



Release Date:
December 4, 2018

CONTACT:
Shawn Brown
sbrown@vamanufacturers.com

Community College Workforce Alliance Named VMA Partner of the Year

- College Works with Industry to Ensure Pipeline of Skilled Workers -

Williamsburg, VA – The Manufacturing Skills Institute (MSI) announced on November 13, 2018 that the Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA) has earned the 2018 VMA Partner of the Year Award for its outstanding leadership in increasing access to industry certifications in the Central Virginia region of the Commonwealth. CCWA partners with industry to deliver the MSI Manufacturing Technician Level 1 (MT1) certificate program onsite at companies as well as its college campuses.

“CCWA has created a service delivery model that incorporates both the skills needs of manufacturers and the employment needs of individuals by creating training cohorts of job candidates that receive a customized connection with employers upon MT1 program completion and attainment of the MSI nationally recognized MT1 certification,” said Dr. Victor Gray, MSI Executive Director. “CCWA understands the value of industry credentials as a way in which individuals can signal they are ‘manufacturing work ready’ and companies appreciate the return on value in the hiring marketplace.”

CCWA is the workforce development partnership between John Tyler Community College and Reynolds Community College serving the economic development and workforce needs in four cities and 12 counties of Central Virginia. The organization provides non-credit training, custom-designed instruction, consulting, skills assessments and educational programs. CCWA is an MSI Academic Partner and has an authorized MSI Assessment Center with MT1 Certified Trainers.

“While manufacturing plants have many open positions, and opportunities exist for employees to progress upward internally, employers find it difficult to locate candidates with the needed technical knowledge,” said Elizabeth Creamer, CCWA Vice President of Workforce Development. “This skills gap creates a significant opportunity for companies and individuals to break away from the pack. Job seekers and incumbent employees who are obtaining the MT1 certification become more competitive. That’s why at CCWA we’re imbedding the MT1 into education and training ranging from apprenticeship programs, boot camps for job seekers, and on the job training for existing workforce.”

The MT1 certification program documents individuals’ mastery of the critical competencies required for modern manufacturing production and production-related occupations. The core competency areas certified with MT1 are: Math and Measurement; Spatial Reasoning and Manufacturing Technology; and, Quality and Business Acumen.

CCWA was the first organization in the Commonwealth to incorporate this certification within registered apprenticeship programs. Working with Virginia Department of Veterans Services, in 2018, CCWA launched a pilot Military to Manufacturing program which provides transitioning service members and veterans with free MT1 certification training, on site industrial tours, and job interviews. To date, CCWA has certified more workers and job seekers in the MT1 certification than any other workforce agency in the country, and CCWA continues to develop new employer partnerships every day.

Secondary and postsecondary educational institutions can join the MSI Academic Partner Network by contacting Antonya Hurt at ahurt@vamanufacturers.com.

About the MSI

The industry-led Manufacturing Skills Institute (MSI) is the workforce development affiliate of the non-profit Virginia Manufacturers Association. It provides relevant education and skills training for careers in advanced manufacturing by offering world-class training programs delivered by MSI and MSI education partner institutions. Through the partnership between industry and education, employers set the skill standards for MSI program offerings anywhere offered to ensure learning is linked to employment and career advancement opportunities. Employer-specific customized training can be provided onsite or at any MSI education partner location. Working learners advance their manufacturing technology knowledge and skills via OJT classes, classroom-based and online training offered by MSI and education partner faculty grounded in real world experience. For more information about MSI, visit www.manufacturingskillsinstitute.org.