

2014-2015

# Invest In Your Workforce

The purpose of this offering is to raise financial capital for the Workforce Central Manufacturing Partnership to serve employers and workers in the region.

## Origin and Accomplishments

Since 2009, a combined total of \$2.1 million has been invested in the Workforce Central Manufacturing Partnership to launch and incubate solutions to manufacturing employment challenges in our region. Local and national philanthropy has contributed 80% of that investment. Businesses have contributed to the effort through contributions to the project as well as specific training investments in their employees. To date, the Workforce Central Manufacturing Partnership has provided training and talent assessment services to 35 regional employers and 500 local workers.

## Our Work Is Not Complete

For lasting results the Manufacturing Partnership must have a sustainable structure. This work is crucial to our region if we are to prepare for the existing and coming "Silver Tsunami" crescendo of baby boomer retirements. Wisconsin and specifically our region will face a severe labor shortage in the years to come. On top of that our region has lost 10% of its population within the 0-29 age range. We must stem this hemorrhaging "talent drain". Our work and results are crucial to differentiating our region and sectors to position them for growth and success.

## Investments to Support Business Plan Phase

National Fund for Workforce Solutions will provide \$1 for \$1 match to local investors up to \$75,000.	
Total to be raised:	\$150,000
National Fund for Workforce Solutions	\$75,000
Local Manufacturing Firms	(minimum) \$75,000

All investments are considered philanthropic gifts to Incurage and are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

### For more information, contact:

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### Business plan phase will:

- Assess Manufacturing Partnership organizational structure and financial model
- Map retirement/departure projections for local partner businesses
- Grow the appreciation of family sustaining career opportunities within the manufacturing sector
- Map core sustainable pipeline strategies including
  - High skill development and attraction strategies (e.g. engineers, IT, STEM, etc.)
  - Engagement of four-year institutions
  - Middle skill recruitment and training strategies (e.g. K-12, MSTC)
  - Career pathway entrance paths for underemployed, unemployed and youth
  - Expansion of youth and adult apprenticeship model

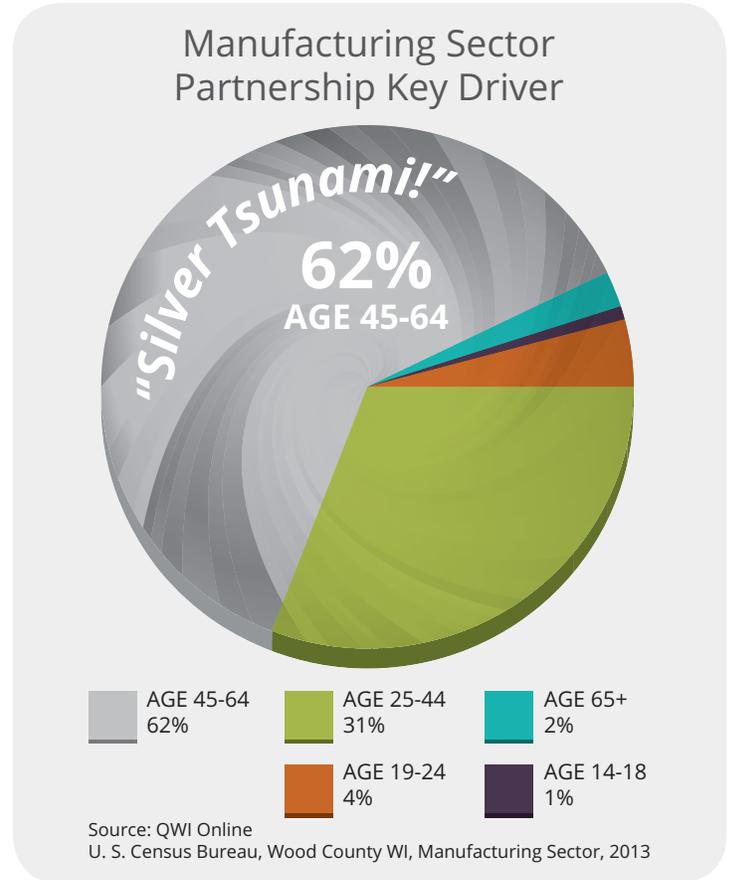
# Overview of the Workforce Partnership Solution

Workforce Central is one of thirty-five local initiatives supported by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. Since inception Incourage has staffed and led this initiative. Local employer partnerships like Workforce Central's Manufacturing Partnership develop up-to-date intelligence about the collective skills industry needs, and deliver knowledge to workers, educators and policy makers. Industry relationships like these promote improvements in business practices and public systems that lead to healthier economies and better career opportunities for our workers and job seekers.

