

## Mid-south Steel Fabricators Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

ASU Mid-South Welding Annex

### Meeting Notes

#### Meeting Participants

##### **Attendees**

##### **Companies**

Barnhart Crane

- David Dingeldein

Crystal Steel Memphis

- Steve Clark
- Bill Lo

Delmuss Woody

GMW Inc.

- Tim Smith

Keeler Iron Works

- Clay Keeler

Lewis Mechanical

- Ryan Green

Plant Maintenance Service Corp.

- Stan Rodgers

Providential Fabricators

- Rich Reigel

Rees-Memphis

- Andy Cowan

SFI Fabrication

- John Whittington

o Latanyua Robinson

Greater Memphis Chamber

o Anita Brackin

##### **Workforce Resources**

Arkansas State University Mid-South

o Ed Cook

o Alex Lamm

o Emilee Sides

o Pete Seldon

Moore Tech

o John Schmidt

Southwest Tennessee Community College

o Chris Ezell

o Willie Burley

Tennessee College of Applied Technology

o Andy Helms

Workforce Investment Network

o Henry Lewis

##### **Guests**

The Manufacturing Institute, NAM

Katherine McClelland

Thomas P. Miller and Associates

- Sara Hunt

##### **Staff**

Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive  
Workforce

o Pauline Vernon

#### **Welcome to ASU Mid-South / Tour of the ASU Mid-South Welding Annex**

Pete Selden, Associate Vice Chancellor of Workforce Education, welcomed the Steel Fabricators Council to ASU Mid-South and introduced his lead welding instructor, Ed Cook who led a tour of the Welding Annex.

#### **Meeting Welcome and Introductions**

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

### **Career Pathways Implementation Report**

- Katherine McClelland (**The Manufacturing Institute**) provided an overview of the GMACW Career Pathway Report. This included the background research and overview of the labor market information to provide the foundation for the report. Additional elements included industry recognized certification recommendations, the academic programs in the GMACW consortium, and national best practices that have been incorporated into the report.
- Sara Hunt (**Thomas P. Miller and Associates**) provided a detailed description of the recommended Steel Fabrication Career Pathway, including the certifications, exposure, program focus, GMACW schools for each step, and the fabrication-related occupations aligned with each step. The steps are as follows:
  - **Step 1** – Foundational Skills (Exposure) - provides generalized, exploratory entry points and preparation for various manufacturing career pathways, including welding, for high school students and transitioning adults
  - **Step 2** – Work-Ready (Entry level) - leads to welding positions which typically require minimal formal education followed by on-the-job training
  - **Step 3** – High-Need Skills (Advanced level) - students continue along a welding track, gaining greater competence in welding processes in more challenging positions, with more challenging metals, and earning higher-level AWS certifications
  - **Step 4** – Subject Matter Expert - often achieved only after many years of experience; the individuals in these roles often have extensive institutional knowledge and should be tapped as mentors for the emerging workforce
- Sara also provided a visual overview of the Career Pathway Draft, which includes average wages per step.

### **Fitters Pathway Review and Update**

- David Dingeldien (**Barnhart Crane**) gave an update of the work that the Fitters Subcommittee has completed and work yet to come. Based on the work of the subcommittee, a pathway has been identified, key competencies have been defined and employer requirements have been identified.
- The next steps in the subcommittee are to meet with the GMACW schools identified as potential partners to work to develop a curriculum and program options within the coming year.

### **Manufacturing Month**

- Anita Brackin (**Memphis Chamber**) gave the group an update on Manufacturing Day and indicated that there were still opportunities to take part in Manufacturing Month events throughout the month of October.

### **Open Discussion**

- Employers expressed interest in opportunities to provide exposure to the different types of fabrication careers so that students know what to expect when taking a position.
  - Many were interested in either short-term or longer-term internships and using these as a form of pre-screening for employees they would potentially hire
- Financial literacy and employability skills are a major point of importance for all employers, and they indicated that they are interested in the free online course on MemphisWorks.com
  - Some employers suggested using the MemphisWorks financial literacy course as part of employee orientation
- Employers indicated they would like to see machine operators be another focus of the Council and possibly another subcommittee, as CNC and drill operation are two needs that are common amongst Council members

### **Next Steps and Moving Forward**

- Next meeting will be held in January 2017
- The Council will be looking into best practices for work based learning, internships and apprenticeships, and will incorporate that into the plans for 2017
- Survey of Welding Requirements: looking especially for entry level positions – would like employers to send GMACW sample job postings