

Mid-south Steel Fabricators Council Meeting
Tuesday, August 16, 2016
William R. Moore College of Technology Welding Annex
Meeting Notes

Meeting Participants

Attendees

Companies

- o Barnhart Crane – David Dingeldein
- o Crystal Steel – Delmus Woody
- o Crystal Steel – Steve Clark
- o GMW, Inc. Tim Smith
- o Keeler Iron Works – Clay Keeler
- o Lewis Mechanical – Al Green
- o Plant Maintenance Service Corp. – David Galtelli
- o Plant Maintenance Service Corp. – Stan Rodgers
- o Providential Fabricators – Rich Riegel
- o Quality Iron – Jeremy Clark
- o Rees-Memphis – Andy Cowan
- o SFI – Grant Noggle
- o Stinson’s Industrial – Kimberly Taylor
- o Stinson’s Industrial – Johnny Stinson
- o Southern Systems, Inc. – Billy Potts

Staff

Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce

- o Pauline Vernon
- o Latanyua Robinson
- o Gerald Joyner

Greater Memphis Chamber

- o Anita Brackin

Workforce Resources

Arkansas State University Mid-South

- o Pete Selden
- o Emilee Sides
- o Ed Cook

Moore Tech

- o Skip Redmond
- o Karen Treas
- o John Schmidt
- o Ann Wagner

Southwest Tennessee Community College

- o Chris Ezell

Tennessee College of Applied Technology

- o Andy Helms

Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas

- o Angela Robinson

Workforce Investment Network

- o Melanie Winfield
- o Henry Lewis

Guests

The Manufacturing Institute, NAM
Katherine McClelland

Welcome to Moore Tech / Tour of the Moore Tech Welding Annex

Skip Redmond, President, William R. Moore College of Technology, welcomed the Steel Fabricators Council to Moore Tech and introduced his lead welding instructor, John Schmidt who led a tour of the Welding Annex.

Meeting Welcome and Introductions

Council Chair, Andy Cowan, thanked the group for attending meeting and read the Mission Statement for the Council. He then asked for self-introductions by all attendees.

MemphisWorks.com Job Posting Capabilities

- Latanyua Robinson, GMACW, provided an update on MemphisWorks.com, which will go live in the coming weeks.
- Employers are now able to upload jobs to the site as well as use the site to connect to GMACW schools.
- Employers expressed interest in being able to post a video with the job when they post them so that they can customize and show the ins and outs of what is required in the position.
 - They would also like to be able to add in codes and standards such as ASME.

Fabricator Pathway Report

- Katherine McClelland, The Manufacturing Institute, provided a preview of what the Council can expect to see from the GMACW Career Pathway Report, including industry recognized certification recommendations, the academic offerings at each of the GMACW schools, and corresponding positions to the academic pathway.
 - Employers mentioned that they are all working under a certain codebook so the students will have to pass under that as well to be hired.
 - GMACW schools echoed that they know that the students will have to retest, but having the certifications makes their students ahead of the competition.

