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19 Graduate from Workforce Alliance Skill Up for Manufacturing Training Program

New program off to strong start; 89 percent receive job offers by graduation

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – March 15, 2019 – Workforce Alliance and Gateway Community College hosted a graduation ceremony celebrating the first 19 Skill Up for Manufacturing training program participants who will all enter Connecticut’s manufacturing workforce later this month. The graduation was attended by more than 50 Connecticut manufacturers and family members and included remarks from Democratic U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro.

“There are literally thousands of unfilled manufacturing jobs and not enough qualified workers in Connecticut to fill them,” said Bill Villano, President and CEO of Workforce Alliance, whose organization developed Skill Up with local employers using a successful model from Eastern CT. “This first class includes several people who never considered a career in manufacturing until now and this program is delivering a vital boost for the industry and state’s economy.”

[Skill Up for Manufacturing](#) is a free, five-week program launched in February with a classroom curriculum designed in partnership with Connecticut manufacturers. This and future cohorts are funded through state and federal monies designed to get unemployed and under-employed job seekers into in-demand jobs. Participants complete 250 hours of training and pre-apprenticeship hours, and receive hands-on experience to begin careers in the manufacturing industry.

Participating manufacturing companies include: Penn Globe, PTA Plastics, Wepco Plastics, Inc., Brooks & Whittle Packaging Solutions, Rowland Technologies, Ulbrich Steel, Allnex and the New Haven Manufacturers Association. 89 percent of the first Skill Up class has accepted job offers.

Democratic U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro said the training initiatives by Workforce Alliance of South Central CT show it is taking a leading role in dealing with the state’s need to rapidly train and place the next generation of manufacturing professionals.

“The training incentives by the Workforce Alliance and its Executive Director Bill Villano, showcase its leading role to rapidly train and place the next generation of manufacturing

professionals into good-paying jobs right here at home,” said Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro. “This Skill Up program reaffirms Connecticut’s commitment to the manufacturing industry. I could not be more proud to have fought and secured \$2.8 billion nationally for State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grants in 2019 – funds that made this program possible. So, congratulations to the first graduating class, and I look forward to celebrating classes year-after-year that will continue to make Connecticut’s manufacturing workforce second to none.

Students from Bristol, Branford, Durham, East Haven, Hamden, Meriden, Newtown, Shelton, Wallingford, West Haven, and Woodbury were among the first Skill Up for Manufacturing graduating class.

Following the short ceremony and remarks from Dr. Paul Broadie, President, Gateway and Housatonic Community Colleges, Skill Up for Manufacturing program graduates gathered to celebrate their achievement.

Skill Up is based on the successful model of the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, which has placed more than 1,000 people into good manufacturing jobs over the past three years and resulted in approximately \$37 million in direct annual wages and roughly \$38 million in indirect annual wages. Seventy-eight percent of those placed in Eastern CT had no prior manufacturing experience.

The first and second Skill Up sessions are fully funded and full. Rolling admission is open for the third training session scheduled May 6 - June 7 at Gateway Community College, New Haven. Classes meet Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. More information is available by visiting <http://www.workforcealliance.biz/skillup>. Support services are available to participants while in classroom training including travel reimbursement, daycare assistance and required books, tools and clothing. Additionally, there is a cash stipend awarded to participants for successful completion of training benchmarks.



Workforce Alliance and Gateway Community College hosted a graduation ceremony celebrating the first 19 Skill Up for Manufacturing training program participants who are primed to enter Connecticut's manufacturing workforce later this month. The graduation was attended by more than 50 family members and Connecticut manufacturers and included remarks from Democratic U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro. Pictured top row Dr. Paul Broadie, President, Gateway and Housatonic Community Colleges, US Representative Rosa DeLauro, Bill Villano, President and CEO of Workforce Alliance along with instructors and supporters. Almost 90 percent of graduates have received job offers. Three people have accepted job offers from Brook & Whittle including (front Row, far left) Matt Brimmer of Newtown, press assistant, (front row, far right) Derek Walker of Hamden, press assistant and (second row, middle) Katerin Torrez of Branford, supervisor. For more information on how to register for this free, five-week training program, visit www.workforcealliance.biz/skillup

About Workforce Alliance

Workforce Alliance is the policy and oversight organization responsible for creating a comprehensive, community-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce in South Central CT, which comprises 30 towns. Board members include business owners, local elected officials and community leaders in order to meet changing local needs and shifting national economic and workforce trends. Services are primarily funded by the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act for low-income adults, dislocated workers and youth; and

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families which mandates employment activities to help people become independent of cash assistance. Workforce Alliance oversees four American Job Center South Central CT locations in New Haven, Meriden, Middletown and Hamden. For more information visit workforcealliance.biz

South Central CT includes 30 towns: Bethany, Branford, Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Haven, Essex, Guilford, Haddam Hamden, Killingworth, Madison, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Old Saybrook, Orange, Portland, Wallingford, West Haven, Westbrook and Woodbridge.

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