**MJSP Funded Projects**

**October 24th, 2022**

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Anoka Ramsey Community College | Kurt Machining | $49,596 | Partnership |
| Kurt Machining (KM), located in Minneapolis, is a contract manufacturer that does machining, die casting, impact extrusion, screw machining, assembly, and other such services. The current KM workforce has a growing turnover rate due to employees seeking advancement opportunities at other companies. During the ongoing labor crunch, KM believes that it is critical to retain employees through upskilling them for new internal opportunities and commensurate pay increases. In Partnership with Anoka-Ramsey Community College (ARCC), KM proposes a New Employee Academy which would provide training and ARCC certifications of core competency in essential work skills for new or recently hired employees. Many of their new hires lack critical machine operations skills and this training will allow KM to recruit a more diverse workforce that has less experience in a manufacturing environment. Specific training topics will include Tools of Production, Mechanics of Production, Methods of Measurement, and Computer Software Systems. In addition to the New Employee Academy, an Advancement Academy training program will be implemented to upskill the existing employees that are critical to KM operations. These employees will receive specialty training on CNC Basic Programming, CNC G&M Coding, and Computerized Coordinate Measuring. It is expected that the proposed training project will bring new hires up to speed for high operational quality while also providing skill advancement opportunities to critical KM workers.  Contact: Matthew Salo, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 763-422-6116 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Anoka Ramsey Community College | Priority Envelope | $49,299 | Partnership |
| Priority Envelope (PE), located in Minneapolis, is a custom envelope manufacturer that provides envelope converting and specialty equipment designed to provide multiple types of envelopes. As an essential business, PE was able to maintain full staffing during the pandemic. During that time, they developed a plan for continuing to move the company forward post pandemic. As part of this plan, PE seeks to retain their current staff levels with a training program that reinvests in their workforce. The training program will enhance machine maintenance skills, internal and external communication abilities, technical skills for using state-of-the-art printing equipment, and supervisory skills for managers. Specific training topics will include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Foundations of Supervision; Leadership for Leads; Serving the Customer; Die Cutter Technical Skills; and FTA Color Press Technical Skills. The proposed training is expected to assist in the identification of potential PE Leaders, technicians, and customer service staff across the organization. Those that receive training will be provided with certificates of completion from ARCC and they may be eligible for third-party equipment manufacturer’s certifications.  Contact: Matthew Salo, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 763-422-6116 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Century College | Nonin Medical | $49,749 | Partnership |
| Nonin Medical, located in Plymouth, is a medical device manufacturer that creates noninvasive patient monitoring devices for healthcare professionals and individual users. For years, the medical device manufacturing industry has faced economic pressure to create demanding high-quality products quickly at low prices, and this has led to many businesses in this industry moving overseas. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic and the current labor crisis have both had a deleterious effect on attracting skilled applicants and retaining the existing workforce. Nonin understands that their competitiveness in this market requires that they train entry-level workers, retrain existing workers, and nurture the potential of their current workforce while offering them a culture where professional growth and advancement within the company are possible. The training program will allow for the consistency and compliance their customers demand as well as develop current and future talent for supervisory and management roles. The aim of the training project is to enhance the skills available throughout Nonin’s employee base by providing a combination of industry required hands-on-training along with leadership and customer service focused courses. The training topics will include IPC J-Std-001 certification, communication skills, leadership/management skills, customer service, and Lean Principles. The proposed project is expected to increase the knowledge base of Nonin’s workforce overall while directly impacting the company’s bottom line. It also provides training and advancement opportunities within the company and industry at larger to participating workers.  Contact: Eric Riedel, Century College, 651-779-3310 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Century College | PowerMation | $45,889 | Partnership |
