

Erie Community College

SUNY

ECC News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECC, manufacturing companies form alliance to benefit students, employers

Erie Community College has formed an alliance with manufacturing companies in Western New York in order to prepare students for employment in the manufacturing industry and also to provide services to businesses in the form of hands-on training and technical assistance.

ECC officials and representatives of several area companies met Thursday, Dec. 9 at ECC's South Campus, 4041 Southwestern Blvd., Orchard Park, to discuss the mission of the alliance, as well as to identify goals that will meet the needs of both students and the community.

The manufacturing alliance was created as a result of ECC's Machine Tools Pathway, a program that was first offered at the College this fall. The Machine Tools Pathway is an outgrowth of the College's collaboration with the Metalworking Institute of Western New York, which closed in 2003 after 26 years. The Institute donated its assets totaling more than \$500,000 to ECC's Industrial Technology Department through an endowment fund.

ECC has also invested \$250,000 in renovating classrooms, labs and equipment to create a state-of-the-art lab at its North Campus, located at 6205 Main St., Williamsville to serve students in the Industrial Technology program.

The College recognized that the success of its Machine Tools depended on the local manufacturing and machining community, Richard Washousky, ECC associate vice president for academic affairs, said.

ECC's goal is to prepare students and job seekers to meet the needs of the region's manufacturing industry.

The Machine Tools Pathway is part of ECC's Industrial Technology program. The Industrial Technology program provides academic coursework, hands-on skills and advanced manufacturing processes required by businesses today. Graduates can enter or advance in such fields as mold making, model making, die making, machine repair and computer numerical control machining.

It provides a broad based skills set on which students can build solid careers as well as a strategy for lifelong learning and career modification.

By developing this industry-driven alliance, ECC and area companies will take the lead in attracting young adults into the manufacturing field and increase awareness of the tremendous number of employment opportunities available in the manufacturing sector. Members will also work to change the misconceptions that surround the manufacturing industry.

Instructors from ECC, along with adjunct professors from the College's manufacturing partnerships, will train manufacturing personnel to use the latest in manufacturing machinery.

The program offers additional benefits to area industry in that it provides education and training aimed at upgrading the skills of existing employees.

Data from the New York State Department of Labor indicates that there is, and will continue to be, a great demand for skilled machinists. A large majority of young people are pursuing white collar jobs and companies are having difficulty finding highly skilled machinists, especially those with experience programming computer numerical control machines.

Western New York is losing jobs at an alarming rate as companies are shipping out high tech workers.

"Our region needs these jobs and if we all work together, we can turn the tide," Washousky said.

"First, we will work on immediate needs and fill open jobs, but second, ECC could be a catalyst to attract and retain businesses," Paul Pietraszewski, industrial technology department head, ECC, said.

ECC's Machine Tools Pathway will align the needs of employers with the supply of available skilled workers. The College's Workforce Development Department can even customize curriculum and training according to specific needs.

"Look at your company – where you are, where you want to go: we can help you," Carrie Kahn, ECC executive dean of workforce development, said.

"Economic development, employment and education; you can't have one without the other," Mark Hoerber, assistant academic dean for technology at ECC said. "We have a common goal, we care about people and we care about our community. Industrial Technology is the means to accomplish our goals." ECC is excited about the dynamic changes that are occurring in industry today and aims to stay at the forefront of new developments in order to provide the latest innovations in technology for businesses in Western New York.

For more information, contact Richard Washousky at (716) 851-1765.

Manufacturing Alliance membership list

Bob Baker – Johnson Precision, Inc.

Tim Baker – Medsource

Lee Bakus – Medsource

Rick Betschen – JRB Machines

Vita Casoni – SMG

James Finamore – Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

John Goller – Arrow Grinding, Inc.

Robert Gralke – North American Carbide

Margurite Grego – Empire State Development

Mike Keller – Keller Technology Corp.

Jack Kopcznski – Ascension Industries

Dick Leed – Leed Steel, Inc.

Joe Liberti – Gaymar

Ron McCarthy – Manth Manufacturing, Inc.

Kathy Mecca – Taylor Metal Works

Larry Menkowski – Nowtech, Inc.

Tom Novelli – Elrae Industries, Inc.

Paul Nowicki – Nowtech, Inc.

Kathleen O'Brien – Employment and Training Center

Tom Owczarzak, Palma Tool and Die
Ray Pratt – North American Carbide
Jeff Rathmann – Willard Machine
Trish Rollisan – McGard
Hank Rydzik – Moog, Inc.
Joann Simon – McGard
Gary Simon – Erie County Office of Economic Development
Tim Smith – Advanced Tech
Mark Sporysz – Moldcraft, Inc.
Bill Tate – Palma Tool and Die
Jeff Tucker – WNY Pattern and Tool, Inc.
Don Zgoda – McGard
Lee Dombrowski – Moog

Charlie Corluccio – ECC
Paul Goodrich – ECC
Mark Hoeber – ECC
Paul Pietraszewski – ECC
Bob Slawinowski – ECC
Richard Washousky – ECC
Dr. Dariush Zadeh – ECC
Joanne Colmerauer – ECC
John Slisz – ECC
Carrie Kahn – ECC
William Mariani – ECC
Ann Croft – Buffalo Public Schools
Larry Mansell – Buffalo Public Schools
Katherine Heinle – Buffalo Public Schools.