

The Ohio TechNet Defense Industrial Base STEM Consortium

Case Study – Statewide Earn & Learn Expansion

For manufacturing employers, experiential and work-based learning programs create a robust, reliable pipeline of skilled talent, reducing turnover and ensuring that the emerging workforce is trained on current technologies and processes. For workers and students, these programs provide paid experience, valuable credentials, and clear, navigable career pathways.

To support statewide expansion of Earn & Learn experiences in defense-aligned manufacturing careers, Ohio TechNet through the Defense Industrial Base STEM Consortium (OTN DIB STEM)

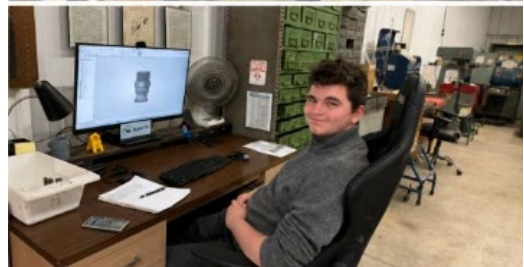


Strategic Ohio Council for Higher Education

has partnered with the Strategic Ohio Council on Higher Education (SOCHE). SOCHE engages colleges, universities, and industry to transform the economy, connecting employers with emerging talent and providing high school and college students with paid internship opportunities to develop the workforce of tomorrow. SOCHE's cost-share model has leveraged funding from the OTN DIB STEM project to pay 50% of intern wages, while also supporting employers through resume review, hiring, and intern onboarding, reducing the administrative burden for employers.

In less than two years the statewide pilot partnership between Ohio TechNet and SOCHE has supported **thirty-six student interns at twenty-six employers** across Ohio. Interns represent post-secondary and dual-enrolled high school students, from a range of programs of study including biomedical engineering, manufacturing engineering technology, CNC machining, computer science, and cybersecurity. Seven high school interns were served, all of whom either continued to post-secondary training and education or obtained full-time employment with the same company. Nearly half of all interns either obtained full-time employment following their internship, or are continuing their education – in many cases also continuing part-time employment.

Dually enrolled students from Marion L. Steele (Amherst) and North Ridgeville High Schools benefited from internships supported by SOCHE and OTN. Two students from each school completed paid work-based learning with Black Tip, a Lorain County plastics manufacturer. One student used the experience to satisfy a requirement of their pre-apprenticeship, sponsored by local sector partnership Manufacturing Works, and all four have continued to post-secondary training and education. As high school dual-enrollment in technical training expands, high quality work-based learning experiences will become ever more important, leading to stable, well-paid careers for students and a reliable talent pool for employers.



Washington State College of Ohio (Marietta) utilized OTN-SOCHE internship funding to support a work-based learning pilot with area manufacturer Miba. The four-tier Experiential (L)Earning pilot structures paid work-based learning for dual-enrolled high school students through fourth year bachelor's degree students, at progressive wages and encompassing a range of roles and responsibilities. The pilot cohort of four interns successfully completed their internships, with three continuing their studies at Washington State and one, who completed their degree, hired full-time at Miba. This partnership provides a model for other employers and training providers to adopt in partnership, and a use case for strategically deployed funding.