| Power/Mation, located in St Paul, provides automation solutions fit for specific industry operations such as robotics, process automation, industrial internet, and pneumatics solutions. During the pandemic, Power/Mation saw growth due to the need for continued production streams in other industries despite those industries also needing to limit person-to-person contact in their own workforces. However, Power/Mation understands that further growth will only be facilitated by investing in their current workforce. In order to retain and grow the company from within, Power/Mation proposes a training program that will enhance the soft and technical skills of their current workforce. Training topics will include Communication Skills; Continuous Improvement; Customer Service; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Providing Feedback; MS Excel; Basic Computer Skills; and Leadership. It is believed that this training model will improve the internal culture of the organization and that it will also improve communication between employees and current and potential customers.  Contact: Eric Riedel, Century College, 651-779-3310 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| South Central College, Mankato | Alumacraft Boat Company | $49,447 | Partnership |
| Alumacraft Boat Company (ABC), located in St. Peter, is a manufacturer of recreational transportation vehicles. In 2018, ABC was purchased by its now parent company Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP); an acquisition and integration process has been ongoing since. However, the pandemic slowed down this integration process significantly. In order to integrate the two companies in a timely manner and prepare for anticipated growth, ABC proposes a training program that will bring ABC management up to speed and encourage the development of a more inclusive and effective workplace culture. The company acquisition means that ABC workers and leaders must be exposed to a new way of doing business, and it is essential that new and emerging leaders in this workforce be trained for this process. In cooperation with South Central College, ABC has created a training plan that incorporates multiple management skills as well as BRP’s Corporate Social Responsibility plan (CSR25). Specifically, training will be provided in the areas of CSR25 for Leaders, Change & Transition, Leading to Safety, Leading from the Front, and Supportive Supervision. It is believed that the induction of such skills in the workforce will enable a smooth and orderly integration of ABC with Bombardier Recreational Products and position ABC as the cornerstone of BRP’s marine products division.  Contact: Tanja Stading, South Central College, Mankato, 805-389-7392 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| South Central College, Mankato | Dakota County Lumber | $49,704 | Partnership |
| Dakota County Lumber (DCL), located in Farmington, is a lumber yard that provides goods and services to local residential construction businesses. In recent years, DCL has seen an increase in business and growth. DCL had previously operated as a small family-owned business, but this growth period has prompted the company to develop future plans for further business growth. This means that the company must adopt new methods and processes for doing business at larger scales and with more commercial partners. In order to do this, DCL is proposing an alteration to its current organizational structure such that they will be better able to expand product lines and grow business-to-business services. DCL also believes that it is imperative to introduce and train the current workforce in these new methods and processes. Training will include Planning for Growth, On-Boarding Reboot, Leadership Styles, Influencing Without Authority, and Systems of Communication. It is anticipated that the training program will enable DCL to make the transition from a small “family owned” business style to a larger and more productive business-to-business service pipeline. It is also intended that providing on-boarding training to their existing employees will ensure a common understanding of how the company will operate going forward.  Contact: Tanja Stading, South Central College, Mankato, 805-389-7392 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Anoka Ramsey Community College | Lexington Manufacturing | $300,000 | Partnership |
| Lexington Manufacturing Inc. (LM), with location in Coon Rapids and Brainerd, is a window, door, and structural millwork component parts supplier which also provides customized manufacturing and fabrication services for customers. The company is currently experiencing a post pandemic growth period due to previously unmet customer needs in the housing industry. LM has increased its workforce significantly, and, while a previous grant between MJSP and LM has met most training needs for the company, the larger workforce, historic difficulty retaining employees in this particular industry, and post-pandemic labor force difficulties has prompted another training proposal. While high turnover still exists in production operations, LM is detecting a troubling trend in turnover across all departments. It is a very common situation that is facing the state of MN where the unemployment rate is historically low. This has been coupled with a large wave of retirements nationwide and LM has experienced this phenomenon as well. This situation has prompted LM to produce a holistic growth and training plan that focuses on the individual needs of its workers. The proposed training is segmented into three groups that together form a training plan called the Center for Growth and Excellence. The Foundations Academy is expected to provide training that will ensure the success of new and entry-level workers with an individualized approach to each new worker. Amongst other topics, training will include Diversity Equity and Inclusion and On-Boarding. The Growth Academy focuses on training existing and advancing new employees at LM. Training will focus on developing technical skills, computer software usage, and process improvement methodologies. It is anticipated that Growth Academy training will provide job mobility by providing cross training, multi-skilling, and progressive skilling. The Leadership Academy will provide training necessary for current and aspiring leaders to advance into leadership positions. This training segment will provide core training in being a leader while also assisting current leaders in training in how to build and maintain a positive work environment with a diverse workforce.  Contact: Matthew Salo, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 763-422-6116 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Century College | Delkor Systems | $300,000 | Partnership |
