

Media Release

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QCC RECEIVES \$750,000 NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANT

Research and Outreach for the Manufacturing Industry in Worcester to Benefit

WORCESTER, Ma – Quinsigamond Community College is pleased to announce the award of a \$750,000 National Science Foundation grant which, in conjunction with a report on the status of the manufacturing industry in the Worcester area, will fund the creation of the Massachusetts Technician Education Collaborative (Mass-TEC)

Commissioned by QCC, a report on the status of manufacturing in Central Massachusetts titled, “Worcester Area Manufacturing Workforce Competitiveness: A Report on the Status of the Industry, July 2007,” indicates that 73 percent of local manufacturers cite a lack of a pool of qualified, skilled workforce candidates as a top concern with the region’s employment climate and its effect on the manufacturing industry. In addition, the report indicates that the top two occupational areas in which the industry is facing the most severe employee shortages are: CAD/CAM technicians and production supervisors.

“Like many manufacturers, Metso Automation is struggling to obtain the skilled resources that are essential to develop and implement advanced technologies,” David Bayreuther, Vice President of Engineering for Metso stated from one of the company’s major Engineering and Manufacturing centers located in Worcester. “We are facing the stigma that manufacturing is on the decline in North America and the negative impact this had had on technology education.”

Quinsigamond Community College, with its newly formed Massachusetts Technician Education Collaborative, has begun work to fulfill these corporate needs by devoting its recent \$750,000 NSF grant to researching the Worcester area manufacturing industry and beginning outreach efforts. The initiative is aimed at producing more engineering technicians to meet regional advanced manufacturing workforce demand, and will target the career decision-making of adult job seekers and K-12 students, particularly under-represented minorities and women.

Working with Quinsigamond Community College’s partners in Mass-TEC are the Worcester Public Schools, the Latino Education Institute of Worcester State College, the Worcester Family Engagement Coalition, Intel Corporation, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, the Commonwealth Corporation, the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Education Development Center, Inc.

Mass-TEC will take a leadership role with parents, teachers, and career counselors in promoting college-level technician education and career pursuits within advanced manufacturing. It will emphasize the disciplines of industrial robotics and automation, manufacturing, electronics, computer and information technology and engineering technology, and promote the educational opportunities in those disciplines offered by area colleges.

“Last week, QCC’s Board of Trustees approved the offering of a new CAD Certificate Program in response to our criteria finding,” QCC President Gail Carberry stated. “Our partnerships with industry and education will further advance a response to this local competitive workforce issue.”

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense..." NSF is the funding source for approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.

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