

**For Immediate Release:**  
February 26, 2008

**For More Information Please Contact:**  
Jack Healy  
MassMEP Director of Operations  
508-831-7020

**SKILLS TRAINING WHERE IT MATTERS M.O.S.T.:  
HOW MASSMEP'S MOBILE TRAINING PROGRAM IS PREPARING YOUNG  
MASSACHUSETTS WORKERS FOR MANUFACTURING CAREERS**

**East Longmeadow, MA** – Eighteen-year-old Derrick Gentry-Mitchell runs a CNC machine at the coatings department at LENOX Industrial Tools and can easily explain how coatings adhere to metal using a molecular process. But just months prior, Derrick was still in high school, working at a fast-food restaurant part-time, and hadn't even thought of going into the field of manufacturing.

"I just never thought about it before because I wasn't familiar with the opportunities manufacturing could present me," he said. "But now I'm taking my career very seriously at LENOX."

Derrick was one of 40 candidates who recently took a TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education), administered by Futureworks Career Center in Springfield, to determine if he should be chosen to obtain a seat in a special Mobile Outreach Skills Training (M.O.S.T.) that LENOX was providing for their potential employees right in their parking lot.

"M.O.S.T. is a program the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP) created to fill vacant manufacturing positions that are in high demand across the state. The program helps companies like LENOX find, and begin to train, potential new employees using the MTU, or Mobile Training Unit," said Leslie Parady, MassMEP project manager. "The MTU is equipped with state-of-the-art computer workstations, and a scaled down CNC mill and lathe, so the trainees can get hands-on training right on the manufacturer's property."

During this particular M.O.S.T. program, LENOX opted for an accelerated 40-hour training session, taught by Matthew Healy of the MassMEP. The trainees learned the

basics of machine operations, shop math skills, and blueprint reading through a series of classroom and hands-on projects. This prepared them for the second round of training, which consisted of 60-90 days of paid on the job training at LENOX.

“Thanks to the MassMEP M.O.S.T. training, I am doing many things in my new job at LENOX and continue to learn more daily. The best way to learn about the job is to actually do it. I have mentors who help me learn the skills I need and who help me troubleshoot problems,” said Derrick. “I believe there is potential for a long-term career and advancement for me here now.” In addition to his training and new job, LENOX will be investing in Derrick through tuition reimbursement for his college education at Springfield Technical Community College.

“I think what meant the most to LENOX was the commitment on the part of those who gave their time without pay for the M.O.S.T. training to show this company that they were serious about wanting to learn the tools necessary to excel and succeed as members of this team,” said Derrick’s supervisor, Flow Line Manager John Guzzo. “Derrick not only did this during his training, but has shown that same commitment over the past four months. He is well liked by his co-workers and has vastly become an asset to this company.”

The MassMEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP system is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information, please visit [www.massmep.org](http://www.massmep.org), or phone 1-800-MEP-4MFG.

**-END-**