

## Developing Partnerships with Employment Associations

**Issue:** Advances in technology have led to unprecedented changes in employment. A quick google search will bring up countless changes where jobs have been changed, down sized or eliminated. Changes have been seen significantly in the fields of Information Technology and Advanced Manufacturing.

**VACPID response:** To better understand these changes, VACPID developed partnerships with two employment agencies: Northern VA Technology Counsel (NVTC) and VA Manufacturers Association (VMA).

**Virginia Manufacturing Association:** <http://www.vamanufacturers.com/>

The Virginia Manufacturing Association (VMA) works with VA manufactures to advocate and provide business services to their members. They serve as a primary resource for consultative services and programs which are necessary to remain highly competitive, technology-intensive and efficient organizations.

The CPID relationship with VMA provided the following:

- Embed VACPID employee on site: This opportunity provided staff an opportunity to develop effective processes for engaging manufacturing businesses in the project, and for identifying opportunities for project participants to become employed in advanced manufacturing in Virginia. They were provided the opportunity to participate in VMA's Workforce Development Committee, conferences and Manufacturing Town Halls.
- Host VA Manufacturing Roundtable: The CPID Industrial Roundtable provided an opportunity for partnering states (Nebraska, Georgia, and Kentucky) to highlight and discuss relevant information related to Advanced Manufacturing and hiring practices for IWD. The Roundtable also provides an opportunity to learn directly from businesses, their preferred industry recognized credentials and to discuss the value of including IWD in their diverse talent pipeline. As well as the employment opportunities created through Assistive Technology.
- During VMA's Spring Forum they hosted Kathy West Evans on a 503 training.
- Secure an infographic video for program outreach to advanced manufacturing businesses and partners. This outreach was presented to businesses at Town Hall Meetings, conferences, emails, VMA Website and provided to VACPID staff to share as needed.

- Provided technical assistance with VACPID advanced manufacturing academies in the targeted regions of the project. Also provided guidance to other locations for academies, work with staff to solicit industry for sponsors and reduce the license fee for each academy.
- Provided training to DARS and DBVI on lean manufacturing, case studies and closing the skills and interest gaps in advanced manufacturing.
- VMA Workforce Development Committee served as an advisory board to the VACPID project.

In partnership with VMA, VACPID worked to develop a Lean Manufacturing Assessment: Accessibility Benchmark System. The goal was to have a clear understanding of what manufacturers need in their future employees, help develop quality and consistent training, change disability stereotypes and shrink the skill and interest gaps in advanced manufacturing. This Inventory also addresses additional assistance available such as job analysis, disability awareness training, review of tax incentives, and on-boarding assistance.

Topics assessed include Communication and Culture in the Workplace; Information Technology Review; Visual Systems, Workplace Organization and Total Productive Maintenance; Standard Work; Continual Improvement; Operator Flexibility/Job Analysis; Mistake Proofing; Change Overs; and Balanced Production and Pull Systems.

The Accessibility Benchmark System requires having a VMA representative, VCPID staff member, plant manager, and HR manager. This ensured that discussion included what was needed on the floor as well as onboarding considerations. An in-depth on sight tour was also required. The end result included a report that was provided before leaving the manufacturing plant. This report included a report summary, highlights and strengths, and opportunities and action steps.

**Northern VA Technology Counsel:** <https://www.nvtc.org/>

The Northern Virginia Technology Council is the membership and trade association for the technology community in Northern Virginia. As the largest technology council in the nation, NVTC serves about 1,000 companies and organizations, including businesses from all sectors of the technology industry, service providers, universities, foreign embassies, non-profit organizations and government agencies. Through its member companies, NVTC represents about 300,000 employees in the region.

The CPID relationship with NCTV provided the following:

Outreach plan to assist DARS with securing the participation of private sector employers in the Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) program.

- NVTC Mapping of Career Pathways: This information focusing on demand occupations and skills needed in the region helped Vocational evaluators and counselors better understand the training and business needs of IT employers. NVTC’s John Shaw presented to DARS on the needs assessment, career pathway and completed business surveys.
- Exhibit space at select NVTC events
- Member presentations and Exhibit Space: Opportunity to present on CPID program at the following NVTC member events and meetings:
  - Workforce and Education Committee
  - VTC Board of Directors or Executive Committee meeting
- Opportunity to host webinars for NVTC members:

#### Recruiting, Hiring and Training Individuals with Disabilities

Kathy West-Evans, M.P.A, CRC, Director of Business Relations for Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), will offer information on affirmative action strategies to assist businesses in recruiting, hiring and training individuals with disabilities and Veterans into their workforce.

#### Office Ergonomics, Universal Design and Assistive Technology

Paula K. Marin, OTR/L, Assistive Technology Specialist with CPID, will discuss office ergonomics, universal design and assistive technology within the IT field.

#### Diversity at Work and Disability Etiquette

LaPearl Smith, Business Development Manager with the Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services, and Diana McBride, Business Relation Specialist with the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, will provide information on diversity at work and disability etiquette.

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