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DRAFT FOR REVIEW

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14 Graduate from Workforce Alliance Skill Up for Manufacturing Training Program at Middlesex Community College

New program recruiting employers and job seekers to participate

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. – August 15, 2019 – Workforce Alliance, Middlesex Community College and Vinal Tech High School leaders were joined by families and supporters on Monday, August 12 to celebrate the first class of Skill Up for Manufacturing graduates to complete the program in here, and the 5th class of manufacturing apprenticeship program graduates. Since March 2019, 84 people have successfully completed the free, five-week training program created and delivered in partnership with Connecticut manufacturers.

“We hear it every day, 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. “Our program is filling gaps in perception and knowledge. Many people who enter our program haven’t thought about a career in manufacturing because they didn’t understand the long-term viability and career path. At the same time many employers are not able to invest the time and money in training entry level candidates. We’re addressing both, and this program is delivering promising results.”

Registration for fall Skill Up for Manufacturing class starting Sept. 9 at Gateway Community College is complete and new manufacturing participants and trainees are being sought for future classes at Middlesex Community College that will include plastics manufacturing training. Interested participants should visit <http://www.workforcealliance.biz/skillup>.

[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 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. Coursework includes OSHA 10 certification and Lean Six Sigma.

Participating manufacturing companies that visited this cohort include Hobson & Motzer, Brook & Whittle, Rowland Technologies, Roto-Frank, Aerocision and Wepco Plastics. Many graduates interview with participating manufacturing companies before graduation and several from the first 4 cohorts have been hired directly by a variety of CT employers.

Students from Berlin, Bristol, Clinton, Madison, Meriden, Middletown, New Haven, New London, Newington, West Hartford and Windham were among the latest first Skill Up for Manufacturing graduating class.

Following the short ceremony and remarks from Dr. Steve Minkler, Campus CEO & Dean of Academic Affairs, Middlesex Community College and Bill Villano, President and CEO of Workforce Alliance and class speaker Shawn Manning from Berlin, 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.

Skill Up admission is conducted on a rolling basis. 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. All required books, tools and clothing are included. A cash stipend is paid to participants as they reach training benchmarks and upon completion.



Workforce Alliance and Middlesex Community College with Vinal Technical High School hosted a graduation ceremony on Aug. 12 celebrating the first class of Skill Up for Manufacturing graduates to complete the program in Middletown, and the 5th class of manufacturing apprenticeship program graduates. Shown are Skill Up graduates who are primed to begin entry-level and apprenticeship positions with Connecticut manufacturers. The graduation was attended by family members and supporters plus: Bill Villano (third from right), president and CEO of Workforce Alliance, and Steve Minkler (third from left) Campus CEO & Dean of Academic Affairs for Middlesex Community College. Since March 2019 more than 80 people have successfully completed the free, five-week training program created and delivered in partnership with Connecticut manufacturers. 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. Its board of directors includes business owners, education and community leaders focused on meeting changing local needs and shifting national economic and workforce trends. 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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Additional photos:



Laura Linder of Clinton completed the Skill Up for Manufacturing training on Aug. 12. She was one of 14 graduates from the latest cohort funded by Workforce Alliance. She completed training on Aug. 12 and is seeking an entry-level or apprenticeship position in manufacturing.



Brothers Tremor and Gauge Allen of Windham stand with Workforce Alliance's Steve Johnson (center) to display their Skill Up certificates. They completed training on Aug. 12 and are seeking entry-level and apprenticeship positions in manufacturing.



Hassan Touil of Middletown was joined by his family to celebrate completing Workforce Alliance’s Skill Up for Manufacturing program. A Skill Up class finished Aug. 12 through Middlesex Community College. He and other graduates are seeking entry-level and apprenticeship positions in manufacturing.



James Tosatti of Middletown; Newton Siame of Meriden, Hassan Touil of Middletown; Shawn Mannings of Berlin and Gauge Allen of Windham display their Skill Up for Manufacturing credentials including 250 Hours Pre-Apprenticeship hours from the CT Dept. of Labor and OSHA 10 Safety Card. Participants also earned Lean Six Sigma certifications. They completed training on Aug. 12 and are seeking entry-level and apprenticeship positions in manufacturing.

