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Reflections on the NYSMIAP Pilot

As we reflect on the first year of the New York State Manufacturers Intermediary Apprenticeship Program (NYSMIAP) we count the way we have come together as a community of businesses focused on the same goal as one of our biggest successes.

When I came on board at MACNY in September, I was immediately impressed by the way that our member companies had come together to address the skilled worker shortage in Central New York. The problem was not unique to a single business, but to nearly all the small and medium manufacturers in our geographic area.

The committee that was formed to identify the most sought after skilled trade areas consisted of plant engineers, factory and operations managers, and workers from the specific trades. This was the humble, but intentional beginning, of what MACNY believes can be the answer to our skilled worker shortage across the country – collaboration, shared goals, focused team building, and registered apprenticeship training that is easy to establish and even easier to maintain by small and medium manufacturers.

During 2016, we created a framework of partnerships with businesses, community colleges, training partners, and agencies that support workforce development– all to become a sole sponsor for New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) registered apprenticeship in CNY– a first of its kind by a manufacturers association in New York State. We have successfully written training contracts with 15 companies and have over 30 prospective apprentices in the pipeline. ToolingU, a training and curriculum development partner, has adapted five NYSDOL training outlines to reflect competency skills for required work processes and a checklist for training. This reduces the enormous amount of administrative energy normally

required to build an on-the-job training plan. ToolingU and our community college partners have also developed pathways to terminal degrees, should an apprentice want to attain these additional credentials.

The visibility of the apprenticeship program positioned MACNY to be partnered on federal grants that address general workforce issues as well as apprenticeship specifically. Our position as an intermediary is unique and our national partners like Jobs For The Future (JFF) and The Americas Promise grant want to establish similar programs. Sharing information and best practices is a cornerstone of our success thus far and will help to grow future successes with the apprenticeship program.

Our goal for the coming year is to replicate and share our learning and success to other areas of the state. We plan to do this with the continued support of the Independent Democratic Conference, and a NYSMIAP appropriation for year two. It is not MACNY's plan to manage apprenticeship programs statewide, but instead to partner with our NYS Manufacturers Alliance Partners to replicate the framework, to identify additional partners, and to assist in creating a model for successful apprenticeship programs in their regions. With the work that has been done in CNY there is a foundation of five trades to build on; Toolmaker, CNC Machinist, Maintenance Mechanic, Electronics Technician, and Welder. Each geographic area in the state has their own specific skilled trade shortages that need to be addressed. Additional trade outlines can be developed regionally based on their specific industry needs and then shared throughout the state. Workforce agencies and community colleges can also tap the works of their partners in CNY to build on successes.

The skilled Manufacturing workforce shortage remains a hallmark issue wherever you live in New York State. The businesses are different, the sizes of the businesses are different, and the owners come from all walks of life. The stories of jobs that continue to go unfilled and the “silver tsunami” of an aging workforce on its way to retirement leading to the forever loss of skilled experience is the same. MACNY's Apprenticeship Program work is a great beginning to proactively address this pressing issue.

To get involved and find out how your company can join with us to specifically address the skilled manufacturing worker shortage, please email me at mponge@macny.org.