

# 1 Peer-to-peer leadership support

**Purpose:** A local peer to peer network of manufacturing chief executives, facilitated by Workforce Central facilitators with extensive manufacturing experience. Members leverage their combined industry expertise and strategic leadership to develop solutions to shared workforce challenges.

**Return on Investment:** Lower collective training costs due to localized training and achievement of Workforce Advanced Training (WAT) grants. Employee recognition and appreciation of incumbent worker development investments.

## Achievements/Milestones:

- Shared best practices in areas such as safety, quality, process improvement, policies, and retention practices
- System change in employment practices to signal true needs for skills and credentials
- System changes to collaborative technical college partner with greater focus on true business needs
- Collective feedback and input to local utility providers resulting in improved reliability
- Multiple sector training strategies developed for dislocated workers, incumbent supervisors, incumbent employees, and job seekers
- Formation of other needed workforce/economic development initiatives
- Stronger relationships established resulting in increased trust and communication



*"Workforce Central provides a unique opportunity for business leaders to get together in a safe, confidential environment – allowing us to find ways that we can collectively bring each of our workforces together in the same frame of mind."*

Kirk Willard, Advanced Manufacturing Peer Council member,  
and Ocean Spray Cranberries Plant Director,  
Wisconsin Rapids and Tomah



## 2 Pipeline Solutions

**Purpose:** There are stark gaps in the hard and soft skills of area job seekers and a lack of knowledge of the number of family sustaining career opportunities in the region.

**Return on Investment:** Collective input on curriculum and skill development at a system level. Collaborative achievement of Constellation “Energy to Educate” \$45,000 grant expanding STEM curriculum in area high schools. To create capacity in STEM and Project Lead the Way, school districts are offering classes with less than standard registration levels.

### Achievements/Milestones:

- Respect for needs of businesses, students, and the educational systems
- Collaboration of public and private school systems as well as technical college (MSTC)
- Educator and administrator business tours to increase understanding of the modern manufacturing environment and technological advancements
- Business tours of high schools to develop understanding of real constraints on the educational systems and the current curriculum offerings
- Increasing STEM student demand through summer camps and curriculum changes
- Constellation “Energy to Educate” grant to expand STEM curriculum in area high schools
- Support for new Central Wisconsin STEM Academy
- Expansion of youth apprenticeships into area manufacturing facilities
- Summer course for educators, introduction to key regional business sectors





## 3 Training Solutions

**Purpose:** Develop training solutions for displaced workers, job seekers, low skilled adults, and incumbent employees that meet a collective defined need.

**Return on Investment:** New Food Manufacturing Science Certificate curriculum at MSTC, etc. Cost-effective training solutions for incumbent supervisors; lean six sigma; Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT); Hazard Analysis for Critical Control Points (HACCP); College Preparation and Industrial Manufacturing. In total, 500 participants have elevated their skill level to meet the needs of area employers.

### Achievements/Milestones:

- 684 College credits earned in the supervisory training program towards associate's degrees
- 329 Job seekers served through Pathways and Food Manufacturing Science Certificate (FMSC) programs
- 223 Industry credentials earned
- 102 Incumbent participants in the supervisory training program
- 27 Trained in Hazard Analysis for Critical Control Point training (HACCP)
- 24 Trained in Lean Six Sigma
- 18 Incumbent non-supervisory participants completed the MSSC Certified Production Technician (CPT) curriculum.

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*"We have seen significant benefits in our operations on all shifts as a result of the supervisory training program."*

Richard Wyman, Advanced Manufacturing Peer Council member,  
and General Manager, Biery Cheese, Kickapoo Valley Plant

# 4 Sector Awareness and Promotion

**Purpose:** Delivering clear impactful information on the regional workforce system and career pathway opportunities for all stakeholders.

**Return on Investment:** Effective communication tools delivered to the community and stakeholders including a full project evaluation community presentation and forum.

*"If I had known the class was out there, I probably would have taken it earlier."*

FMSC Participant

## Achievements/Milestones:

- Published "The Ultimate Source of Manufacturing Competitiveness, the Case for Corporate Training Investments"
- Published "Building Your Local Economy" whitepaper on economic development via leveraging community assets and supply chain
- National & state advocacy on rural strategies/ challenges, and the use of a place-based, community-driven model to address
- Sparkfun, VEX Robotics, and Race Car Engineering summer STEM camps with local news coverage
- Vital Signs, economic data to stakeholders including educators and CEOs for strategy development
- High school career discovery days as well as community and school presentations about local job opportunities
- Local media coverage including newspaper, television, and radio show coverage of key work and events
- Support and collaboration on study and report on the aftermath of the Port Edwards mill closure





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We envision a community that works well for all people. Incourage is a leader in rural community development, serving the south Wood County area of Wisconsin. To learn more, go to [incouragecf.org](http://incouragecf.org). Contact Jenny Riggenbach or Rick Merdan, 715.423.3863.