



Oral Testimony Submitted to:

**Joint Legislative Budget Committee Workforce
Development**

Submitted By:

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February 4, 2019

My name is Martha Ponge, and I serve as Director of Apprenticeship for the Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY), an organization representing over 330 employers in 26 counties. I also represent the Manufacturers Alliance of New York that supports an additional 1,500 manufacturers across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on the continued success of the Manufacturers Intermediary Apprenticeship Program, known as MIAP.

MACNY and the Alliance are committed to promoting innovative, effective career pathways to grow the number of qualified applicants in advanced manufacturing throughout our region and statewide. We are engaged in creating registered apprenticeship training programs to increase the number of mid-skill level technician workers in advanced manufacturing. We are able to do this critical work because of the Legislative Line Item for MIAP that you have provided over the past three years. We are requesting to have our funding restored as it was eliminated in the 2019-20 Executive Budget.

MIAP is designed to address the single biggest challenge facing New York manufacturing companies - workforce. The current reality is, that companies face the retirement of the baby boomer generation and are poised to lose between 25% and 40% of their workforce in the next 5-7 years. This shortage of skilled workers could not only cripple our existing manufacturers but make New York less attractive to new businesses determining whether to locate here. We need to intentionally and effectively disrupt this trend by finding ways to get more young people, job changers, women, minorities, the disabled, and our Veterans into the manufacturing workforce through registered apprenticeship training opportunities.

Apprenticeship programs have proven to be most successful when designed by employers based upon their own needs. MIAP is targeted at raising the skill levels of incumbent manufacturing workers and creating distinctive career pathways, while filling a crucial need within the industry. Our Central New York program currently has more than 30 companies participating in establishing apprenticeships. We have 140 apprentices at 20 different companies, and we project at least 50 new apprentices this year. In addition, our Alliance partners in Rochester have over 40 apprentices, and The Council of Industry has enrolled 26 apprentices at 15 companies. To date, our programs maintain a ninety eight percent retention rate. The successful implementation of the apprenticeship program has already created a statewide need to begin to

fill the pipeline earlier with pre-apprentices; equipped with stackable credentials and prepared to go directly from high school into careers in manufacturing

Modern apprenticeship has two basic elements - On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction. In the pilot program, we identified the five traditional occupational groups of CNC Machinist, Electronics Technician, Maintenance Mechanic, Toolmaker and Welder as high demand areas to begin training. The Alliance Partners have since added over 15 additional trades. We also helped to establish 3 completely new trade outlines in advanced manufacturing and worked with partnering agencies to create 7 new IT trades to support our manufacturers. Our work to develop new trade outlines continues in 2019 with the addition of apprenticeships in the Dairy Industry through a partnership with Cornell University Cooperative Extension. We are also currently establishing apprenticeships for people with disabilities through a Partnership with the NY Alliance. We have begun to engage with our transitioning veterans, and plan to run manufacturing bootcamps that lead directly into apprenticeship and full-time employment with manufacturers across the state.

Last year, the MIAP program was funded at \$750,000 for Central New York, the Hudson Valley, Rochester, the Capital District, and the Southern Tier of Buffalo. As a result of the positive results from MIAP, MACNY is poised to continue our current efforts, and we would like to expand the program into New York City and Long Island Regions. These two new regions, alone, are home to more than 3,500 manufacturing companies. We have already been approached by several manufacturers in these two regions that are asking to participate in MIAP. But in order to sustain, and ultimately expand MIAP across New York State, we respectfully request a total of \$1,250,000 (*1.25 million*) in funding to accomplish this important goal. We are making great strides but have much more work to do. With your help, and with the proper long-term funding, we can help expand this program and train increasingly more hardworking men and women across the State of New York.

The State Department of Labor continues to be very supportive of our approach, and we have been working with them to address implementation. Our manufacturers know us and trust us, and we have the ability to bring hundreds of additional small and medium sized companies to the table. We know that our past successes can be replicated throughout the State to continue to revitalize the state's workforce.

Thank you for your consideration of restoring funding to the MIAP program.

Thank you. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Martha Ponge
On behalf of Randy Wolken, President and CEO, MACNY and the Manufacturers Alliance