



Growth Based Solutions for Manufacturers

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Mass MEP Receives Grant for Older Worker Retention Programs

Effort will focus on strategies for maintaining skilled workers in specialized manufacturing areas

(Worcester, MA) The Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the National Tooling and Machining Association have announced they have received a grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to develop strategies for retaining older workers and studying the impact to local industries as these skilled laborers retire.

“We’re pleased to have received this grant from the Commonwealth,” said Jack Healy, MassMEP Director of Operations. “We know that small and medium-sized manufacturers face challenges finding workers with the proper skill-sets. The problem of maintaining a qualified work force is only compounded as veteran machinists and production operators prepare for retirement.”

A variety of industries in the Commonwealth are facing severe shortages of skilled and experienced workers as many people prepare to retire. In order to help address this problem, Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Suzanne Bump recently announced the allocation of several Older Worker Retention Strategies Grants.

“The purpose of these grants is to research and design methods of retaining critical and skilled workers who are over 50 years old in fields such as Health Care, Manufacturing and Higher Education,” said Secretary Bump. “With these new strategies and methods in mind, businesses in the Commonwealth

will be more prepared in the future to retain and preserve an experienced and knowledgeable workforce."

MassMEP, and its partner, the Western MA Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association, have received a grant in the amount of \$50,000. MassMEP will analyze over 1,281 employees from 33 different businesses who are employed as Machinists, Set-Up Operators, Machine Operators and Production Workers. MassMEP will develop and test an assessment tool and methodology that will demonstrate the business impact of retaining or losing staff. Six companies will pilot the tool to develop customized retention strategy plans. Once tested, the tool and methodology will be made available to other companies.

MassMEP was among a half-dozen organizations to receive grants. Other recipients included Bay State Medical Center, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical, the Institute for Community Inclusion, and UMass Medical School.

About MassMEP

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, or phone 508-831-7020.

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