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# National Fund NEWS

The logo for National Fund for Workforce Solutions, featuring a stylized fan icon to the left of the text "National Fund for Workforce Solutions".

May 2017

## Expanding Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are an underutilized solution for employers and employees. Businesses report significant ROI from [higher retention, employee engagement and performance](#) while apprentices gain work experience and a valuable credential. For example, Cincinnati-based manufacturer Richards Industries [recorded a 875% ROI](#) on its apprenticeship program.

The National Fund is using its expertise and network of local partners to grow apprenticeships in new industries and communities.

## The JPB Foundation Grants \$800,000 to Scale Apprenticeships

With support from the [JPB Foundation](#), the National Fund is expanding apprenticeships to non-traditional



industries like healthcare, financial services, information technology and hospitality, and working to reach new candidates such as disadvantaged youth and under-employed workers. To achieve this goal, the National Fund will provide technical assistance to its [regional funder collaboratives](#), support their individual efforts to expand apprenticeships, evaluate new efforts, and replicate successful models within the network.

**Hiring National Apprenticeship Director. Please Share!**

The National Fund is hiring an [Apprenticeship Director](#) to lead this exciting effort. Ideal candidates should have experience in implementing workforce development programs and a deep knowledge of the apprenticeship model. Please share this [job listing](#) and encourage qualified candidates to apply.

## Apprenticeship Forward Conference

National Fund CEO Fred Dedrick moderated a panel of industry representatives from North America's Building Trades Unions, Precor, Kroger and Hartford Insurance at the [Apprenticeship Forward](#) conference. The panel explored how apprenticeships drive each



companies' talent acquisition strategy, and how the apprenticeship model is applied across industries in construction, manufacturing and financial services. The conference brought together businesses utilizing apprenticeships, state leaders expanding the model in their communities, education and training providers preparing students, and apprentices using the program to launch successful careers.

## News Clip: [“How Manufacturers Build Skills Through Apprenticeship, Industry Partnerships”](#)

Fred Dedrick published an article in [Chief Learning Officer](#) on how [Atlantic Mold and Machining Corp](#) is using apprenticeships to train new workers. Based in Sarasota, FL, this custom plastic injection manufacturer has struggled to find skilled workers. In response, it created a 10,400 hour apprenticeship program for its employees to develop key skills while on the job. [CareerEdge](#), the region's funder collaborative, is working with Atlantic Mold and other manufacturers to expand this successful model throughout the region.

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## New Report: [Universal Woods and a Business Logic of Trust](#)

The business model of Universal Woods centers on investing in and empowering its employees. The Louisville-based materials manufacturer uses a range of employee engagement and job quality practices including educational scholarships, cross-training opportunities, quarterly profit-sharing, and an innovative production approach that eliminates supervisors on the production floor in lieu of 'team-managed teams.' Because of its extensive workforce investments, Universal Woods has experienced 20% growth for the past five years and a customer retention rate of 95%. The National Fund's [Employer Profiles of Job Quality](#) analyze successful HR and training practices like Universal Woods' 'team-managed teams' that work for employers and employees.

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## President's Corner: Is a Tight Labor Market Causing You to Innovate?

Everyone we hear from, everywhere we go and everything we read point to an extraordinarily tight labor market. Many employers are responding with creative recruitment strategies focused on bringing in individuals with few credentials, recruiting underemployed workers ready to try a new industry, or giving the formerly incarcerated a second chance. Tell us your story of how you, or an employer you know, are using innovative strategies to fill their talent supply chain.

Email me at [fdedrick@nationalfund.org](mailto:fdedrick@nationalfund.org).

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## Successes Across the Network

The National Fund's network of 33 partner communities are continually testing and scaling new efforts to help workers, companies and communities succeed. Our partners are strengthening their regions' workforce system, preparing workers for good jobs, and helping companies hire and retain talented employees. Recent success include:

- [Chicago Workforce Funders Alliance Receives \\$1 Million from Mr. and Mrs. Obama](#)
- Atlanta CareerRise Developing Industry Partnerships in GA Region 3
- [Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center Trains 1,000th Worker](#)
- [CareerEdge Releases Annual Impact Report](#)
- Greater Washington Works Grants \$250,000 to Support Training of Hundreds in Healthcare and IT
- [BACH Operates Maryland's First Environmental Care Supervisor Apprenticeship Program](#)
- [Workforce Alliance Hosts Round Table in Partnership with Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City](#)

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### [New Report: Healthcare Providers Must Train Their Employees](#)


The Urban Institute produced [Employer Roles in Building Pipelines for Middle-Skill Jobs in Health Care](#). The report documents successful efforts by healthcare providers to develop frontline workers and top initiatives such as [CareerSTAT](#).

