

Armstrong County Manufacturing Consortium
Thursday, January 08, 2009

Attending: Vickie DeThomas (OSTI), David English (AET), Joe Goldcamp (Nature's Blend), Alex Stockmal (Mid-Atlantic District Labs), Rob Beatty (Manufacturing Assistance Center), Mandy Markuzic (Nature's Blend), Pat Hollinger (Penn State New Kensington), Marie Dillon-Griffith (PA Career Link Armstrong County), Jeff Fullerton (DRS Technologies), Lori Harvey (Penn State Electro-Optics Center), Jim Pish (Dielectric Solutions)

Guest Speaker: Scott Dietz (Catalyst Connection)

Interim Chair Alex Stockmal called the meeting to order at 7:37 AM due to the weather bringing in members and resource partners later.

Officer Update

Vickie DeThomas announced that Alex Stockmal and Joe Goldcamp volunteered to serve as interim chair and vice chair - she will serve as immediate past chair and an executive committee member.

Guest Speaker

Alex introduced Scott Dietz as guest speaker for the meeting. Scott gave background information on Catalyst Connection. Goal is to help small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in the region grow and succeed. They provide a wide array of services and programs to manufacturers in the southwestern Pennsylvania area.

Catalyst Connection is doing more in workforce development since manufacturers are finding it difficult to hire good people. For the most part, this programming is happening at the high school level.

Scott handed out a flyer for summer intern program with a match of up to \$3000 for salary for the summer - college interns in a technical area (engineering, information technology, etc.) This is available in all nine local counties. Catalyst Connection will connect with colleges to find the students interested in these positions.

Adventures in Technology program

- Project-based learning experience - unique aspect is working with high school students
- The program fits in well with STEM initiatives
- Typically the school and company are within a 20-mile radius but have not interacted in any way - students and teachers are not

aware of the scope of the products and services put together in the area

- They work in a team environment on a project-based experience
- Moving in the direction of using an entire class as a team within a 10-12 week time frame
- Couple of hours a week is spent on this in most cases
- There is no pay involved for the students
- A number of the projects have been IT-related, but they have been very diverse (process improvement, shipping and receiving, new product development, market research)
- Schools of all nature have been involved - some through clubs or gifted programs or a part of the senior project for the students
- They match school with company with the following approach:
 1. Scope of project
 2. Students identified
 3. Prepare mentor
 4. Tour and set up
 5. Weekly communication while students spend 10 weeks working on the project
 6. Final presentation
- Showcase for all projects later in the year

Goal with expansion is to include Armstrong and Westmoreland Counties:

- 5 teams in 2009
- 10 teams in 2010
- 20 teams in 2011

Success story: Respironics and Franklin Regional

Use of gifted students (5-8 each year) with cross over (continuing students as juniors/seniors plus new students as freshmen/sophomores)

Project saved the company about \$20,000

Company has hired a summer intern (as a college student) who went through the program

Success story: All-Clad and South Fayette

Independent study students focused on process improvement

Company and students came up with the exact same solution to the problem

Success story: McKesson Automation and North Hills

Tech Ed teacher using students from that class

Shipping and receiving enhancement

Scott will send Dave English a list of companies who have participated so it can be shared with members.

Preference is to match company and school from the same county.

He has talked to Freeport and Armstrong School Districts about potential and is working directly through the StrongLand Chamber of Commerce.

Dave mentioned that we will share with Superintendents on their agenda at their Monday meeting.

Update on Consortium

New members will dictate the plans for officers in the future - hope to keep interim short and sweet

Minutes from members-only meeting in December

Jeff Fullerton made a motion to approve as written. Vickie DeThomas seconded, and the minutes were approved by voice vote.

Industry Partnership Funding

Mary Salony could not attend today; she is keeping on top of things until a new coordinator is hired.

Resumes have been submitted for the industry partnership cluster coordinator position; interviews will be conducted using one chair from the tri-county region.

Our industry partnership funding has not arrived yet, although the funds for IP for manufacturing were given to the technology consortium.

Committee Reports

Public Awareness - radio campaign is in place: Marie is next in line - try to pre-tape the programs in the coming months and weeks

Video program is running on ASD Television program - dates to come soon

Idea of bringing more manufacturing consortium connections into companies around the ARMTech Showcase, around the Electro-Optics Alliance meeting

Preferred Vendors - no report

Training - waiting for shared training money to come, RFQs are done

Going Green, Welding, Kaizen, Advanced Human Resources, and Customer Enhancement Techniques

Educational Awareness - county-wide career fair on February 23 and Educator in the Workplace plans

Females in STEM (FASE) group is moving along with plans for programs to bring girls into science, engineering, technology, and math

New Members - campaign will begin in February with personal contacts

New Business

Non-profit status: Vickie has a contact that will assist with setting up non-profit status and she has asked for a quote for their services.

Butler is considering pursuing a 501 c 6 membership non-profit organization.

Partner Updates

PA CareerLink - filing for unemployment claims are up, hours are increased for clients, decline in job orders, 186 people in trade act funding training programs (mostly New Castle School of Trades) - the majority of the Eljerware workers will be laid off soon - Kensington Windows may not be approved for trade funding - trying to find an instructor for basic computing skills for these job seekers.

Other Items

ARMTech Showcase - can we get additional time around the showcase for students and others to bring up the details?

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 5, 2009 at 7:30 AM in conference room 1 at PA CareerLink Armstrong County for all members and resource partners