MJSP Funded Projects

October 23, 2023

# Partnership Grants

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $399,187

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): Wilson Tool International Inc.

Project Summary: Wilson Tool International (WTI), a global tooling solutions company based in White Bear Lake, MN, is seeking a state grant for job training to address pressing training requirements stemming from the evolving landscape of global machine tooling. With the global machine tool market projected to reach $137 billion by 2030 and grow at a 5.7% annual rate from 2023 to 2030, WTI faces increased demand, primarily in aerospace, automotive, and defense sectors that demand higher precision and efficiency. To remain competitive, WTI must embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) which is sweeping through the manufacturing industry. 4IR involves digitization, data application, electronic connectivity, analytics, and the application of robotics and artificial intelligence. WTI must automate machining processes and equip its workforce with skills to handle increasingly complex products. The shift towards energy-efficient tools and digital transformation in the automotive industry also has significant implications for WTI's operations. WTI's training needs encompass aligning the entire organization with its new vision, embracing diversity in its workforce, preserving institutional knowledge, improving data analytics and communication, streamlining production processes, strengthening leadership at all levels, enhancing core technical skills, and upgrading skills for operating advanced automated equipment.

Grantee: Century College Award Amount: $237,513

Grantee Contact: Eric Riedel, 651-779-3310

Contributing Business(es): Advanced Molding Technologies

Project Summary: Advanced Molding Technologies (AMT), located in Circle Pines, MN, is a plastic-injection molding company that manufactures plastic parts for a variety of industries. The pandemic led to a significant decline in the labor force, with a notable exit of workers aged 55+ due to early retirements. As demand for medical-grade products surged, AMT expanded its facilities and needs qualified employees to meet growth. They struggled to find skilled candidates for maintenance and mold technician positions, necessitating additional training resources. Recognizing the need for enhanced training and development, AMT conducted surveys that highlighted employees' desires for better training, growth opportunities, and resource management. To address these issues, they initiated the creation of an official Training and Development Program, focusing on onboarding and ongoing training. Managers and supervisors identified specific training needs, with requests for IQMS, automation, robotics, leadership, communication, and various manufacturing-related topics.

Grantee: Hennepin Technical College Award Amount: $391,213

Grantee Contact: Leslie Price, 763-488-3705

Contributing Business(es): Rosenbauer America LLC

Project Summary: Rosenbauer America LLC, located in Wyoming, MN, is a custom manufacturer of fire trucks with 14 locations worldwide. Rosenbauer's manufacturing operations are expanding to meet the surging demand for advanced firefighting technologies, driven by increasing fire safety awareness, a rise in fire incidents, and the need for innovative firefighting vehicles. In Minnesota alone, 70 individuals lost their lives in fires in 2022, marking one of the deadliest years in three decades. Furthermore, the United States has witnessed an 18% increase in its fire death rate from 2012 to 2021, with forest fires becoming more widespread. As Rosenbauer experiences this heightened demand for firefighting equipment, scaling its operations becomes imperative. The grant addresses a need to advance their current employees and train new, entry-level employees to meet increasing demand. This grant is essential for Rosenbauer to fulfill its manufacturing needs, address the demand for firefighting technologies, and contribute to the economic growth of the region.

# Short Form Grants

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $49,969

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): Aggressive Hydraulics

Project Summary: Aggressive Hydraulics (AH), located in Cedar, MN, designs, engineers, and manufactures hydraulic cylinders and components. AH has seen significant growth in recent years resulting in a 40,000-foot expansion of its facility and a nearly 50% increase in employment. This expansion places pressure on new and existing employees to meet production quotas while retaining high quality throughput. New hires often lack the core skills necessary to ensure high and consistent performance. In addition, new product lines along with a shift towards a highly automated, high-speed production environment has resulted in additional training needs for both new and existing employees. To address these training needs, AH plans to partner with ARCC to provide training in interpreting electronic schematics, setup time reduction, automated production systems, and leadership skills. It is anticipated that this training program will provide employees with the skills necessary to function in a highly automated and electronic environment.

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $49,969

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): Asmodee North America

Project Summary: Asmodee NA, with locations in Roseville and Lino Lakes, is a board game developer, publisher, and distributor. Asmodee is a dynamic, innovative, and growing company. They believe a diverse workforce has been a positive force in their growth and to ensure their workforce continues to grow in both diversity and number, Asmodee would like to develop a formal DE&I program. Asmodee sees a solid base of understanding and skill development of its leadership network in both of its Twin Cities facility as an essential prerequisite to creating a full-blown DE&I program. Towards this end, the company will partner with ARCC to develop the initial training program that will be aimed at their leadership structure. Training will be provided in variety of DE&I topics including Diversity Awareness, Cultivating a Culture of Belonging, Unconscious Bias, Inclusive Communication, Conflict Resolution in a Diverse Environment, and Diversity Recruitment and Advancement. It is anticipated that this training will better prepare leadership to manage in a dynamic, diverse, growth-oriented workplace.

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $49,871

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): Gassen Inc.

Project Summary: Gassen Inc., located in Eden Prairie, MN, is a property management business that provides services that include homeowners association management, financial services, maintenance and construction, capital improvement, project management, and HOA board member training. Gassen has identified multiple weaknesses in the property management industry’s operational functions that impedes growth of the field. These weaknesses include recruiting individuals that see property management as a career choice, proper on-board training, a lack of continuous training, and a lack of training in the financial management of properties and property management technology and software. Gassen has partnered with ARCC to develop Gassen University, which will serve as the training arm of Gassen to train Gassen employees as well as HOA staff and board members. The program will provide training in four key areas: Associate On-Boarding, Intro to Property Management, Property Management Accounting, and HOA Management. Training is expected to form a strong base of Gassen employee understanding within all employee positions.

