



New Funding For Student Workforce Training Will Create Meaningful Connections To Manufacturing Industry

12/22/2020

Harrisburg, PA - Today, Governor Tom Wolf announced that The Challenge Program, Inc. (TCP) in Cambria County was approved for \$143,000 in funding through Pennsylvania's Manufacturing Training-to-Career program, a program that helps companies identify and train a skilled workforce through targeted programs and services.

"Pennsylvania's manufacturing industry powers our economy, and provides stable, good-paying jobs to workers across the commonwealth," said Gov. Wolf. "As we look toward the future, we know that this industry will be more important than ever, and it's critical that we help today's students make the connections they need for tomorrow's careers."

The funding will allow 11,000 students in western Pennsylvania to more closely interact with manufacturers and receive two years of programming and increased workforce development connections. TCP's Manufacturing Awareness Program helps students in grades 10-12 at participating high schools learn more about local manufacturers, gain a greater understanding of opportunities in manufacturing and specific positions that manufacturers are seeking to fill locally, and obtain the training/educational pathways to enter those careers. Students at 30 high schools in 10 counties are currently partnered with TCP and manufacturing businesses.

"At TCP we connect business and education while motivating students to develop good habits required to succeed in school and in their future careers. A major part of this mission is a focus on high-growth industries, including manufacturing. This project will allow TCP and our business partners to have a greater impact on the career and training decisions that students start making before they graduate," said Sara Deyarmin Jones, Director of Program Development at The Challenge Program, Inc.

Manufacturers in Pennsylvania account for 12 percent of the commonwealth's total output, and according to the Manufacturing Institute Report (Deloitte), 84 percent of manufacturing executives believe there is a talent shortage in the United States. While TCP is a motivational awareness program, partnerships often result in job creation. Since 2016, TCP has connected more than 20 students with employment in manufacturing.

Governor Wolf's Manufacturing PA initiative was launched in October 2017, and since then has funded 48 projects and invested more than \$10.5 million through the Training-to-Career program. Training-to-Career grants support projects that result in short-term work-readiness, job placement, or the advancement of manufacturing. The Manufacturing PA Training-to-Career program works collaboratively with local manufacturers to identify and teach missing essential skills for entry level applicants seeking manufacturing employment, engage youth or those with barriers to career opportunities in manufacturing, and or advance capacity for local or regional manufacturers.

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