

P O L K C O U N T Y B U S I N E S S - B A S E D T R A I N I N G

Employed Worker Upgrade and Retention
New Hires

Customized

Quick Response
General Equivalency Diploma (GED)



POLK COUNTY

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING PARTNERSHIP



Polk Works was recently awarded one of three statewide Business Employment Solutions and Training (BEST) grants by the State of Florida. This grant supports the further development and full implementation of the Polk County Manufacturing and Pre-Engineering Academy (MPE). The MPE partners the Polk County School Board, Polk Community College, manufacturing, and community/faith-based organizations in a collaborative manner to address critical shortages of high-skilled workers for advanced manufacturing.

Through existing relationships with educational providers, businesses, and community partners, Polk Works is addressing critical shortage areas for high-skilled manufacturers and building sustainable career ladders for the industry from first jobs to better jobs and high-skill jobs. The project is addressing universal issues such as industry image and general information about the opportunities and advantages related to manufacturing employment.

At-risk youth will be targeted from specific schools and programs in the county, including the extensive Polk Works Out-of-School Youth project, for exposure to occupations in the manufacturing industry, as well as specific training opportunities that will prepare them for entry level employment leading to a high-skill career path.

MPE has as one of its primary goals the advancement of lower-skilled workers, particularly those transitioning from welfare or who would otherwise qualify for welfare, to high skill jobs that pay a self-sufficient wage through the application of training and support services. Those employed within the manufacturing industry, as well as other area employers, are targeted for participation.

Manufacturing is a targeted, high-value industry for Polk County as defined by the Central Florida Economic Development Council. Development of the Advanced Manufacturing and Pre-Engineering Academy, with the capacity to train high tech workers in the areas of production, process development, quality assurance, health/safety and environmental assurance, maintenance/installation and repair, and logistics and inventory control will position Polk County for expansion and attraction of high tech manufacturing jobs in the years to come. Data and research available as a result of US Department of Labor demonstration grants for high tech manufacturing, as well as local business input gained through focus groups with local manufacturers, are ensuring the development and operation of a demand-driven system for the betterment of our community.



TRAINING DOLLARS AVAILABLE!

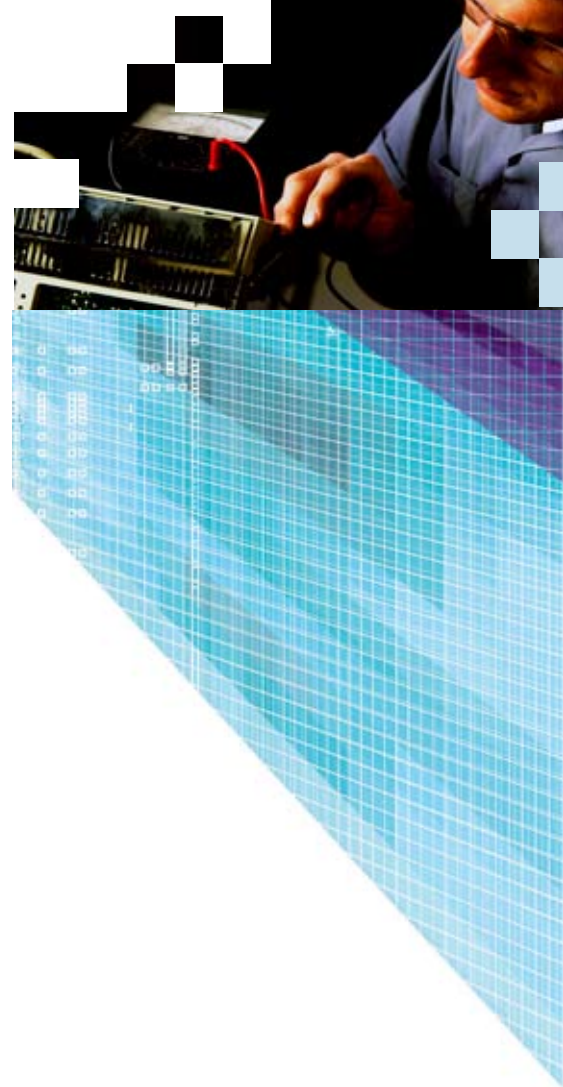
Training dollars are available through Polk Works for:

- Employed Worker Upgrade and Retention Training
- New Hire Training for individuals who need training to meet minimum job requirements
- Customized Training in occupations needed by an employer or group of employers
- General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Training



Applications are available online at www.polkworks.org!