| Delkor Systems, located in Arden Hills, is manufacturer of advanced robotic packaging systems and the automation partner for a wide array of food, beverage, and consumer product manufacturers. From 2010 to 2022, Delkor has had a workforce that increased from 50 to 330 employees. The company is positioned as a leading advanced robotic packaging system manufacturer during a historic labor crunch. This creates a situation of unprecedented demand for automated systems and induces Delkor to invest in training programs that are efficient, effective, and quick to raise their workforces’ skill levels. The current labor crunch is further exacerbated by the ongoing retirement of older workers that is occurring both nationally and locally. In addition to this, the advanced technology required by advanced robotic systems requires a workforce that has cutting edge awareness of technology and software skills which can be challenging to acquire and retain in the workforce at this time. Delkor will partner with Century College to create comprehensive customized videos that cover everything needed for employees to learn about a single topic or work instruction in a short period of time. It is anticipated that, as employees move through the training curriculum, they will have increased opportunities for career advancement by completing quantifiable skills evaluation gates that have been established by management. To this end, Delkor is partnering with Century College to jointly prepare a digital training library to encourage and support workforce development. The digital training library paired with Delkor’s established processes and procedures is intended to be easily and efficiently accessible from employee workstations. In addition to training videos that cover over 200 topics ranging from general knowledge such as how to measure a part to specific machine operation procedures, training will also be provided in GD&T and PMMI (Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute).  Contact: Eric Riedel, Century College, 651-779-3310 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Century College | IC System | $300,000 | Partnership |
| IC System, located in Vadnais Heights, is a nationally licensed accounts receivable management firm that focuses on ethical debt collection. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a change in how remote work was perceived by both workers and employers. Prior to COVID, Minnesota law required call center agents working in collections to be physically at their place of work, but this law was temporarily amended during the pandemic and a new law has now gone into effect that allows work-from-home options on a permanent basis on the condition that a collection agency must be able to prove that they were providing secure technology to protect consumer data. The demand for remote work combined with the ongoing challenges in the national labor force has made the clear case for IC System to offer comprehensive remote work options. However, collection agents at IC System require comprehensive training, including monitored calls and one-on-one debriefing sessions, to learn how to perform their job. To improve retention efforts, IC System must pivot towards a remote work option while also offering the extensive remote training necessary to performing collections work. IC System will partner with Century College to develop a virtual classroom experience where new employees learn about company culture, laws, procedures, and approved collection techniques on self-paced schedules. Subject matter experts at IC System and continuing education experts at Century College will focus on updating and converting IC System’s current training program, which consists of 80 hours of classroom training and 40 hours of hands-on training, to an online program, which will involve the redevelopment of training materials into web-based materials, updating of role play scenarios, modernization of online content, and re-development of training modules for a virtual workplace. Training will include many topic areas such as Personal Card Industry Compliance, Collections Compliance, Quality Control, Ethical Collections Practices, and Customer Services. In addition, documentation of workplace procedures will be produced and distributed to new agents and supervisors to ensure that all new employees have ready access to critical information.  Contact: Eric Riedel, Century College, 651-779-3310 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Hennepin Technical College, Brooklyn Park | Myplas USA | $270,243 | Partnership |
| Myplas USA, Inc., located in Rogers, is a manufacturer that recycles rigid plastic packaging into exportable plastics compounds. The first branch of Myplas is located in Cape Town, South Africa and they are expanding to Rogers, Minnesota with a new film recycling plant. This represents the first international expansion for the company, and it comes at an opportune time to meet the Midwest’s need for plastics recycling while also providing workforce opportunities in a metropolitan area. Due to China banning the importation of plastics to their country in 2018, the United States has seen a large increase in plastic recycling needs because of accumulated plastic waste. In addition, the pandemic produced a rise in single use plastic items that further exacerbated the issue. The Myplas Rogers facility meets a need in both the local ecosystem and state economy by training workers to process plastics that would have likely ended up in Minnesotan waterways. The proposed curriculum for workers at the Rogers facility includes safety, quality, and technical skills needed to process plastics components. Training will be provided in the following courses: Principles of Process Quality, Identify and Process Waste, Intro to Polymer Chemistry, Plastics Material Processing, Extrusion I, Line Leadership, OSHA and other various safety courses. Trainees who complete the Extrusion training will receive 3 college credits that can be applied towards the Plastic Extrusion Occupational Certificate.  Contact: Richard Kelly, Hennepin Technical College, Brooklyn Park, 763-488-2728 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| MN State, Mankato | Lou-Rich Inc. | $300,000 | Partnership |
