

MCC's M-TEC Program Provides Valuable Workforce Aid

by Jim Stickford

Designed to provide its graduates with practical and desired skills, M-TEC celebrated the 10th anniversary of its integrated workforce training program at the Macomb Community College Oct. 31.

The MCC's Michigan Technical Education Center facility on Tank Avenue in Warren is just one of 18 of Michigan's M-TEC locations across the state.

Holger Ekanger, director, Engineering & Advanced Technology at Macomb Community College, said it's important to celebrate the college's 10 years of affiliation with M-TEC because of the service that is provided to both students and businesses.

"The students who take M-TEC classes are incumbents who are with employers," Ekanger said. "Businesses come to us and say they have these employees we need to retrain or maybe upskill."

The school works with businesses to make sure that students are learning skills for which there is a demand in the workforce.

Macomb's M-TEC also provides grant-funded training programs that are targeted at the dislocated, the unemployed and the underemployed.

"Again, we work with companies so that these grant-funded students get the skills they need for employers to hire them at the back end, when they complete their course work," Ekanger said.

"Private companies come in and help validate course content. They say, 'Here are the skills we require and are hiring for.'"

"We cover classes in advanced automotive technology, advanced manufacturing, and alter-

nate and renewable energy training. We also provide placement services once students finish their courses.

"The idea is provide employers with workers who have the skills employers need right now."

Macomb's M-TEC works with all the community colleges in Southeast Michigan and has connections with local high schools as well, Ekanger said.

"In the last two-and-a-half years, we have placed 892 graduates with 386 different companies," Ekanger said.

"The length of training courses vary. The longest is 17 weeks. The higher the level of skills required, the longer the more training is required."

Ekanger said the college is looking for students for its grant-training programs. Interested potential students should call 586-498-4100 to learn more about the programs.

"This M-TEC facility is important," said Daniel Nowicki, division chief financial officer for Hampson Aerospace in Macomb Township. "I've been involved as an advisor since day one."

"In a good economy such as we had 10 years ago, we couldn't find enough skilled workers. Now they are more valuable than ever and we businesses end up stealing them from each other."

The problem is only going to get worse in the next decade, Nowicki said. Many of today's skilled technicians are in their 50s and will be retiring. That makes it very important to train the next generation of skilled techs.

"This is not the old days,"



Jim Sawyer

Nowicki said. "Today's technicians work in air-conditioned factories using sophisticated technology. The days of manual labor in factories is gone. We have a perpetual 'help wanted' sign up, but we're looking for skilled and trained workers."

Jim Sawyer, MCC provost and vice president for the learning unit, said part of the problem is that young people are being steered away from manufacturing training.

They're going toward IT or health care, which are growing job markets, but so is manufacturing.

"The feedback we get from the companies we work with is that they are looking for young people," Sawyer said.

"We grant associate degrees, but we don't want people to end their education there. We encourage people to go on and get their bachelor's degrees and even go beyond that."

Mulally Remains Ford Motor CEO Through 2014

Ford executive chairman Bill Ford announced on Nov. 1 that Alan Mulally plans to continue to serve as the company's CEO through at least 2014.

He also said that Mark Fields has been named Ford's chief operating officer, effective Dec. 1, 2012.

Mulally will continue leading the long-term strategic development of the One Ford plan. Fields, in turn, will be responsible for all business operations and will continue to report to Mulally, as will the company's chief financial officer, general counsel and group vice president of Human Resources and Corporate Services.

"Today marks an important next step in the profitable growth of Ford Motor Company and the appointment of key leaders who will help us continue to make progress on our One Ford plan," said Bill Ford.

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John Fikany from Microsoft to Speak To 'Young Leaders'

As part of its DEC Young Leader Series, the Detroit Economic Club is hosting John Fikany at a special networking reception on Thursday, Nov. 15, beginning at 4 p.m. at the Microsoft Office & Technology Center in Southfield.

The event is for DEC Young Leader Members exclusively. To learn more, visit www.econclub.org.

Fikany is the Microsoft enterprise executive leader for what the company calls "the Heartland Area" - Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee.

In this role, he leads a diverse team of sales, technical, marketing and services professionals supporting all commercial sector enterprise industry accounts in those four states.

In addition, he is the Executive Sponsor for multiple national strategic initiatives.

With more than 24 years of sales and industry leadership, Fikany served as vice president of Microsoft's \$6.2B U.S. commercial sectors industry practice responsible for driving industry strategy, sales, services, partner and marketing execution for 19 verticals.

This organization serviced over 3,600 national commercial customers, in the manufacturing, healthcare, financial services, retail, distribution and professional services sectors.

He served on the North American Enterprise Product Group Leadership Team.

Prior to this role, Fikany was the vice president responsible for building out the U.S. manufacturing industry sector for Microsoft.

His duties included automotive and industrial equipment, high-tech manufacturing, CPG, and oil and gas that supported 1,100 strategic national enterprise customers and more than \$1.2 billion in revenue.

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