POLK WORKS AND POLK COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEAM UP TO PROVIDE HIGH SKILL/HIGH WAGE TRAINING



Under the Business Employment Solutions and Training (BEST) grant, Polk Works has partnered with Polk Community College to develop and deliver training programs designed to train incumbent workers at Polk County Manufacturing facilities. The training covers many high-tech applications including, Programmable Logic Controls, CNC processes and Computer Assisted Design (CAD). Training in management skills such as problem-solving and decision-making, statistical process control and leadership are offered. Mechanical and Electrical Maintenance as well as Welding and Pipefitting skill training will be provided to incumbent maintenance workers. Several cable and wiring harness manufacturers are in need of new “lead free” soldering techniques to meet Federal standards. These techniques will be taught by contracted instructors from NASA.

Twenty-nine manufacturers were interviewed about the program and their training needs and twenty employers have filed applications seeking to have nearly 1,600 employees trained. Approved Best Grant applications will cover training to more than 600 incumbent workers which must be completed by June 30, 2006 under the grant. Since the program was oversubscribed by 1,000 applicants, Polk Community College has applied to Workforce Florida, Inc., the state’s oversight organization for workforce matters, for additional training funds through a separate program called Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). Once awarded, it will allow Polk Community College to continue training for Polk manufacturers through January 2007.

The BEST Grant also provided training for another 192 entry level employees and new hire applicants. To accomplish this, Polk Works partnered with Polk County School Board and various training providers such as Henkels and McCoy, Inc. and Arbor E&T, Inc. who are positioned to train needy youth and low income providers.

Polk Manufacturers who partner with and apply for BEST Grant assistance have formed a Polk Manufacturing Council in an effort to sustain this initiative.



QUICK RESPONSE TRAINING

The Quick Response Training Program (QRT) provides grant funding for customized training for new or expanding businesses. Companies are reimbursed for training of new hires or for retraining existing employees on newly implemented systems. An area college, university, or technical center must serve as fiscal agent for each grant. PCC Corporate College is currently fiscal agent for five awards totaling \$534,700, with two additional grant prospects in the works. Corporate College assists the company in all phases of the grant process, including application, reporting, and funds disbursement. These grants span a wide variety of companies, from one who provides very high tech systems for the Defense Department to a manufacturer of doggie beds.

Lockheed Martin Corporation Financial Services (i.e. travel expense reporting, payroll, accounts payable) - Relocated the majority of work from its Clarksburg, MD office to Lakeland at an estimated non-recurring expense of \$6M, resulting in 100 new hires.

Technology Research Consultants - High technology corporation, specializing in Department of Defense and electronics manufacturing contracts. With 58 existing employees and 67 new hires, high-tech positions offer wages that far exceed the Polk County average wage.

Rotanis Pet Products - Founded in 1938, Rotanis manufactures pet products, such as dog and cat bedding, distributed nationwide and in Canada. They have relocated from New York to Lake Wales, bringing 59 new jobs to the area.

Cellynne Holdings - A paper converter company, established in Miami in 1988, moved its national headquarters to Haines City in 2002. Cellynne converts huge rolls of paper into tissue and paper towels and has recently added a 75,000 sq. foot warehouse to its existing 100,000 sq. foot operation in Haines City. They recycle 32,000 tons of paper annually and will add 95 new, full time employees to the existing staff of 135.

Southern Wine and Spirits of Florida - Founded in 1968 and headquartered in Miami, Southern Wine and Spirits has built a new distribution facility in Lakeland, which will employ 340 people once completed. The company anticipates that approximately 160 of these employees will be new hires. Existing Tampa employees are being offered the opportunity to work in Lakeland and some employees will relocate from Jacksonville. Southern Wine and Spirits is the single largest distributor of wine, spirits, beer and other non-alcoholic beverages in the United States.

about polk works

Polk Works is the regional workforce development board responsible for implementing local employment and training programs. Job seekers and employers are our customers, and we partner with many organizations to achieve our mission. Workforce development services are available through a variety of programs, but primarily through our Polk Works One-Stop Center system. This system was designed to provide easy access to diverse services, including job placement and training, temporary cash assistance, and special support services such as subsidized childcare and transportation. Other programs include Young Leaders, WorkForce 2020, and REACT.

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