

Workforce Learning Summit Innovation or Best Practice

McDowell Technical Community College

Partnering for Progress (Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center)

In McDowell County, the local economy is concentrated in manufacturing, and yet there are challenges to supplying the workforce that manufacturers need. MTCC wanted a customer-focused process to fill the need. Meanwhile, the main campus was running out of room. When a property/plant beside the community college came up for sale, McDowell Technical Community College worked with multiple partners to secure, design and pay for renovation of the former furniture plant to repurpose it as the Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center. The Center will house a 50,000 square foot Advanced Manufacturing Training Center plus space for new companies.

DETAILS

In McDowell County, the local economy is concentrated in manufacturing, and yet there are challenges to supplying the workforce that manufacturers need. A Workforce Pipeline Committee has been hard at work addressing this challenge. In the summer of 2013, 500 brand new manufacturing jobs came to the county via two existing companies expanding (Baxter Healthcare and International Automotive Components). MTCC wanted a customer-focused process to be able to fill the need.

Meanwhile, the main campus of McDowell Technical Community College was running out of room. There was a need for additional space for...

- expansion of the Early College and Career and College Promise Programs
- expansion of healthcare programs and other technical program areas
- cafeteria expansion and space dedicated for student activity center
- faculty/staff offices and storage space
- accommodation of baccalaureate degrees through colleges/universities

A unique opportunity arose when a property beside the community college campus went up for sale and the former Universal Furniture Plant facility became available.

McDowell Technical Community College has worked with multiple partners to secure and design space at the former furniture plant for the Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center, which will accommodate a 50,000 square foot Advanced Manufacturing Training Center plus space for new companies. Plans are underway for the following types of training to be offered at the Training Center:

- Computer Integrated Machining
- Welding
- Electronics/Electrical Systems
- Industrial Systems
- Customized Industrial Training
- Air Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Technology, Solar

- PLC, CNC, Robotics, etc.

In addition to consolidating manufacturing training, HVAC, etc. in one location, enabling each program area to at least double in size, the college is tying the “Get the Not Out” campaign efforts into the initiative. The “Get the Not Out” Campaign is geared to reach the long-term unemployed, dislocated workers and educationally disadvantaged individuals in McDowell County.

The Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center that is under development replicates practices used elsewhere, such as the Spartanburg Community College Tyger River Campus and the North Carolina Center for Engineering Technologies, which is co-sponsored by multiple universities and community colleges in Hickory.

The public/private partnership that is making the manufacturing center and its training center possible include the following:

- McDowell Technical Community College– spearheading the overall effort
- MTCC Foundation – conducting a capital campaign to support the effort
- McDowell County – primary funder - purchased the property/facility and contributed toward renovation (see amounts below under funding)
- City of Marion – has donated land and is providing water/sewer to the facility
- Isothermal Planning and Development – involved in planning and workforce initiatives
- McDowell Economic Development Association – will be co-located at the facility and is involved in planning efforts
- McDowell Chamber of Commerce – involved in planning efforts and will have a presence at the facility
- McDowell County Schools – involved in planning, program development and marketing efforts
- Golden Leaf Foundation - funding for renovation (see below), plus other grants have been submitted and approved for this project
- Duke Energy – equipment grant (see funding below)
- Appalachian Regional Commission – equipment grant (see below) and Campus Renovation Project
- USDA – coordination of Campus Renovation Project funded by ARC
- Cannon Foundation – grant toward renovation at Universal site (see below)
- Businesses: Baldor, Baxter, International Automotive Components, Tilson Machine, Key Gas, Coats American – have been involved in facility design, program development and marketing efforts for the project

Implementation began in November 2011 with McDowell County's purchase of the Universal Furniture site and building.

Partner Type(s):

- Business/Industry (direct involvement)
- Economic Development
- Workforce Development Board/One-Stop
- Public Schools
- Other: Government, Foundations

Impact/Outcomes

Training impacts will include increased capacity for relevant advanced manufacturing training through co-location with the industrial site, while freeing up space on main campus for other important and growing programs. (25,000 square feet of vacated space from programs relocated

to Universal Building will be renovated for Early College expansion, Career and College Promise Expansion and overall college expansion.) Co-location may also allow for work-based learning opportunities and increased opportunities for students to obtain jobs.

Businesses will benefit through the preparation of workers, proximity to students and instructors (hopefully yielding training that is even more business-driven) and incubation space.

The area economy and community will benefit from the business and economic development opportunities the project is expected to bring.

Stay tuned for more on impacts and outcomes in the future. (The facility is still under construction, with completion estimated in October 2014 and the facility in use for training purposes estimated for November of 2014.

Funding Source(s)

McDowell County purchase of *facility and site*: \$2,650,000

Grants received for the *renovation* of 50,000 square feet of space for the Training Center:

Golden Leaf	\$2,140,000
Cannon Foundation	\$150,000
ARC	\$300,000
Enterprise Rental Fees	\$745,000
<u>McDowell County</u>	<u>\$576,695</u>
Subtotal:	\$3,911,695

Equipment:

Duke Energy Equipment Grant:	\$240,000
ARC Equipment Grant	\$100,000

Grand Total: \$6,901,695

REFLECTIONS

Innovation or Best Practice

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the Center is the breadth and depth of the public/private partnership that is making it possible. In addition, the use of a former manufacturing facility simultaneously for business and training space offers benefits for economic development, businesses and students. The strategy also provides the college room to grow, both literally and in terms of the scope of its activities.

Specific ways this represents a best practice include:

- Manufacturing sector and public sector engagement in facility design, equipment, programming and marketing.
- Strengthens manufacturing related training programs areas as well as Career and College Promise technical programs.
- Provides for a state of the art Manufacturing Training Center that can be utilized as a recruitment tool to market McDowell County, the Universal facility and the Universal property.

- Provides a facility that can be utilized to provide for incubation of larger manufacturing companies.
- Directly relates to MTCC's "Get the Not Out Campaign" and Workforce Pipeline Committee Initiatives.
- Provides for the sharing of critical resources, facilities, equipment and staffing by the college, public schools, McDowell Economic Development Association, and the manufacturing community.
- Allows for the involvement of industry in marketing, recruitment and changing the public perception of manufacturing related employment.
- Allows MTCC to have additional land set aside for future expansion.
- Allows MTCC the vacated space on campus for expansion in other areas such as Early College, Career and College Promise, Health Care Programs, etc.
- Enhances MTCC's ability to market the property as a combination Industrial/Education Park Complex.

Lessons Learned

The involvement of the many partners has been challenging, however it has resulted in many positive outcomes to include...

- Sharing of critical resources and facilities to better all parties involved
- Development of new programs and partnerships with School System to better serve the manufacturing community and increase apprenticeship opportunities, co-ops and work experience opportunities for students
- Collaborative marketing efforts
- Improved engagement between local industry, the college and the local school system
- Improved response to local need on the part of the college, regional planning council, school system and local economic development association

Scalability

The cost and scale of the initiative may make this hard to replicate in some communities. However, the concepts of the broad partnership and of using old manufacturing space for combined training and business/economic development space could be applied in other ways in many communities.

RESOURCES

Workforce Learning Summit Presenters

- Dr. Bryan Wilson, President, McDowell Technical Community College
- Chuck Abernathy, County Manager, McDowell County
- Jerry Broome, NCWorks Career Center Coordinator, McDowell Technical Community College and President Ex-Officio, McDowell County Chamber of Commerce
- Josh Kennedy, Get the Not Out Coordinator, McDowell Technical Community College

For Further Information

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