



**Media Contact:**

Claudia Follet  
321-266-0677

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MASSACHUSETTS STATE LEADERS TOUR  
SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAM FOR VETERANS**

***M.O.S.T.<sup>®</sup> Program at Smith & Wesson Delivers Training, Employment***

**SPRINGFIELD, Mass., April 14, 2011**—The Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP), in conjunction with Smith & Wesson Corp., the legendary 159-year old company in the global business of safety, security, protection and sport, is currently training a second class of military veterans in a specialized training program. Today, two Massachusetts state leaders, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Secretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee, will be onsite at Smith & Wesson to tour the Mobile Outreach Skills Training (M.O.S.T.<sup>®</sup>) program firsthand. Following the completion of the program, all 15 graduates will be offered employment by Smith & Wesson.

The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) continues to make employment a priority for veterans in the Commonwealth. DVS partnered with MassMEP and Smith & Wesson in order to provide training and certifications for veterans in the workforce. Veterans were referred to the program through DVS, Veterans' Service Officers, and One-Stop Career Centers. Additionally, the Holyoke Soldiers' Home provided space for interviews and coordination. This current program is funded in part by a U.S. Department of Labor \$500,000 grant. Additional funds for this training may be contributed by state, local and private-sector funding.

"Creating jobs and putting people back to work continues to be a top priority of the Patrick-Murray Administration here in Massachusetts," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "Recognizing the sacrifice of our military service men and women, it is our responsibility to provide veterans with job training and other services upon their return home. We applaud MassMEP for providing veterans with the right resources, and we appreciate Smith & Wesson for their continued support of our veterans."

The M.O.S.T.<sup>®</sup> program is a fast-track, intensive skills training, recruitment, assessment and placement program that prepares unemployed and underemployed individuals, including returning veterans and minorities, for production jobs in less time than traditional programs. The training is conducted over a period of two weeks in a state-of-the-art mobile training facility stationed by MassMEP on Smith & Wesson property.

"We are proud that Massachusetts leads the nation in benefits and services we offer to support our veterans, and we know that entering or re-entering the workforce is an important, meaningful step for so many veterans, particularly those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan," said Secretary Nee. "MassMEP, together with Smith & Wesson, are helping veterans as they work to reintegrate back into the workforce and the community."

**(more)**

The M.O.S.T.® program, has recently been selected to receive the Associated Industries of Massachusetts' John Gould Education & Workforce Development Award for 2011 for their contributions to the quality of public education and the advancement, employability and productivity of residents of the Commonwealth, provides quick-start job training for small and mid-sized manufacturers seeking entry-level workers. The program's mobile training unit is outfitted with state-of-the-art training equipment that allows participants an opportunity to upgrade or learn new manufacturing skills. Because of its mobility, the program is able to move to areas where jobs and potential employees are located. The unit is generally situated onsite at an employer's facility or other location convenient for trainees and the company. Training, which is often customized to suit the needs of the participating employer, helps reduce the time typically required for new employees to become fully productive.

"Programs like M.O.S.T.® are vitally important to our communities and to our returning veterans," said Dr. Claudia Follet, Director of Grants and Partnership Development for Time Wise Management Systems. "While the national unemployment rate, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, is 9.6%, the unemployment rate for returning veterans between the ages of 18 and 24 is at 21.1%. This high percentage of unemployment is due partly to stereotyping veterans' fitness for employment, such as inadequate technology skills and lack of education.

"The M.O.S.T.® program identifies jobs prior to training, trains hard-to-serve populations for high-wage jobs with benefits, fills the existing skills gap, and has a job retention rate of 87%. It is a tremendous program that has been successfully implemented in Mississippi, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Florida," added Follet.

For more information on the M.O.S.T.® program, visit [www.timewisemost.com](http://www.timewisemost.com) or contact Dr. Follet at 321-266-0677.

#### **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](http://www.MassMEP.org).

#### **About Smith & Wesson**

Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation (NASDAQ: SWHC) is a U.S.-based, global provider of products and services for safety, security, protection and sport. The company delivers a broad portfolio of firearms and related training to the military, law enforcement and sports markets, and designs and constructs facility perimeter security solutions for military and commercial applications. Smith & Wesson companies include Smith & Wesson Corp., the globally recognized manufacturer of quality firearms; Universal Safety Response, Inc., a full-service perimeter security integrator, barrier manufacturer and installer; and Thompson/Center Arms Company, Inc., a premier designer and manufacturer of premium hunting firearms. Smith & Wesson facilities are located in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and Tennessee. For more information on Smith & Wesson and its companies, call 800-331-0852 or log on to <http://www.smith-wesson.com>; <http://www.usrgrab.com>; or <http://www.tcarms.com>.

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