

The Manufacturing Education Project

The Manufacturing Education Project is a partnership among the New Haven Manufacturer's Association, Workforce Alliance, Regional Growth Partnership, Greater New Haven and Greater Meriden Chambers of Commerce, and CBIA.

The Manufacturing Education Project is matching high school students with companies that will do plant tours, do in-school presentations and provide externships for teachers. The pilot for this program will include 6 High Schools. Success in the project requires the full cooperation of the schools' Career Services Offices, Guidance Counselors, and two or more teachers in the STEM skills areas. We will also seek a Champion in each school to shepherd the process.

Manufacturing employers face a catch-22: their skilled workforce is on average the oldest of any sector in the state, with many reaching retirement within 5 years; while, young people, their parents and many educators don't see jobs or a future in Connecticut manufacturing. The fact is that hiring sufficient replacement skilled workers will create a huge opportunity for today's high school students.

But where are the workers? The pipeline of skilled factory workers in CT is down to a trickle. Plenty of jobs are available in jobs that no one has been training for. Factory jobs are no longer just for high school grads. Today's high-tech factories are computer-driven, from product design to packaging. Many of the jobs at these manufacturers require at least a 2-year post-secondary degree.

This experience is open to students from every part of the high school, not just Career/Tech Ed. The more diversity of interests on the part of students the better the project's results will be. Our initial planning meeting with school officials is planned for December 6 at Assa Abloy/Sargent Manufacturing on Sargent Drive in New Haven. We will discuss the following:

- The purpose of our pilot
- What is expected of each school team
- Selection of a Champion at each school to be our key contact
- What the schools can expect from NHMA and the Jobs Initiative
- Discussion of current coursework that is relevant to manufacturing
- Distribution of posters, with instructions on setting up tours, including dates, expectations
- Distribution of Manufacturing video to be shown to students before the field trips

Manufacturers are opening their doors and their arms to the next generation of employees. We have the opportunity to offer students career paths.

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