

ROGUE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

Meeting Summary – Rogue Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (RAMP) – July 15, 2016

- The RAMP meeting was attended by 13 manufacturing leaders (see attached list) and Dr. Cathy Kemper-Pelle, President, Rogue Community College
- Jim provided a brief summary of the previous RAMP meeting, which focused on identifying priority workforce issues: (1) Manufacturing Awareness and Image Campaign; (2) Recruiting and Maintaining a Skilled Workforce and (3) Advocacy for Manufacturing Workforce Policies
- Audrey provided highlights of the meeting with educational leaders. The bottom line of that meeting was that both the high schools and community college are ready to move forward with aligning industry certifications with career technical programs of study. The State Department of Education is providing an incentive fund to support that effort, but educators need guidance on which certifications are of greatest value to employers.
- In support of that request, the agenda for the RAMP meeting focused on a discussion of:
 - Key manufacturing certifications that have been endorsed at the national level
 - An overview of the perceived value of those certifications by other employers
 - Identifying those of greatest value to RAMP members and other regional manufacturers
 - Implications for hiring and promotional practices
- The point was made that the region is extremely well poised to launch a major new initiative focused on manufacturing, given new leadership in key positions. Buy-in from manufacturers will be critical, and the members of RAMP will have a major role to play in serving as “champions” to communicate with other business leaders about the outreach campaign, certification initiative and policies that may have to change at the local and state levels.
- Cathy made the suggestion that it would be important to combine and/or coordinate the efforts of the RAMP and the college manufacturing advisory group, so those manufacturers would be on the same page and working to support the RAMP initiatives. She also pointed out that the direction the conversation is headed is very much aligned with the direction she is planning for the college in terms of working closely with the high schools and expanding dual credit. Industry certifications can serve as a bridge in that effort.
- RAMP members liked the idea of “stackable” credentials, and they could see how someone graduating with an industry certification could go to work for them and then go back to school to earn an additional credential and industry certification. The visual that illustrates that model (an example developed at Alamo Community College in Texas with neighborhood high schools) is attached for reference. This is the type of model the educators are interested in building in the region, with input and guidance from manufacturers.
- Audrey reviewed industry certifications that are widely used nationally: National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC); Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT); Manufacturing Skills Institute Manufacturing Technician Level 1 (MT1); American Welding Society (AWS); and National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS). See Power Point presentation for details. RAMP members also expressed an interest in certifications for multi-skill/ mechatronics and purchasing.
- The next RAMP meeting will focus on: (1) next steps on selecting certifications of greatest value; (2) discussing strategies for a manufacturing awareness campaign; and (3) highlighting plans for the two-day educator workshop in October to begin the process of embedding industry certifications of value to manufacturers into high school and community college programs of study.