

## Mid-South Steel Fabricators Sector Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2017

Tennessee College of Applied Technology

7:30 a.m.

### Meeting Notes

#### Meeting Participants

##### Attendees

##### **Companies**

Crystal Steel-Memphis

- Steve Clark
- Delmus Woody

GMW, Inc.

- Tim Smith

Lewis Mechanical Contractors

- Alfred Green

Lincoln Electric

- Josh Jones

Memphis Wire & Iron

- Jim Stafford

PMSC

- Stan Rodgers
- David Galtelli

Providential Fabricators, Inc.

- Rich Riegel

PSI Contractors

- Mike Purifoy

Rees-Memphis

- Andy Cowan

##### **Guests**

The Manufacturing Institute

- Katherine McClelland

##### **Staff**

Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce

- John Churchill
- Gerald Joyner
- Latanyua Robinson
- Pauline Vernon

Greater Memphis Chamber

- Anita Brackin

##### **Workforce Resources**

Arkansas State University Mid-South

- Ed Cook
- Pete Seldon

Moore Tech

- John Schmidt
- Karen Treas

Southwest Tennessee Community College

- Willie Burley
- Chris Ezell
- Taylor Tagg

Tennessee College of Applied Technology

- Nathan Garrett
- Andy Helms
- Cassandra McNair-Brown
- Bond Stewart

Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas

- Angela Robinson

Workforce Investment Network

- Henry Lewis

### **Welcome TCAT/Tour of the TCAT Welding Program**

- Roland Rayner, Director of TCAT, welcomed council to the campus of TCAT; He gave a brief overview of the technical programs offered by the college and thanked the council for their attendance.
- Chairman Andy Cowan introduced Nathan Garrett, TCAT Assistant Director, to the council. Nathan Garrett reintroduced himself and reiterated Roland Rayner's welcome to the TCAT campus.
- The Council was given a tour of the Welding Program by Lead Instructor Bond Stewart (TCAT)

### **Meeting Welcome and Introductions**

- Chairman Andy Cowan thanked the group for coming and prompted the council and the attendees to give self- introductions.

### **Proposed Technical Certificate, Steel Fabricator Fitters Technology-ASU Mid-South**

- Pete Seldon, Associate Vice Chancellor (ASU), and Ed Cook, Lead Welding Instructor (ASU), detailed the proposed technical certificate program for Steel Fabricator Fitters Technology at ASU Mid-South. The two gave the reasons for industry needing the new program which is the need for "short-term" training.
- Both Seldon and Cook detailed the two courses which will be added for the Fitters Program: 1. Fitter Blueprint Reading 2. Intro to Steel Fabrication
- Ed Cook (ASU) mentioned that he will be meeting with foremans from members of the council to better prepare students, procure projects (from all aspects of Fabrication) for students to work on, and assistance in modifying curriculum. The program is set to start in Fall 2017
- Pauline Vernon (GMACW) posed the question, "Would companies be willing to employ/hire potential graduates of the aforementioned Fitters program? Several council members replied, "Yes."
- Tim Smith (GMW) mentioned that fitters are difficult to come by, so when people apply, he tries to find a place to employ them at GMW because of the scarcity of well-trained fitters in the industry.

- Pete Seldon (ASU) stated that he would propose to his supervisor to at the least, “put classes on the books” in case the new certification program is not approved.
- Pauline Vernon (GMACW) informed the council that the first wave of graduates from the proposed certification program would be available for employment in May 2018.
- Henry Lewis (WIN) briefly detailed information pertaining to Incumbent Worker Training and the possibility of employers paying for the training as well as the necessity for the training being justified by the employer in order to receive funds from Workforce Investment Network.
- Andy Cowan (Rees-Memphis) suggested creating subcommittees to address worker training options.
- John Churchill (GMACW) suggested the subcommittees work on a “proof of concept”; What does and does not work. Send skilled workers to ASU program to prove the need and function of the proposed Steel Fitters Program.
- Delmus Woody (Crystal Steel) and Tim Smith (GMW) posed a question to the council asking if it is feasible to set up different curricula/programs for different areas of Fitting that address the core fundamentals/elements of Fitting.
- Ed Cook (ASU) informed the group that general knowledge of Fitting would be included in the course (s) curriculum. He explained that students who complete the Technical Certification (TC) will be “ready to work” upon completion of the TC.

### **Final Reports for Fitters and Steel Fabrication Pathways**

- Katherine McClelland, Director, Education and Workforce Initiatives, of The Manufacturing Institute, gave an extensive presentation on the report for the Fitters and Steel Fabricators Pathways. (see attachment)
- After the presentation, Katherine McClelland (TMI) asked the council did they have any best practices that they would like to incorporate as it pertains to work-based learning.
- Pauline Vernon (GMACW) mentioned the option of council members sponsoring internships.

- Steve Clark (Crystal Steel) stated that they are willing to do internships.
- Pauline Vernon (GMACW) posed the question, “What are the challenges, if any, for companies to have internships?”
- The council listed the following challenges in dealing with internships: 1. Resources and Time 2. Return on investment 3. Difficulty in finding employees willing to train interns 4. Cost and Expense
- Delmus Woody (Crystal Steel) suggested “rotating internships” as a way to cut down costs/expense of internships.
- John Churchill (GMACW) mentioned that it would be a good idea for the council to adequately define “internship” and “apprenticeship.” Churchill also mentioned that there could be safety issues with OSHA as it pertains to rotating internships.

#### **Additional Discussion Items**

- Andy Cowan surveyed the council to see which members would be interested in serving on a subcommittee to address internships as a form of Work-Based Learning.
- Council members began volunteering for the subcommittee.

#### **Action Summary and Next Steps**

- Andy Cowan mentioned reaching out to companies that are not attending council meetings. He solicited members to invite other companies within the industry as a means to increase attendance and membership; 18 of 38 companies have been in attendance per Chairman Cowan
- Next Meeting Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30 a.m. William R. Moore College of Technology
- Meeting Adjourned by Chairman Cowan