| Lou Rich, located in Albert Lea, is a contract manufacturer that provides precision machining, metal fabrication, assembly, and sourcing solutions to various industries. The company is currently in competition for labor in southern MN where it is particularly challenging for employers to hire workers. The company has indicated that many of its workers lack a basic, fundamental understanding of lean manufacturing principles and proper training and application of these tools will help position them for stable, sustained growth in their industry. Lou Rich has seen success in training and developing workers in the hopes of retaining them for the long term. The proposed training program will focus on Process Improvement and Redesign courses that will be delivered to all production employees on staff. All of the training is considered advanced, due to the fact that the industry requires a great deal of automation. Training in the following courses will be provided: Intro to Lean, One Piece Flow, Single Minute Exchange of Dies/Quick Changeovers, Poke Yoke, Value Stream Mapping, Waste Identification, and Design for Manufacturability.  Contact: Tammy Bohlke, MN State University Mankato, 507-389-2572 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| St. Cloud State University | Dubow Textile | $280,000 | Partnership |
| Dubow Textile, located in St. Cloud, provides decorating services for apparel and consumer requested items with processes such as embroidery, applique, laser etching, digital printing, screen printing, and so on. During the initial stages of the COVID pandemic, Dubow lost a significant number of employees, but a shift in the consumer landscape to online ordering suddenly created a need for a large amount of hiring. Since this shift, employee growth has remained strong; however, Dubow has struggled to train new hires in quality improvement processes while also incorporating succession planning into the growing workforce. During the current labor crunch, it is understood by Dubow that retaining their workforce is a critical element of their own economic growth. In coordination with St. Cloud State University (SCSU), Dubow endeavors to create a Learning Management System for their employees. This will create a training foundation in three fundamental curriculum tracks: Workforce Development/Employee Engagement, Process Improvement/Operations, and Technical Training. The Workforce Development/Employee Engagement track focuses recruitment and retention optimization; supervisory skills development; emerging leaders development; diversity, equity and inclusion; communication; and succession planning. The Process Improvement/Operations track will train employees in lean manufacturing topics, quality management processes, financial acumen, project management, operational processes, machine operation and safety. The final track, Technical Training, will provide MS Office training, effective writing skills, PulseID software system training.  Contact: Ileana Merten, St Cloud State University, 320-308-6160 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| St. Cloud State University | Essilor Luxottica | $260,000 | Partnership |
| EssilorLuxottica, located in St Cloud, is a vertically integrated multinational corporation that designs, produces, and markets ophthalmic lenses, optical equipment, prescription glasses and sunglasses. The optical industry is an international growth industry, and it is expected to grow significantly over the next 10 years. This growing demand will also fuel growth for ophthalmic laboratory technicians. Despite this projected growth, local colleges often do not offer optical degrees and there is currently a local shortage of applicants for these positions. In addition, with increasing technological advancements in the industry, to remain a leader in the industry, EssilorLuxottica’s goal is to become ISO 13485 certified. To do so, they must meet stringent requirements and have effective processes in place. EssilorLuxottica’s new training program is divided into three tracks: Workforce Development/Employee Engagement, Process Improvement/Operations, and Technical Skills. The first track focuses on the creation of a workplace culture that enables growth, embraces diversity, builds employee relations, and retains workers. Courses here will focus on conflict resolution, diversity and inclusion, and employment law. The second track, Process Improvement/Operations, will focus on EssilorLuxottica’s goal of becoming ISO 13485 Certified, and, to that end, employees will be trained in Six Sigma, ISO Standards Certification, and Project Management. The final training track, Technical Training, will focus on the design, maintenance, support, and operation of Ophthalmic Equipment and ophthalmic products. Courses will include Advanced Ophthalmic Continuing Education courses, Automation Technology, Mechanical Pneumatics and Schematics, and Microsoft applications.  Contact: Ileana Merten, St Cloud State University, 320-308-6160 | | | |