



The Center to Advance Manufacturing Monthly News

February 2024

Dear Associates,

Workforce training continues to be one of the top priorities as the Center to Advance Manufacturing meets with industry leaders. In late January at the Center's Advisory Board meeting, board members participated in a roundtable discussion. The discussion quickly turned to workforce training, specifically leadership training and soft skills. Workforce training can become confusing with all of the programs and agencies providing services. The Center recognizes that manufacturers struggle to understand who they should be talking to about funding, training, compliance, etc. for all of the local, state, and federal training programs.

In order to hit the "easy" button for manufacturers, the Center will be hiring a workforce training coordinator. This position will link training resources with training providers. For example, local employers could utilize programs such as On-the-Job Training and/or Incumbent Worker Training dollars to support their training needs. In addition, there are programs that are administered by the State of Ohio such as Tech Cred and the Individual Microcredential Assistance Program (IMAP) that offer assistance. These programs have different schedules, reporting requirements, and uses of funding. Manufacturers may use this money to supplement in-house training or regional training providers.

Northwest Ohio is fortunate to have passionate leaders in economic and workforce development. Organizations like the Toledo Regional Chamber, Raise the Bar Hancock County, Jobs and Family Services, Goodwill Industries, and many more work tirelessly to support workforce training efforts. The Center's workforce training coordinator will be an extension of the great work that is completed every day. Our vision is to be a multiplier to our partners by elevating awareness of programs, assisting in applications, establishing a concierge service through training completion, and identifying new training programs needed in the region. Interviews for the position will be completed in February and we look forward to onboarding the new workforce training coordinator this spring.



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Site Visits & Meetings

Ohio Manufacturers' Association

In early January, Mayle met with the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) President, Ryan Augsburger and JobsOhio Chief of Staff, Phil Greenberg to discuss future opportunities for collaboration. As a result, Bowling Green State University has become a member of the OMA.



The OMA's mission is to protect and grow Ohio manufacturing through providing public policy advocacy and assistance with services including safety and workers' compensation, workforce development, information, and much more. The Center is excited to work with the OMA to continue to strengthen the Northwest Ohio manufacturing industry.

Defiance County Economic Development



Mayle visited the Defiance County Economic Development office to record an episode of their "Working It" podcast with their Executive Director, Erika Willitzer. Find their episode soon at defiancecountyed.com/podcast, where Mayle details what the Center can do for area manufacturers!



OGO Compost Toilet

Mayle, and Center Program Manager, Ford Weber, met with OGO Compost Toilet Founder and COO, Kevin Bartchlett, to continue conversations about how the Center can assist their business with research, development, and technology.



The group toured the Bowling Green State University Engineering and Robotics Labs to explore the available technology and examine opportunities to work together.

OGO was particularly interested in utilizing the following equipment: plastic injection mold, non-destructive testing x-ray and additive manufacturing. To learn more about OGO, visit ogotoilet.com.



Center for Automotive Research (CAR)

Center staff attended a webinar hosted by CAR highlighting the future workforce skills in the automotive and electrification industry.

Industry experts detailed the current domestic battery industry, including the lithium battery supply chain, and examined workforce training needs. They also explored emerging trends for automotive jobs, with a focus on artificial intelligence and sustainability and shared their economic projections for 2024.



Findlay-Hancock County Chamber of Commerce



Mayle attended multiple events hosted by the Findlay-Hancock County Chamber of Commerce in January.

Their monthly Fresh Brewed Business meeting featured Findlay-Hancock Economic Development Director, Dan Sheaffer. Dan presented on the past and current economic environment, as well as forecasted for a successful 2024 in Hancock County.



The Chamber also hosted an event titled, "Financing Resources for Small Business," with Ohio Director of Development, Lydia Mihalik, as the keynote speaker. In addition, speakers from the University of Findlay, Toledo Port Authority, Small Business Development Center (Rhodes State), Toledo Economic and Community Development Office, and Hancock Regional Planning Commission shared their insights on public and private financing opportunities for small business.

Regional Growth Partnership/JobsOhio Regional Meeting

Center Staff attended the virtual Regional Growth Partnership (RGP) and JobsOhio Regional Meeting. Chase Eikenbary, RGP Vice President of Project Management, provided a project recap of 2023 and projections for 2024. Additionally, she provided an overview of the Business Retention and Expansion (BR & E) program. In 2023, the majority of the BR & E visits were with manufacturing and logistics companies.

Speakers from the Ohio Grants Alliance and Ohio Rural Business Growth Program also shared information on their programs and how they can provide support for the region.



Center Projects

Economic Development Administration Planning Grant

The Center is working with the Northwest Ohio Innovation Consortium (NOIC), the Center for Regional Development (CRD) and regional workforce partners to develop an application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The application will request funding for a planning grant to coordinate a regional workforce plan. The plan could include goals related to apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships and career assessment. Northwest Ohio has numerous successful workforce programs that the region can model and build off of. If the grant is awarded, the region will benefit from collaboration on identifying needs and delivering solutions for workforce training. The CRD is an EDA University Center and a member of the State of Ohio Rural University Program. They are committed to sharing their economic and community development expertise and resources to help create sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economy in our region.



College Technology Internship Program

The College Technology Internship Program, formerly the Diversity & Inclusion Technology Internship Program, is a great opportunity for students and companies! Paid internships give college students great experience in business and entrepreneurship, while companies gain access to young, diverse talent to help them compete and grow.

The Ohio Department of Development will reimburse two-thirds of an intern's wages up to \$7,500. Technology companies or simply a company with a technological need are eligible to apply.



Companies do need to provide a meaningful internship experience, must have non-residential work space, and must hire interns as employees (W-2). They can hire as many as 10 interns for different positions. The minimum wage for interns is \$15 per hour but can exceed that amount.

