

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Industry Partners with Academia to Develop Apprenticeship Program and Enhance Local Manufacturing Workforce



Photo: David Hoffman, Executive Director of AIM; John Beaumont, Founder and Executive Director of AIM; Lance Hummer, Executive Director of Keystone Community Education Council.

Oil City, PA – The Keystone Community Education Council (KCEC) has teamed up with the American Injection Molding (AIM) Institute and Clarion University to help bridge the skills gap in Northwestern Pennsylvania’s manufacturing workforce. The inaugural class of the Plastics Process Technician Apprenticeship Program will step through AIM’s doors on November 12th to begin two years of classroom and on-the-job-training.

This state-registered program will allow the apprentices to advance their skills and help progress our region’s manufacturing base. The local plastics industry has been asking for a program like this for years. This combination of hands-on experience and classroom learning is tailored to the exact needs of our region’s injection molders.

The Plastics Process Technician Apprenticeship Program was pioneered by a collaboration of twelve plastic manufacturers in our region. These companies recognize the importance of investing in their

employees and the high value that continuing education brings to the advancement of their organizations. Through this effort, these companies have helped pave the way for skilled plastics workers to further their education in a new pathway that until now was unavailable locally.

Having multiple pathway options simultaneously builds a pipeline to expand the future labor force with the skills needed in manufacturing, plastics, and petrochemical industries. An individual after high school graduation could enter the labor force and begin to obtain industry certifications through apprenticeship training or enter into a post-secondary track, such as Clarion University's associate's degree in Applied Technology. At completion of this juncture, an individual would have the opportunity earn industry specific certifications, or continue on for a bachelor's degree.

KCEC is the Sponsor and will manage all administrative aspects of the program, including helping interested companies receive reimbursement for nearly two-third of the program costs through the Greater Oh-Penn Manufacturing Apprenticeship Network (Oh-Penn) and the Workforce & Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA).

If any companies are interested in participating in this apprenticeship program please contact Lance Hummer, Executive Director at the Keystone Community Education Council, by emailing lhummer@keystonecec.org.

