

Charged Up Quarterly Narrative (04.2025)

A. Summarize the Grant Activities (includes career, training and supportive services):

- Types of services supported by the grant, how they were delivered, and how they contributed to a participant's ability to fully participate;
- Additional information about services and training activities and outcomes.

To date, LCCC is serving 35 of a goal of 45 participants for this grant-funded project. Participants are enrolled in various manufacturing programs including bachelor's and associate degrees (Digital Fabrication, Microelectronic Manufacturing, Applied Electronics, Welding Technology, Micro-Electromechanical Systems) and Short-Term Certificates/Fast-Tracks (Welding Technology, Electronics Fabrication, Micro-Electromechanical Systems, Robotics Operator, Entry-Level Machining Technician).

Eight students have completed their programs of study, earning credentials in Welding Technology, Electronics Fabrication, Robotics Operator, and Micro-Electromechanical Systems.

We continue to offer success coaching, student support stipends, and supportive services. Our Success Coach has effectively established relationships with students while facilitating their access to funding, gaining valuable insights into the barriers manufacturing students face. Students have readily utilized supportive service funds through the Advocacy Resources Center (ARC), though engagement with Career Services remains an opportunity for growth.

Moving forward, we aim to deepen these student relationships to overcome the transactional approach many community college students take toward their education. By fostering more meaningful connections, our Success Coach can better promote available resources and encourage students to fully utilize support services throughout their career journey.

B. Progress towards Grant Goals:

- Updates on key deliverables towards training and program activities;
- Challenges and concerns encountered;
- Next steps and/or key areas of focus planned.

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The team is strategically partnering with Enrollment and Financial Aid to enhance resource connectivity for students. While the Success Coach serves as a primary liaison, expanding resource awareness across student-facing departments enables earlier intervention, strengthens institutional connection, and provides targeted support to improve program persistence and employment outcomes.

Transportation remains a significant barrier, with 54% of students requesting ARC funding citing this challenge. LCCC actively engages with county-wide transportation initiatives, including the Go Ohio rideshare program, expanded Lorain County Transit routes with electronic access, and the "Via" micro-transit service implementation. The college facilitates access through LCT rides/tokens available at the ARC and LCCC Bookstore, with LCCC serving as a primary transit route stop. The institution leverages strategic partnerships with community programs (OMJ, SNAP, Job and Family Services, local grants), federal financial aid, and private funding to address transportation as an essential need based on individual eligibility requirements.

Priority focus areas include developing more resilient success coaching processes to accommodate staffing constraints. Given recent health-related absences affecting the success coach position, implementing a more robust support system ensures continuous service delivery regardless of temporary staffing limitations.

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C. Development and Implementation of Effective Practices and Program Model Strategies:

- This may include:
 - i. A description of outreach and/or recruitment activities
 - ii. Examples of the development and implementation of education and training programs
 - iii. Identifying and engaging industry sectors and employers
 - iv. Aligning policies and programs
 - v. Measuring systems change and tracking performance
 - vi. Developing new, or enhancing existing, curriculum or industry training; and
 - vii. Creating new career assistance tools and resources.
- Describe how any development and implementation activities (such as those outlined above in Section IV.A) contribute to use of services by underserved populations and facilitate equitable service provisions across target populations and underserved communities. Grantees may also identify administrative barriers, statutory barriers, or other challenges they face in ensuring equitable use, service delivery and outcomes achieved.
- Grantees may describe any lessons learned and how those lessons learned will be integrated into ongoing grant activities.

Many of our current students are in Fast-Track manufacturing programs. The FastTrack programs represent a strategic approach to addressing barriers faced by adult learners in manufacturing career pathways. These credit-bearing programs prepare students for industry-recognized certificates and credentials in high-demand, well-paying fields across Northeast Ohio at no cost to participants, effectively removing significant financial barriers. LCCC has intentionally refined its FastTrack offerings from 60 to 14 programs, prioritizing careers with higher earning potential, strong industry demand, and enhanced advancement opportunities.

