

**MVMC | MAHONING VALLEY
MANUFACTURERS COALITION**
Working together to create a 21st Century skilled workforce.

23 October 2013

The Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition is pleased to submit this letter of support for Mahoning County Career & Technical Center's Straight A application titled "Manufacturing/ Shale Lab."

Manufacturing provides about 40,000 jobs—about 11% of jobs—in the region, which consists of Trumbull, Mahoning and Columbiana Counties in Ohio and Lawrence and Mercer Counties in Pennsylvania (part of the metropolitan statistical area). Manufacturing brings in \$2.66 Billion in earnings to the region. The average experienced manufacturing employee makes \$69,454 a year compared to \$34,725, the average pay in the region for non-manufacturing employees.

Manufacturers face current and future needs for additional skilled workers. There are a variety of contributing factors, including:

- **Growth** – While manufacturing showed a decline during the recent recession, the industry was growing in the Oh-Penn Interstate Region.
- **Oil and Gas Activity** – Manufacturing investment is already flowing to the region related to the oil and gas industry as the cost of transporting natural gas from shale deposits is relatively low. In addition to adding more jobs in manufacturing, the oil and gas industry is beginning to compete for the same talent pool for their drilling sites and processing operations, which increases the demand for skilled workers.
- **Older Workers** – Many Baby Boomers are retiring or about to retire. Many of them are in the most skilled positions.
- **Weak Talent Pipeline** - Not enough people (especially young people) are choosing to enter into manufacturing careers due to misperceptions about the industry

This presents significant opportunities for individuals to enter into and move along manufacturing career pathways in the Mahoning Valley, and MCCTC's Straight A Fund project will contribute resources necessary to prepare students with the specific skills identified as needed by our manufacturing members.

The Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition (MVMC) was formed in September 2011 by a group of small- and medium-sized, locally-owned manufacturers in Trumbull, Mahoning and Columbiana Counties in Ohio solely for the purpose of "creating educational pathways to meet the needs of member companies for a skilled workforce." The group is a grassroots effort led by industry with representation from all public institutions of higher education, including Mahoning County Career &

Technical Center and its partners in this proposal: Eastern Gateway Community College, Youngstown State University and the Mahoning County Educational Service Center.

The MVMC has fostered a new, collaborative way of thinking where manufacturers convene, educate, charge and mobilize the region's key stakeholders to initiate actions that will stabilize our economy and provide opportunities for individuals and families in the Youngstown area to earn livable wages and advance up a career pathway in manufacturing. Further, the Coalition created a demand-driven mechanism for ongoing dialogue among industry, education and the public workforce system to ensure manufacturing remains an important part of the regional economy.

MCCTC has been a good partner from early on, responding to the needs identified and creating responsive solutions. This Straight A Fund application is yet another example of their dedication and partnership, and we look forward to working with them and the other partners to implement the Manufacturing/Shale Lab project.

The idea of a modern manufacturing laboratory that would cross multiple career paths to further develop and enhance skills in the manufacturing and shale arena is one that has been suggested and embraced by our manufacturers. In addition, the career center has committed to allow associate schools the opportunity to reserve the lab and the teacher to create learning opportunities for as many classes as possible in the associate schools. We support these collaborative efforts to create as many students as possible to gain hands-on experiences in high-level manufacturing and oil/gas/shale related activities.

We also support the concept that this laboratory can be used for teacher professional development in manufacturing and shale careers. This will allow teachers to bring real-world experiences and relevance into their lessons, which is a need that has been identified as a priority through our strategic planning process.

We are pleased to support this application. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at jborza@tpma-inc.com or 330.853.7906.

Sincerely,



Jessica A. Borza
Executive Director