
President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

Accelerated Skills Training for New England Machine Shops

Grant amount: \$2,996,724

Grantee: Maine Department of Economic and Community Development

Key partners: Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers, One-Stop Career Centers, local community colleges, Suppliers Excellence Alliance, U.S. - Mexico Chamber of Commerce, and local manufacturing associations

Grant activities will take place in Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Vermont

Leveraged amount: \$4,800,000 in cash and in-kind resources from state workforce agencies, employers, and participating MEPs

Challenge:

Small machine shops confront numerous barriers to staying competitive and winning new business, including: complex legal and financial bid requirements; lack of capacity and/or expertise to translate technical drawing into quotes; lack of access to appropriate technology; production, delivery, pricing and quality programs may not meet the needs of prime contractors; and lack of a skilled workforce.

Addressing the Challenge:

The Maine Department of Economic Development will partner with MEP centers in six New England states to provide accelerated training for Computer-Numerically Controlled (CNC) workers for on-demand production opportunities. The project will implement an innovative solution to assist small machine shops by simultaneously increasing their chances of winning contracts as well as their performance capabilities. The project will create a virtual Center for Supply Chain Integration, with hubs in the six states. These Centers will work with small machine shops to effectively reduce the major CNC-related engineering know-how needed for the bidding process and production, thereby leveling the playing field for small manufacturers. This simplification of CNC operation effectively reduces the intensity and time required to train a CNC operator through the normal education system. Therefore, the project will facilitate the hiring and accelerated training of individuals for these high-demand occupations.

Projected Outcomes:

- Training for 300 entry-level job seekers and 750 incumbent workers
- Training curriculum and outreach materials for One Stop Centers and community colleges to increase awareness of challenges small and medium-sized manufacturing employers and employees face and recruitment issues related to non-traditional CNC operators.
- CNC operator training certificate curriculum tested with at least 4-6 community colleges in New England.