Each program adheres to four key design principles that support untapped populations: completion in 16 weeks or less, making them accessible for working adults; stackability into one-year certificates and associate degrees, creating clear advancement pathways; strong labor market alignment, ensuring relevance to high-wage job opportunities; and consistent semester availability, offering multiple entry points year-round.

Outreach and recruitment activities have been extensive and targeted. The Success Coach has conducted 13 classroom presentations at area high schools, reaching approximately 277 students. These presentations included visual manufacturing demonstrations and distribution of program materials. Additionally, the Coach participated in 7 career and job fairs, engaging

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with approximately 600 attendees through informational table displays. Specialized outreach to adult education programs included 5 presentations to GED students (58 participants) and 4 presentations to ESOL students (22 participants).

Preview Days continue to be an important means of promoting Advanced Manufacturing programs and pathways to area high school seniors. This spring, 81 high school students from 5 different schools participated in hands-on sessions that included MEMS, Automated Manufacturing, and Welding.

This comprehensive approach ensures equitable service provision by addressing multiple barriers simultaneously: financial constraints, time limitations for working adults, educational accessibility, and direct employer connections. By meeting underserved populations where they are—whether in high schools, adult education programs, or community organizations—we create multiple entry points to manufacturing career pathways.

D. Status Update on Match and/or Leveraged Resources

- **Identify any funding needs and sources, and report the cumulative amount of any match and/or leveraged resources provided by the grantee and partners each quarter.**
 - i. Match resources are required resources, from non-Federal funds, that support the allowable grant activities. Only grants with a match requirement should report on match.**
 - ii. Leveraged resources are those additional resources the grantee and its partners use to support the implementation of the program. Leveraged resources may take the form of cash or in-kind donations. Please indicate any new leveraged resources used to sustain the project after the life of the grant, if applicable.**
 - iii. Please note that both match and leveraged resources must also be reported on the Financial Status Report (ETA-9130) quarterly, if applicable.**
- **The update may include:**
 - i. Organizations that contributed the resources;**
 - ii. Ways in which the resources were used during the current quarter;**
 - iii. Cumulative amount of match and/or leveraged resources; and**
 - iv. Type of match and/or leveraged resources contributed to the project.**

The College leverages multiple funding streams that support expansion of manufacturing enrollment and industry engagement. This includes an investment from the Intel SERP program and an investment from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions.

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E. Status update on Strategic Partnership Activities:

- Provide details regarding maintaining partner engagement and their impact on the grant. Description may include:
 - i. Key activities completed, including partnership development and coordination;
 - ii. Reporting any new partners and intended activities;
 - iii. Expanding partnerships with new business or industry associations;
 - iv. Developing partnerships with organizations that serve, train, and hire individuals from underserved and marginalized communities most impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.
- If applicable, identify any new challenges encountered (resolved and/or ongoing).

The Success Coach has actively engaged with key workforce development organizations including OMJ Huron and Lorain Counties, Goodwill Industries of Lorain, and the Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership/Manufacturing Works. These partnerships facilitate direct connections between employer needs and student skills development, with specific emphasis on connecting welding Fast Track students to industry opportunities. The Success Coach has developed a working relationship with Dr. M. Judith Crocker, Workforce Specialist for the Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership, providing detailed information about certificates, training, and skills our welding Fast Track students possess.

Through our Adult Diploma Program (ADP), promotional and outreach efforts have yielded positive results by encouraging students to enroll in and complete manufacturing courses. In addition, LCCC staff have hosted FastTrack presentations for the GED and ADP students.

Partnership outreach has expanded through participation in numerous community events. The Coach participated in 7 career and job fairs, engaging with approximately 600 attendees through informational table displays.

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F. Status Update on Employer Engagement Strategies.