## Business Pain Points

- "Silver Tsunami," current and accelerated rate of retirements within the baby boomer generation
- Technological advancements and automation, less physical work, more intellectual work
- Bridging valued anchor institutions (e.g. MSTC, NCWWDB, K-12) using the collaborative approach to business workforce needs using the National Fund for Workforce Solutions Model:

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions partners with businesses, communities, and philanthropy to develop employer-driven workforce strategies. The value of this unprecedented initiative of national and local funders rests on its support for local communities to organize and sustain regional funding collaboratives that invest in worker skills and their key regional industries. The collaboratives are catalysts for generating additional investments in creating sectoral workforce partnerships, training workers, and improving workforce practices.



## National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS)

### Every Workforce Partnership Shares Two Core Elements:

- All training programs are designed in close collaboration with employers; and
- The focus is not just on preparing jobseekers and entry-level employees for work, but for careers.

At their core, workforce partnerships need to be results-driven, entrepreneurial, and worthy of trust from both employers and workers. Workforce partnerships serve a wide range of jobseekers and employees but are especially attuned to the needs of lower-skilled, lower-wage workers and jobseekers.

*"The last five years' efforts have repeatedly demonstrated the value of philanthropic investments fostering relationships built on trust. Building a critical mass within our partners has begun to yield positive results."*

Kelly Ryan, President and CEO,  
Incourage Community Foundation

# Workforce Central Manufacturing Partnership Value

The Manufacturing Partnership has been meeting the needs of employers and workers since 2009 based on the following goals:

- Employers are able to hire and retain local skilled workers at competitive wages.
- All workers have the skills they need to successfully participate in a vibrant, local labor market.
- Articulated career pathways will exist in industries vital to the region.
- Anchor institutions such as Mid-State Technical College (MSTC) have needed information to serve employers and students.

*“Collaboration with our local communities and organizations such as Incurage’s Workforce Central Manufacturing Partnership is vital to our ability to deliver the skills and education that our students need to be successful in central Wisconsin’s workforce.”*

Sue Budjac, President,  
Mid-State Technical College

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## What Makes the Partnership Work?

The coordinating role of Workforce Central staff plays a unique driver role that requires expertise, facilitation, brokering solutions among businesses and partners, and best practice research. As educational institutions, government and businesses themselves are increasingly asked to do more with less, the neutral driver role is increasingly crucial.



# Work is focused in four areas:

## 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.

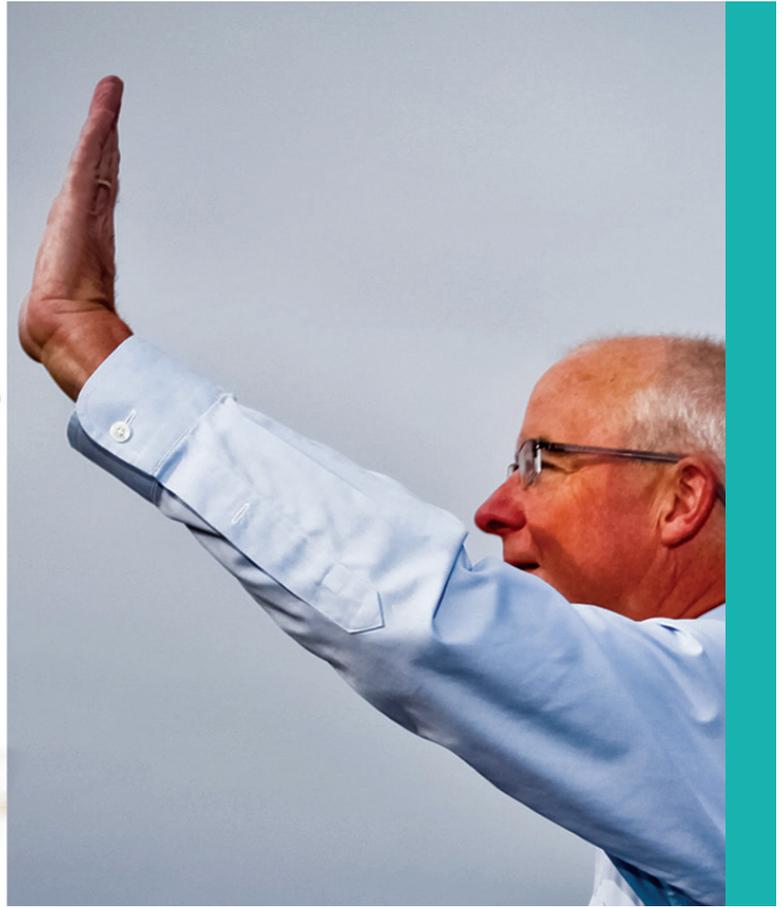
*"If I had known the class was out there, I probably would have taken it earlier."*

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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## In Conclusion

In order to leverage available NFWS grant dollars, we need to raise \$75,000 from business stakeholders. This funding will enable the development of a sustainable business plan.

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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.