **Earn & Learn** models that align to Ohio's most in-demand jobs. Expertise within the consortium is leveraged to accelerate the adoption of these models among partner institutions. This is a win-win for students who complete training with little to no debt, and employers who are able to build a sustainable talent pipeline for both entry-level and skilled positions.

Accelerating Student Learning and Completion

Ohio TechNet launched and is leading the expansion of FastPathOhio.com to help Ohio colleges and universities connect with adults whose on-the-job training could convert to college credit through Prior Learning Assessment. Building on the successful launch of Competency Based Education for manufacturing at Sinclair Community College and Northwest State Community College, Ohio TechNet will assist in replicating this acceleration model statewide, enabling students to enter manufacturing careers much faster than through traditional seat-based instruction.

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Prior Learning Assessment is a proven strategy for opening the doors of our universities, colleges and adult career-technical centers to a much larger number of students, including many adults who may have begun a postsecondary program years ago, but left without earning a degree or credential offering.

Brett Visger, *Associate Vice Chancellor* | Ohio Department of Higher Education

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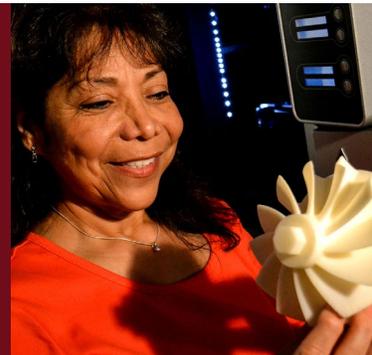
Free Training Resources

We have partnered with the OMA and SkillsCommons to create a portal of free training resources. The materials have been curated by Ohio manufacturers and community college faculty to provide content for your training program. Visit **http://oma.skillscommons.org**

Join Us!

We are actively seeking, and welcome, additional new partners to help meet Ohio's workforce challenge. For more information, visit **http://ohiotechnet.org/**