

Emily Stover DeRocco
President



December 29, 2009

[send via e-mail]

Dear XXX:

On March 4, 2009, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and The Manufacturing Institute, the 501(c)(3) affiliate of the NAM, launched the *NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System* for entry-level careers in our manufacturing economy. Designed to ensure an educated and prepared manufacturing workforce, this system of nationally portable, industry-recognized skills credentials will provide manufacturers with a competitive advantage in the 21st century global economy.

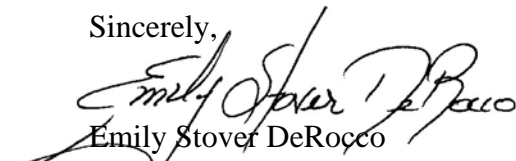
Our initial deployment strategy has been through the nation's community college system. Industry, community college and workforce leaders in 22 states have begun actions or discussions about how best to deploy the credentialing system and align educational and manufacturing career pathways.


Florida, as a national leader in driving to competency-based education and training, is changing the paradigm of manufacturing education. On January 29, 2010, The Manufacturing Institute has been invited to join the Florida Advanced Technology Education Center (FLATE) and state leaders in manufacturing education to review the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System and explore opportunities for Florida to become a national model for System deployment.

In tough economic times, with high unemployment and the loss of jobs, it is sometimes difficult to focus on skills development. In reality, we have no better time. If we are to right our economic ship, we must put in place the talent development strategies that will prepare workers for high quality, middle class jobs and provide manufacturers with the educated and skilled workforce necessary to remain globally competitive.

We invite you to join this important dialogue on the morning of January 29, 2010, at ValPak Manufacturing Center. A summary of the discussion topics is attached for your consideration. Please RSVP to Marilyn Barger at mbarger@hccfl.edu and Lourdes Fleurima at lfleurima@hccfl.edu by January 23, 2010.

Sincerely,


Emily Stover DeRocco
President
The Manufacturing Institute


Marilyn Barger, Ph.D., P.E.
P.I. and Executive Director, FLATE
Florida Advanced Technological Education Center

Manufacturing Makes America Strong

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NAM-ENDORSED MANUFACTURING SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM BRIEFING SUMMARY SHEET

What: Briefing on the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System and a Roundtable Dialogue on Deploying the System in Florida

When: January 29, 2010

Where: ValPak Manufacturing Center
1 ValPak Avenue N, St. Petersburg, FL 33716-4102
<http://www.coxtarget.com/vmc/index.jsp>

Why: In tough economic times, with high unemployment and the loss of jobs, it is sometimes difficult to focus on skills development. In reality, we have no better time. If we are to right our economic ship, we must put in place the talent development strategies that will prepare workers for high quality, middle class jobs and provide manufacturers with the educated and skilled workforce necessary to remain globally competitive.

- Research confirms that an educated and skilled workforce is the single most critical factor in maintaining U.S. leadership in innovation and productivity—keys to our success in the global marketplace.
- There is no longer any doubt that an educated and skilled workforce is the critical asset companies look for when deciding if and where to locate new business facilities and operations.
- And, individual manufacturers look to two balance sheets to determine their strength and resilience in this volatile economy: Their fiscal balance sheet and their human capital balance sheet.
- 21st century human capital, or talent, strategies are critical to manufacturers' success:
“I advise each of my staff that every worker hired is a million-dollar investment for this company. I’m calculating that most hires are under 45 years old; we intend to keep them for at least 20 years, and our average annual salary/benefits package is \$55,000. In other words, we can’t afford to make a mistake—to hire someone without the right skills. Verifiable skills certification programs can make the difference between a good investment and a high-risk.”
- Dennis Rohrs, Human Resource Manager, Fort Wayne Metals, Inc.



- However, there is a deficit in the education and training for manufacturing careers, causing a shortage of skilled individuals who are marketable to industry.
- By deploying the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System, we are employing industry's voice and expertise in helping this nation provide competency-based, customized education and training for the manufacturing workforce.
- Founded on ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate, the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System will validate for employers that a student or entry-level worker has achieved foundational workforce readiness and academic skills. The credentials aligned to manufacturing-wide technical skill requirements are AWS's Certified Welder, MSSC's Certified Production Technician, and NIMS' Machining and Metalforming certifications.
- Finally, SME's Engineering Technologist certification caps our entry-level skills system.
- These "stackable" industry-recognized skills certifications prepare workers with the manufacturing technical skills that enable them to swiftly enter careers in sectors ranging from aerospace to computers, metal fabrication to food processing, pharmaceutical to transportation and logistics.
- These are the postsecondary credentials that have real value in the manufacturing workplace: for workers who need to improve their skills; for workers whose jobs may be at risk, or workers who have lost a job and need to return to the workforce; for individuals coming out of the military; and, for people moving out of welfare and into work.
- An investment in workforce training that leads to specific credentials produces both a sense of accomplishment and merit for workers, and substantiates for manufacturers that the person has the skills to succeed in the workplace.
- The multi-tiered deployment strategy for these certifications and credentials is primarily through our nation's community college system, and then will drive down to the secondary school curriculum, and up to the baccalaureate degree programs.
- Pursuing alignment in college programs will help professionalize the careers in manufacturing as high-tech, high-skill, and high-profile. Leading the way in deployment are four "deep-dive" community colleges and 4 states, funded by a \$1.5 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: Forsyth Technical Community College in North Carolina, Lorain County Community College in Ohio, Alamo Colleges in Texas, and Shoreline Community College in Washington State.
- Deployment is also underway in 18 additional states from coast to coast through the work of industry, state workforce and education leaders.



**NAM-ENDORSED MANUFACTURING SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM
EVENT LOGISTICS**

Date: January 29, 2010

Location: ValPak Manufacturing Center
1 ValPak Avenue N, St. Petersburg, FL 33716-4102
<http://www.coxtarget.com/vmc/index.jsp>
Veronica Kalck [veronica_kalck@valpak.com]

Time: 8:50 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.: Tour of ValPak Manufacturing Center
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.: Certification System Discussion
11:30 a.m. 12:30 p.m.: Networking lunch

Hotel: Hilton Carillon Park
950 Lake Carillon Drive
St. Petersburg, FL 33716
Group Name: HCC
Ph: 727-540-0050
www.hiltonhotelstpete.com

Plant tour requirements: All meeting attendees are requested to bring a valid ID. In addition, individuals interested in joining in the ValPak Tour are requested to adhere to the following dress code requirements: Long pants required, Sleeved shirt required, Closed toe/heel shoes required.