



SMARTFORCE | SKILLS GAP

Leaders Take Action to Fill the Talent Pipeline

A successful operation requires equal parts advancing technology and a talented workforce, but good people are hard to find. At MFG 2023, learn about a program in Arizona that's efficiently feeding the manufacturing labor pipeline.

by [Bonnie Gurney](#)

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Everyone feels the urgency to grow and retain the manufacturing labor force, but how do we do it? Education experts will discuss successful models to scale up the workforce pipeline at [The MFG Meeting](#), April 26-28 in Phoenix, Arizona, at the [Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass](#).

Powered by [AMT](#) and in partnership with [NTMA](#), MFG 2023 is a nationally recognized annual event that features the industry's most sought-after intel to help technology leaders make smart business decisions. Education sessions and workshops cover the latest trends in technology, analytics, and marketing, and networking opportunities create valuable industry partnerships that last a lifetime.

"We are very excited to now be a new member of AMT and attend MFG 2023," says [Rabindra Srikantan](#), managing director at [ASM Technologies](#). "It will be a great time for us to listen to speakers on topics like machine tools and cyber strategy, and to connect with the larger [AMT community](#) to gain insight from other members about market conditions for our product offerings."

Filling the people pipeline

In a session titled “Workforce Discussion: Considerations and Models to Scope and Scale Pipeline Sector Strategies,” moderator [Montez King](#), executive director of [NIMS - National Institute for Metalworking Skills](#), will talk with college representatives about a successful new approach to quickly introducing a large number of people to basic manufacturing skills.

Last summer, a [Semiconductor Technician Quick Start program](#) was launched cooperatively by the [Arizona Advanced Technology Network](#) (AATN) and three [Maricopa Community Colleges](#).

The 10-day accelerated training model offers courses to an existing pathway earning college credit, industry certification, and ultimately a degree pathway. The curriculum was developed in collaboration with Intel, and later an advisory committee of multiple semiconductor companies was added for more input. The course was modeled after a previous quick-start training program with Boeing.

“We identified exactly what the employers wanted for an entry-level person to understand before they started working the first day so they’re more prepared than someone walking in off the street,” says [Leah Palmer](#), executive director of [Arizona Advanced Manufacturing Institute](#) at Maricopa Community Colleges Workforce.

“Also, this quick-start boot camp is a bit of a work verification program. It tests people to see if they have the desired behaviors and interest needed for the job.”

A NIMS certification is in partnership with the program, and students who pass the 10-day course have their tuition costs waived. This opportunity, along with the shorter commitment timeframe, has opened the door for a more diverse group to participate, such as women, lower-income people, and those already with full-time jobs.

“The quick-start course teaches the rudimentary skills that the industry told us they needed: hand tools, circuitry for electrical and pneumatic systems, model-based problem solving, vacuum/clean-room procedures, and process improvements,” says [Ken Hackler](#), automated industrial technology program director and residential faculty at [Mesa Community College](#).

Training after the hire

Once the school brings interested talent in the door, it is the responsibility of the manufacturer to build on that momentum and scale up the workforce with training and support, according to King.

“An employer must consider strategies to capitalize on their scaled pipelines after the hire,” King says. “To ensure an ROI on the investments and to retain workers, there need to be accountable stakeholders and assessment metrics to evaluate effective on-the-job training.”

King, Palmer, and Hackler will share best practices on how manufactures can work with local colleges to grow more skill-specific training boot camps and employee training to solve the labor shortage.

Work hard, play hard

Arizona in April is a beautiful setting for many fun activities. MFG 2023 attendees have options to enjoy their visit outside of work hours, such as championship golf, world-class spa services, horseback riding, casinos, the [Miles for Manufacturing](#) (M4M) 5K Run/Walk fundraiser or M4M Mountain Biking event, and an evening reception, dinner, and dance where AMT will honor Richard G. Kline Sr., chairman and CEO of [Gardner Business Media](#), with the Albert W. Moore Leadership Award.

For more details about MFG 2023 and to register to attend, visit [MFGMeeting.com](#).

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