

Unemployed Receive Specialized Training for Manufacturing Jobs

Mobile Manufacturing Program Provides Hands-On Training

N. VENICE, Fla., July 27, 2011—The Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP), in conjunction with PGT Industries, the nation's leading manufacturer and supplier of residential impact-resistant windows and doors, is providing a second specialized training as part of the Mobile Outreach Skills Training (M.O.S.T.[®]) program, for nine individuals, including two veterans in Southwest Florida seeking manufacturing jobs.

The M.O.S.T.[®] program is a fast-track, intensive skills training, recruitment, assessment and placement program that prepares unemployed and underemployed individuals, including returning veterans and minorities, for production jobs in less time than traditional programs. Training is being conducted in a state-of-the-art mobile training facility stationed by Florida MEP on PGT's property. Six months of follow on services ensure a very high rate of employee retention.

PGT interviewed the candidates and conducted the background testing for the selected trainees, who span many generations. As a strong partner in the program, Suncoast Workforce assisted Florida MEP and PGT by providing the location for orientation, assessment and interviews. Following successful completion of the program, the graduates will all receive full-time employment with PGT Industries. This training is part of a statewide program financed with a \$500,000 Workforce Florida Inc. grant with a goal to leverage federal, local and private-sector funding.

"Because the training we conducted last month was successful for PGT in identifying and training suitable candidates, we set up a second training session," said Alicia Adams, Senior HR Manager for PGT Industries. "The M.O.S.T.[®] program has allowed us to provide the trainees hands on experience and prepare them for what they will encounter on the manufacturing floor."

Providing quick-start job training for manufacturers seeking entry-level production workers, the M.O.S.T.[®] program is outfitted with state-of-the-art training equipment that allows participants an opportunity to upgrade or learn new manufacturing skills. Because of its mobility, the program is able to move to areas where jobs and potential employees are located. The unit is generally situated onsite at an employer's facility or other location convenient for trainees and the company. Training, which is often customized to suit the needs of the participating employer, helps reduce the time typically required for new employees to become fully productive.

"The M.O.S.T.[®] program is vitally important to our communities and to manufacturing companies searching for skilled talent," said Dr. Claudia Follet, Director of Grants and Partnership Development for Time Wise Management Systems. "The M.O.S.T.[®] program identifies jobs prior to training, trains hard-to-serve populations for high-wage jobs with benefits, fills the existing skills gap, and has a job retention rate of 87 percent. It is a tremendous program that has been successfully implemented in Florida, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut and Rhode Island."

For more information on the M.O.S.T.[®] program, visit www.timewisemost.com or contact Dr. Claudia Follet at 321-266-0677.

About Florida MEP

The Florida MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP system is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business "coaches" whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater

productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information, please visit www.FloridaMEP.org.

About PGT Industries

PGT Industries is the nation's leading manufacturer and supplier of residential impact-resistant windows and doors, as well as one of the largest window and door manufacturers in the nation, serving both the residential and commercial markets. Founded in 1980, the company pioneered the U.S. impact-resistant window and door segment and today employs approximately 1,200 at its manufacturing facility in Florida. For more information, please visit, www.pgtindustries.com.