For full details, visit:
development.ohio.gov/business/third-frontier-and-technology

Super RAPIDS Grant Recipients

The Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation recently announced recipients of the Super RAPIDS grants totaling \$40 million. The Center's partner universities each received grants to support equipment for advanced manufacturing.

The new equipment will support training in artificial intelligence and advanced systems, the integration of robotics into logistics and system engineering curriculum, and developing hybrid manufacturing and characterization equipment to enrich existing advanced manufacturing training modules. RAPIDS grants are used to purchase equipment for classrooms specific to regional workforce needs. The Center is focused on aligning regional industry needs with higher education in partnership with economic development professionals.

For additional information, visit:
workforce.ohio.gov/news/121523



Regional Automotive Study

The Center is working with the Regional Growth Partnership (RGP) and the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) to conduct a regional automotive supply chain study in Northwest Ohio. The scope of work is currently in design. The goal is to work with economic development directors to identify automotive companies in each county to include in the study. CAR will conduct an analysis of the suppliers to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Changes in state and federal policy, electrification, implementation of industry 4.0, workforce training and other factors are all leading to generational changes within the auto supply chain. The analysis will provide actionable data for economic development directors to utilize in their efforts to retain regional manufacturers and strategically attract companies. It may also identify gaps within Northwest Ohio in the automotive supply chain and provide opportunities for companies to diversify workforce training and curriculum development and other key findings. The Center looks forward to finalizing details of the study and partnering with stakeholders to support our thriving automotive supply chain.

Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing Educator Program

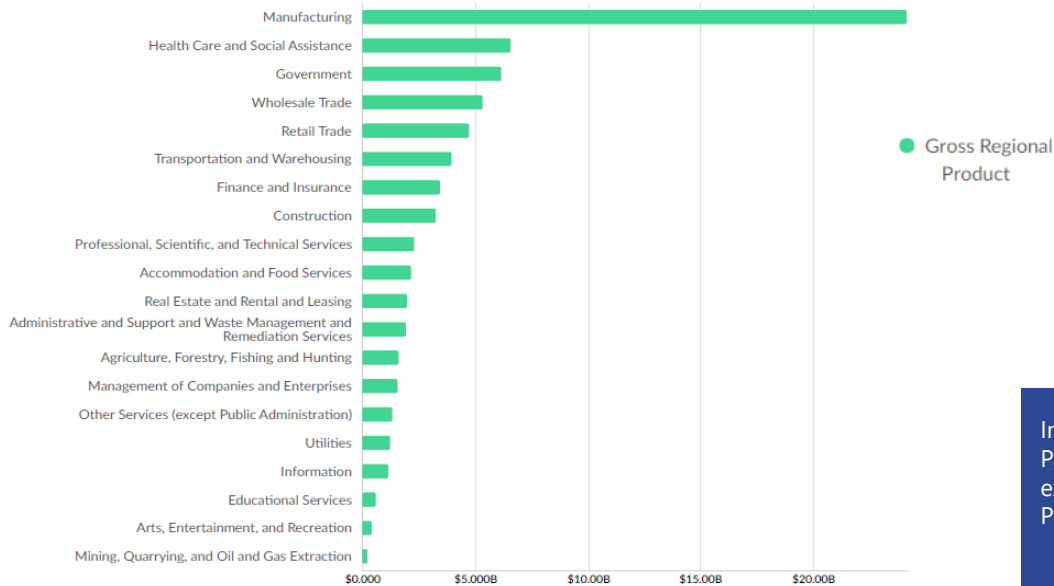


The Bowling Green State University (BGSU) College of Technology, Architecture and Applied Engineering received a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Research Experience for Teachers (RET) program, aimed to increase interest in STEM-related fields with a focus on robotics and advanced manufacturing.

The funding will pay twelve selected high school or community college educators who currently teach STEM subjects for participating in a six-week summer 2024 program and for implementation of developed learning modules during the following academic year. The deadline to apply is March 1, 2024.

For full details and to fill out an application visit:
<https://buff.ly/495Spr8>

Top Industry Gross Regional Product (GRP)



In the 17 Counties of the Regional Growth Partnership territory, manufacturing far exceeds other industries in Gross Regional Product.

Source: Lightcast

	Population (2023)	Labor Force (Sep 2023)	Jobs (2022)	Cost of Living	GRP	Imports	Exports
Region	1,208,620	592,864	587,983	93.7	\$80.53B	\$95.76B	\$111.91B
State	11,979,529	5,789,661	5,938,254	92.4	\$800.30B	\$633.98B	\$789.32B

Center Administrative

Advisory Committee Meeting

The Center hosted our first Advisory Committee meeting on January 30 at Bowling Green State University. At this meeting committee members discussed the manufacturing environment in Northwest Ohio, provided their industry insights, and brainstormed ways to identify and improve upon challenges faced in industry. We are excited to utilize our committee members expertise to expand upon the Center's role in Northwest Ohio! A brief reception was held after the meeting to connect industry professionals to faculty and staff from Bowling Green State University, Owens Community College, and the University of Findlay.



The Center to Advance Manufacturing Advisory Committee

Back Row: Chuck Bills (Ohio Logistics); Rick Morton (First Solar), Matt Yarder (Yarder Manufacturing) Tim Mayle (CTAM), Josh Cmar (Valgroup), Rodney Rogers (Bowling Green State University), Ford Weber (CTAM)
Front Row: Dione Somerville (Owens Community College), Katherine Fell (University of Findlay), Shayna Duke (Principle Business Enterprises), Annette Heslep (Grob Systems, Inc), Matt Jank (Roki America)



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Contact Us Today!

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