### [Chancy Lennon in USA Today on Developing Healthcare Workforce](#)

Chauncey Lennon, [JPMorgan Chase's](#) head of workforce initiatives, [writes](#) on need for healthcare providers to develop their employees. The article cites [CareerSTAT](#) as a resource for organizations seeking to develop frontline employees.

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**Guide to Investing in Frontline Health Care Workers** CareerSTAT



**Executive Summary**

- Why Invest in Your Frontline Health Care Workforce?
- Employer Best Practices for Making Effective Investments
- A Framework for Integrating Workforce Investments with Business Impact
- Resources for Investing in Frontline Workers

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Frontline Workers Are Essential in Today's Changing Health Care Landscape**

*Few U.S. industries have experienced as much change recently as health care. Approximately 20 million new consumers have health insurance coverage due to the Affordable Care Act. Care is shifting from the hospital to the home, clinic, and other community sites. Financing arrangements are shifting from payment for volume to payment for value. And providers at every point along the health care continuum must meet higher standards of quality or face financial penalties.*


National Fund Workforce Solutions EMPLOYER PROFILES OF JOB QUALITY

**UNIVERSAL WOODS**  
THE BUSINESS LOGIC OF TRUST

By Steven L. Dawson, Advisor to the National Fund

The workforce strategy of Universal Woods starts here: "We trust the people we've hired," says Paul Neumann, CEO. From that premise flows all major workforce decisions:

- Eliminate the role of supervisor
- Share financial information
- Build team-managed teams
- Invest in everyone's education
- Encourage participation throughout the organization



**"And that logic of trust,"** emphasizes Neumann, "extends beyond our 200 employees to every person who has a stake in the success of Universal Woods: our customers, our suppliers, our shareholders, our banker."

The result of this organization-wide business logic is a company that over the past four years has grown 20 percent per year, doubled the size of its workforce, maintained 95 percent customer retention rate for 10 years, and is the leader in its two major markets. Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Universal Woods now has operations in Ohio, Australia and Belgium, serving over 200 customers in more than 80 countries.

"Our business strategy," says Neumann, "is to align the economic interests of all our stakeholders—and you can only do that if you share information transparently across all parties—and treat each with respect. If you do that consistently enough, long enough, then those you work with every day will reward you in turn with their trust. And a trusting relationship is incredibly efficient and productive—you're not slowed down by lawyers, lengthy negotiations, layers of supervision, or assignment of blame."

**UNIVERSAL WOODS SHEEP FLOOR**

Universal Woods manufactures hard-surface panels for the photo, art and personalized/customized gift markets, as well as high-durability mezzanine flooring for the material-handling industry. Product brands include Unisub® and ChromaLux® for the sublimation panels, and ResinDek® for the industrial flooring.

For the Unisub and ChromaLux lines, Universal Woods applies an ultrathin, "sublimatable" polymer coating to a variety of hard-surface substrates. Unlike traditional printing, which applies ink to the surface of an object, sublimation uses heat and pressure to bond the image directly into the coating at the molecular level. After applying the sublimatable coating, Universal Woods cuts the panel to the desired shape—anything from a name tag to a wall panel—and the customer then applies the desired graphic. The final "sublimated" graphic is remarkably vibrant yet exceptionally durable.

For the ResinDek line, flooring panels are custom-manufactured for Universal Woods' customers. After applying specialized coatings, the resulting industrial flooring durably withstands heavy equipment, rolling carts and pallet jack loads.

UNIVERSAL WOODS • THE BUSINESS LOGIC OF TRUST | 1

## CareerSTAT Guide to Investing in Frontline Healthcare Workers

Read

## Universal Woods and a Business Logic of Trust

Read



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