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CREATE JOBS

NEW INVESTMENTS IN THE NATIONAL FUND FOR WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS WILL HELP STRENGTHEN MANUFACTURING WITH ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS IN FIVE COMMUNITIES

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions will help small and mid-sized manufacturers address their need for skilled workers through a new \$1.5 million grant from the Boeing Company. The three-year investment will help suppliers develop a more robust pipeline of employees, prioritize diversity and ultimately help small and midmarket manufacturers compete through generating a more comprehensive and adept workforce.

“Technological advances across manufacturing have catapulted the need for more on-the-job training in manufacturing. With more than 380,000 unfilled jobs, small and mid-sized manufacturers rarely have the opportunity and know-how to embark on technical training that can elevate their workforce and draw new workers to the field,” says Fred Dedrick, CEO and president of the National Fund. “This grant allows us to focus on upskilling workers, attracting a new, diverse workforce and most importantly create good jobs for workers. It will also lead to higher productivity and competitiveness for businesses.”

The grant will build off a previous Boeing investment (2012-

2014), which allowed the National Fund to identify best practices of on-the-job training specifically creating career advancement opportunities for entry-level employees and helping make stronger partnerships between employers and the workforce system. The National Fund will give five communities (three in year one and two more in year two) the resources to train, upskill and place at least 200 job seekers or incumbent workers in advanced manufacturing careers. The project will focus on helping diverse candidates enter manufacturing positions and learn on the job through structured training, while also helping companies establish or grow internal training and advancement programs for entry-level staff.

“Communities thrive when business hire locally and provide quality jobs with meaningful employment. We need to ensure that all manufacturers – regardless of their size – can remain competitive and grow their workforce to meet current and future demands,” says Sam Whiting, director of Boeing Global Engagement. “In working with the National Fund, we leverage a partner that has extensive experience in connecting best practices in workforce development with employer needs. With this grant, we are able to provide people with the skilled jobs of today, while also developing systems across our supplier base to address workforce challenges in the long-term.”

The National Fund will seek proposals from its more than 30 partner communities and announce the selected communities in early 2018. **mt**