Fitters Pathway Review

- Katherine also provided a brief overview of the Fitters Pathway, and employers provided feedback including:
 - They are looking for both new employees and also retraining incumbent workers for their open and future fitters positions.
 - They would like to see more on the codes and standards that are needed such as the tolerances defined in codes and standards, ensuring students have the proper understanding of fit-up – the SME code tells you how much mismatch you can have and know the strategic things that would apply to the shop hands.
 - Fitters must be able look at shop drawings, read a procedure and understand it, fully understand blueprints, what weld symbols mean.
 - Weld Procedure Standards (WPS) should be included because fitters need to know how to be able to review that and work within it.
- Andy Cowan asked for a subcommittee of industry representatives to meet prior to the next full council meeting to review the Fitter Pathway information in more detail and make recommendations. Volunteers for the subcommittee included:
 - David Dingeldein
 - Clay Keeler
 - Tim Smith
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- o Jim Stafford
- o Jeremy Clark
- o Workforce Agency Presentation on Services
- Melanie Winfield from WIN provided information on the organization, which is a federally funded agency that provides opportunities for companies to meet their workforce needs.
 - o They provide up to \$4,000 per person in training grants to meet employers training needs at schools, and also provide support services such as tools, uniforms, and transportation assistance.
 - o WIN has incumbent worker training programs to train existing workforce to upgrade their skills, up to \$25,000 a year and can do \$50,000 over a 2 year period, however employer needs to contribute a 50% match of the costs, which can include wages.
 - o On-The-Job Training is another opportunity for newer employees, with WIN subsidizing up to 50% of wages while the employee is becoming proficient in the skills they need for the job, typically lasting around 6 weeks.
- The WIN Team includes 7 employees who can take employers' position requirements, screen candidates, and send them candidates that meet their requirements.
 - o They do not charge for these services because they are federally funded
 - o 901-636-7901 is direct line to the Business Services Department.
- Jobs4TN.gov is a job site funded and mandated by the state of Tennessee that hosts any job post that they have, and job seekers can also upload their resumes directly to the site.
- For new training programs the Steel Fabricators Council may be interested in starting with GMACW for their incumbent workforce, such as a Fitters Pathway, WIN can negotiate a contract so that each employer is providing the 50% match required for the incumbent worker training program, then all of the students can attend classes at a specific location.
- Employers can also call GMACW schools directly to send over resumes of candidates that fit their description.
 - o Manufacturing Day (MFG Day) – October 7th
- Anita Brackin, Memphis Chamber, reminded the group that on Friday, October 7th Greater Memphis Chamber is partnering with the Shelby County Schools take part in MFG Day to take student on tours, but can also reach out to create more activities.
 - o GMACW schools will also be doing activities
- Employers indicated that they are also looking for options for Saturday or weekend tours so that they don't have to shut down production.
- Anita informed employers that the Memphis Chamber can also assist in doing very small tours if that is what is best for the employers and their requirements. Coca Cola, for example, doesn't let those touring wear jewelry.

- A sign-up list was passed around for employers to indicate if they were interested in receiving more information from the Chamber about supporting MFG Day.
 - Need for Instructors
- Pauline Vernon, GMACW, informed the Council that each of the schools in the GMACW Consortium is always looking for new instructors, especially adjunct instructors who may be experienced employees, or for recent retirees or those thinking about retiring. Each of the schools then shared their input and experience. She also mentioned that as we are thinking about customized fitters training, employees could do team teaching with a college instructor to give the specific training.
- Southwest indicated that they are always looking for more instructors, both full time and evening instructors, and can even work with individuals to try a single course with them as an adjunct instructor. They can also provide professional development for the adjunct faculty to develop their techniques in the classroom.
- Mid-South has had companies send over current employees to teach because it helps them get the best students for recruiting, and helps with making sure that the students have the specific skills that the company needs. This also helps with building relationships for the students as they're coming into the workplace and providing students the tricks of the trade.
- TCAT indicated that almost all of their instructors come from industry, and while they do not have a specific opening, they always need substitutes or people who are able to do short term training in different companies.
- Moore Tech's instructor started as an adjunct while he was welding during the day and at the time was hand picking students for his company. He warned that teaching is completely different, but it helps to realize and understand both sides of welding.
 - Open Discussion
- Employers discussed what common solutions were for employee issues like attendance and punctuality, and retention. Suggestions to combat these issues that were offered included:
 - Developing a relationship with and talking to the instructors to figure out what kind of employee a prospective hire will be like.
 - Each instructor from the GMACW schools indicated they are willing and happy to do that, and would like feedback from the employers telling the schools if students don't show up, or if their resumes need improvement so that they don't keep sending out the same students if they aren't doing well.
 - ASU trying to do a real world workforce scenario, including having students punch in and out when they arrive with deductions for arriving late, and also have students doing welding on beams, with mirrors, etc. to encounter real world scenarios.

- o To make welding more real for students, employers could also send over small projects which have material and prints that can be taught in a semester or two. Moore Tech is currently doing this and then sending the projects back to the companies.
- o Next Steps and Moving Forward
- Next meeting will be the third Tuesday of October (October 18th).
- The Council Chairs are looking for suggestions for open discussion topics on what issues that employers would like to discuss
- Looking to also expand the pool of students coming into manufacturing and employers that are engaged in the council
- Survey of Welding Requirements: looking especially for entry level positions – would like them to send us the sample job postings, then start developing the survey from there to ensure that we have the specific skills that they’re looking for
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 - o The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.