

**Process Technology Talent Sector Council**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Southwest Tennessee Community College**  
**November 29, 2016**

**Attendees**

Shawn King, **Buckman**  
David Gramm, **Coca-Cola**  
John Rutherford, **Coca-Cola**  
Marcus Harris, **Glaxo, Smith,  
Kline**  
Darian Clinton, **Glaxo, Smith,  
Kline**  
Brad Phillips, **Glaxo, Smith,  
Kline**  
Cynthia Thompson, **Glaxo, Smith,  
Kline**  
James Barnes, **GP Memphis  
Cellulose**  
Timothy Suggs, **Hershey**  
Billy Thomen, **Hershey**  
Andre Nunn, **Hershey**  
Kevin McDougall, **Lucite  
International**  
David Kurland, **Sonoco**  
Rob Kaller, **Sonoco**  
**Greater Memphis Alliance for a  
Competitive Workforce**  
Gerald Joyner  
Latanyua Robinson

Larry Ferrett, **Sparco.com**

Roger Fields, **Valero**

**Staff**

**Workforce Resources**

**Southwest**

Willie A. Burly

Jaleesa Ivy

Lisa G. Jones

Garry Spencer

Mike Stephens

**ASU**

Charlie Hull

Alex Lamm

Emilee Sides

**WIN**

David Cruthird

**Workforce Development Board  
of Eastern Arkansas**

Angela Robinson

Pauline Vernon

**Greater Memphis Chamber**

Anita Brackin

*Lunch was served. Meeting was called to order at 11:46 p.m. by Roger Fields, Chair of Process Technology Sector Council*

**Welcome and Introductions**

- Mike Stephens, Dean at Southwest, welcomed the group and informed the council that Dr. Ezell was unable to attend due to a prior luncheon engagement on the Southwest campus.
- Council Chair, Roger Fields (Valero), prompted the group to give introductions and speak on their experience at the Process Technology Career Fair. Attendees “were surprised to see so many high school students.” Most of the attendees expressed that they enjoyed explaining Process Technology to the students who did not know what it was prior to the Career Fair.

**Meeting Overview**

- Pauline Vernon, Vice President of GMACW, gave an overview of the role of GMACW—which is to provide talent to Industry and alleviate labor gaps within in the industries located in the Memphis and Mid-South area. Vernon elaborated on the importance of the Process Technology Career Fair to industry as well as the labor force.
- Council Chair Roger Fields encouraged attendees to tour Southwest’s Process Technology Lab after the meeting or at their convenience.

**Process Technology Review/Outreach/Enrollment Update**

- Willie Burly, Interim Dept. Chari of Technologies at Southwest, gave reasoning behind the Career Fair. He suggested the corporations in attendance should be partners with Southwest. He spoke on the flexibility of the school’s Process Tech courses (they are hybrid courses—ground and online course(s)). He informed the council that there are less than 10 students in the program. Burly thinks the “gap” in the understanding of what Process Technology is a major

cause of low enrollment. He believes this gap can be closed by the high school guidance counselors assisting the students in learning about the program and what career choices Process Technology offers.

- Jaleesa Ivy, Grant Coordinator, Southwest Solutions, reiterated what Burly stated. She informed the council that the program needs a major recruitment push to get students enrolled.
- Alex Lamm, Workforce Director at ASU Mid-South, gave an update on graduates from ASU's Process Tech program: 3 graduates (1<sup>st</sup> Cohort), 7 graduates (2<sup>nd</sup> Cohort), and 4 graduates (3<sup>rd</sup> Cohorts). Success stories from the program include 1 student being placed at Cascade Tissue and 1 student being placed at Lallemand American Yeast (Student became Maintenance Tech which includes prepping tools and equipment for process).
- ASU Mid-South Accelerated Program. The college needs industry support with materials and tools/equipment so students can obtain experience working with and on equipment. Lamm asked council members to tour the school's program and for the opportunity for students to tour industry/company participants' facilities.

### **Council's Next Steps- Company Needs**

- What skills are needed for present and future?
- Roger Fields, Chair, reiterated reason(s) for Career Fair. He stated more tours should be in place at the companies represented on the council
- How does the council continue to do innovative things that will engage potential employees in the field of Process Technology?(i.e. tours, more Career Fairs)
- Billy Thomen (Hershey) wants to send existing workers to schools for continual training. He would like to get companies from the council to recruit students and employees for enrollment in the programs at ASU Mid-South and Southwest Tennessee Community College.
- A representative from Coca-Cola stated that "fundamentals are missing" as it pertains to the labor pool/applicants. Industry needs

technical skill sets developed before/by graduation. He also posed the question, “How do we combat the negative stereotypes/connotations of “manufacturing” and “community college”?”

- The question of “What works in the other industry when hiring or locating applicants/potential employees?” was posed. A representative from Lucite stated that applicants “cannot pass behavioral tests.” Cynthia Thompson of Glaxo, Smith, & Kline asked the council “What kind of pre-Employment tests are being used by other companies?” Many participants referenced mechanical and electrical aptitude tests.

Council members suggested the Ramsay Mechanical Aptitude Test.

- Charles Hull, of ASU Mid-South, suggested a curriculum adjustment was needed with assistance from industry. Chair Roger Fields mentioned that Valero contacts the schools’ programs to vet a potential job candidate.

### **Wrap- Up**

- GMACW’s Vice President Pauline Vernon suggested MemphisWorks as a hiring tool and applicant assessment for Interview Readiness. She suggested council participants share pre-employment tests with schools and employers. Vernon informed the group that the next quarterly meeting would be held Tuesday, February 21, 2017.
- Meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.