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $49,526

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): MRG Tool & Die

Project Summary: MRG Tool & Die, located in Faribault, MN, is a sole source tool and die company that specializes in close tolerance metal working. Due to previous workforce training efforts, MRG is better able to respond to market opportunities. However, a review of MRG’s current production capacity and technology indicates that to take advantage of these opportunities will require the adoption of high-tech equipment along with corresponding higher skill levels in their workforce. Rather than trying to increase production through adding to their workforce, MRG is currently in the process of replacing older equipment with new, high-tech equipment and is implementing a strategy to keep its highly skilled workforce through an aggressive retention program that will include training for the skills needed to operate a new generation of technology and the creation of a more defined career path for long-term advancement. MRG has partnered with ARCC to retrain employees in skills critical to production including Machining Technology and Operations, Organizational and Job Mapping, Building Out Production Systems, Paperless Production, and Staff Alignment and Advancement. It is anticipated that this training program will provide MRG with the ability to build the technical and trades skills of its workforce and realign its production process while retaining workers during a critical workforce shortage.

Grantee: Anoka-Ramsey Community College Award Amount: $49,836

Grantee Contact: Matthew Salo, 763-422-6116

Contributing Business(es): Resolution Medical

Project Summary: Resolution Medical (RM), located in Fridley, MN, is a development and manufacturing company for medical devices and components. Because RM is in the highly complex and technical medical device industry where product safety is a must, every aspect in the process of product development, design, production, testing, sale and performance requires constant rigor, precise product knowledge, and detailed understanding of every aspect in the creation and use of the device. Any miscommunication or misinterpretation in the process can result in compromising product performance. Therefore, it is critical that extremely detailed, technical information from highly-trained, scientifically-skilled employees such as engineers and project managers, is communicated in a way that is understandable to vendors, employees and customers. To this end, RM is partnering with ARCC to provide training for Project Managers, Engineers, and Managers that will enable them to interpret and translate difficult subject matter into easily understood terms. Training will be provided in the areas of Project Management, Communicating & Presenting Technical Information, and Data Analysis & Interpretation.

Grantee: St. Cloud State University Award Amount: $49,998

Grantee Contact: Ileana Merten, 320-308-6160

Contributing Business(es): Park Industries

Project Summary: Park Industries, located in St. Cloud, MN, is North America’s largest manufacturer of stone worker equipment. As Park Industries continues to look to the future and future growth, they will be developing from a machine manufacturing company to a company that provides automated solutions for their customers. As Park Industries seeks to thrive in the digital age, investing in the development of their leaders becomes crucial. To this end, the company seeks to improve the skills of its leaders to proactively adapt to market changes, foster innovation, and embrace new approaches to address dynamic market conditions efficiently. The training program proposed here intends to provide leadership at Park Industries with the ability to rapidly evolve strategies crucial for business success by fostering a learning culture that promotes curiosity and continuous improvement. In partnership with SCSU, training will be provided in the areas of Fostering Collaboration, Processing Feedback & Constructive Criticism, Crucial Conversations, Elevating Potential, Tri-Metrics Certification, and Executive & C-Suite Transformation. It is anticipated that the training program will help Park Industries create a strong foundation for their coming growth and development.

Grantee: South Central College Award Amount: $49,488

Grantee Contact: Tanja Sigurdson, 507-382-1152

Contributing Business(es): Siwek Lumber & Millwork Jordan

Project Summary: Siwek Lumber & Millwork, located in Jordan, MN, is a lumber, tools, and hardware supplier for homeowners and contractors throughout the state. Siwek, with lumber yards in Jordan and Minneapolis and a sawmill in LeSeur, is in a transition from a second-generation family-owned business to a third generation of ownership while also expanding from a simple family-owned lumber business to a multi-faceted home improvement business. This transition period requires a retraining of management personnel as well as organizational and cultural transition training as older employees retire and a new generation of employees on-board. The training program proposed between Siwek and South Central College will enhance workforce professionalism and organizational marketing, and facilitate the cultural transition of the business as it makes these large changes in both ownership and services. Training will be provided in the areas of Transforming Organizational Culture, The Art of Succession Leadership, The Employee as Marketer, and Professionalizing Workplace Conduct. It is anticipated the training will provide workers with the ability to navigate the future of the business and will help ensure a smooth transition of leadership.

# Pre-Development Grants

Grantee: Central Lakes College/AgCentric Award Amount: $43,037

Grantee Contact: Keith Olander, 218-894-5163

Contributing Business(es): Ag Innovation Campus & MN Farmer’s Union

Project Summary: Through this project AgCentric, a Center of Excellence in Agriculture for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, will partner with the Ag Innovation Campus (AIC) and MN Farmer’s Union to create an advanced training program for employees of soybean crush facilities that will be deployed at AIC. AIC, located in Crookston, serves as an incubator for agricultural innovations, with a goal to foster new and novel products, create jobs and increase the value of agriculture in the region, state and nation. AIC houses a research facility and a crush plant that is designed to crush specialty soy and other beans to bring a variety of new value-added products to the market. Entrepreneurs and small agricultural businesses will be able to leverage these resources to develop new products. The MN Farmer’s Union, located in St. Paul, will engage its network of members in agricultural processing and production to provide input on the most relevant training needed in soybean research, crushing, logistics, and value-added product development. The resulting training program, which will be mandatory for AIC employees, will be available at AIC to other crush facilities that want to upskill their existing workforce to align with the growing demands of agriculture specialty production and value-added processing.