- The purpose of this section is to share information related to promising practices and strategies that have strengthened existing employer partnerships and any efforts to develop new employer partnerships. This section may discuss how equity is taken into account in the identification of, engagement with, and services provided to employers and employer associations.
- i. Report the efforts that have been undertaken to receive feedback from local area employers to identify their employee pipeline needs and engage local employers to interview, assess, train, and/or hire program participants. Examples may include:
 1. Increased employer involvement including employers serving as mentors;
 2. Program staff and employers identifying ways to encourage continuous improvement to hire program participants;
 3. New employer partnerships (e.g., increased number of employers); and
 4. Positive employment outcomes for program participants (e.g., employers support the hiring and advancement of program participants).

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The Advancing Career Pathways (NSF grant) project is enhancing our employer engagement approach for manufacturing and IT sectors in Northeast Ohio. Co-led by the Fund for Our Economic Future and LCCC, this initiative supports our credit-based FastTrack programs while creating synergies with our current grant efforts.

Our approach includes conducting empathy interviews with stakeholders to understand barriers, establishing a project team to document the change management process, creating experiential workshops with industry partners, and leveraging comprehensive support services. We use data-driven methods to track progress while expanding formal industry partnerships to create accessible pathways for adult learners.

We have actively engaged with industry partners through several key events this quarter:

- 3/5/25: BILT (Business & Industry Leadership Team) Advisory Committee for Automation Engineering Technology Program
- 3/25/25: BILT Advisory Meeting for MultiCraft Maintenance Industry Program, which has applied for state approval to start next fall
- 1/27/25: Met with Ross Environmental Services
- 2/21/25: Hosted RoviSys Tour at LCCC
- 3/12/25: Hosted MultiLink Tour at LCCC
- 3/19/25: Met with PPG
- 3/19/25: LCMSP tour of Campana Center for Ideation and Invention
- 3/20/25: RoviSys attended PLC Immersion Training with I4.0 Teacher training Cohort to evaluate curriculum for future implementation

Through these coordinated strategies and industry engagement activities, we're building a more robust talent pipeline that benefits both grant initiatives, creating sustainable pathways to manufacturing employment in our region.

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G. Significant Activities, Accomplishments, and Success Stories.

- The purpose of this section is to provide additional, in-depth information regarding promising approaches, new processes, and/or lessons learned that are not addressed elsewhere in the report.
 - i. Report any other significant activities and accomplishments.
 - ii. Describe in detail promising approaches, innovative processes, lessons learned, and grant- and participant-level success stories in this section each quarter, as appropriate.
 - iii. Additionally, if appropriate, and with the participant's permission, please highlight one or two grant- or participant-level "success stories" from the program per quarter.
- When documenting success stories, please describe the:
 - i. Background, problem, issue, or concern prior to program involvement;
 - ii. Response or intervention provided by the project; and
 - iii. Results and outcomes, including who benefited and what changed or improved.
- Grantees may also include promising practices and success stories as attachments to the report.

Josh started with the Short-Term Certificate in MEMS, a job-focused program prepares students to work as an entry-level technician. This program reconnected Josh with learning by providing hands-on experience in a class-10,000 cleanroom environment, where he worked directly with industry materials, equipment, protocols, and processes. The program's combination of practical training and theoretical knowledge in MEMS design, sensor operation, microelectronic packaging, and manufacturing created a supportive learning environment where Josh finally found his academic footing and developed a sense of belonging.

The impact on Josh's career trajectory has been remarkable. His newfound passion for learning led him to pursue additional education, and he's currently working toward his Bachelor of Applied Science in MEMS, expanding his knowledge in computer science, electronics, soldering, chemistry, and mechanics. His academic success translated directly to industry opportunities, including a prestigious internship at Intel in Arizona during Summer 2024. Josh has recently secured full-time employment at Multilink in Elyria while continuing to complete his degree. His journey exemplifies how our manufacturing programs seamless pathways from entry-level certification to advanced education and meaningful industry employment in Ohio's growing manufacturing sector.