

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Planning Grant

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

DUE SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education		
Requesting Institution:	UA Cossatot		
Title of Project:	Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline		
Project Partners:	1. SouthArk CC	6.	
	2. SAU Tech	7.	
	3. UA Hope	8.	
	4.	9.	
	5.	10.	
Requested Budget:	\$100,000		
Date Submitted:	8/31/2015		
Applicant Contact:	Maria Parker		
Applicant's Information:	183 College Drive		
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Authorized Signatures for Project Partners

UA Cossatot
Lead Institution

SouthArk CC
Partner

SAU Tech
Partner

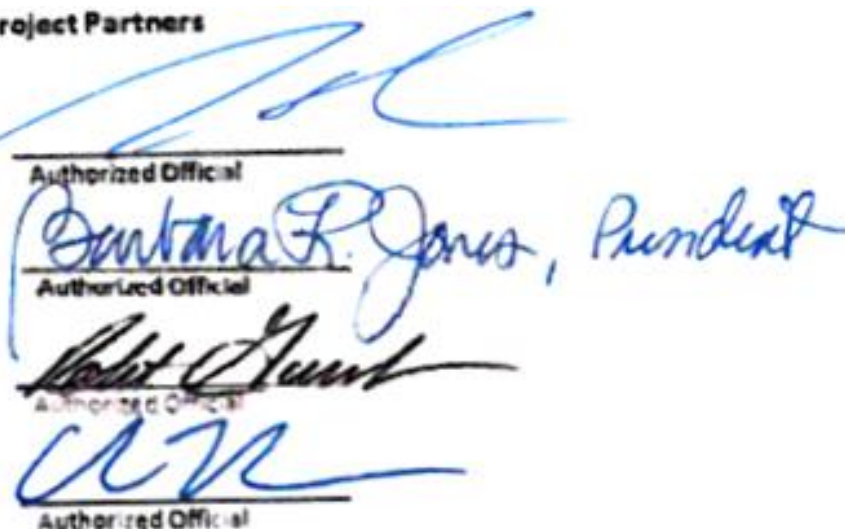
UA Hope
Partner

Authorized Official

Authorized Official

Authorized Official

Authorized Official



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Act 1131 of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant Application

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **September 1, 2015**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that applications will not be accepted without a completed Intent Form, due August 1, 2015.*

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED

30 Points

Proposals will include an overview of the labor needs, as determined by the Local Workforce Development Board, and specifically identify the skills gap employers face in the selected region and will continue to face in the future. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed program and/or equipment needed and how creation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Need (30 Pts)	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region (26–30 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region (21–25 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region (16–20 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area (0–15 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Southwest Arkansas is a socio-economically depressed region mostly comprised of rural areas and small towns with a wealth of natural resources and a diverse economy. The Southwest Arkansas Planning & Development District (SWAPDD) serves 12 contiguous counties and 64 municipalities located in the southwest corner of the state. The District serves a population of over 241,000 residents and includes five municipalities with a population of 10,000 or more.

Southwest Arkansas has a strong and diverse manufacturing sector. In the most western region near Ashdown and De Queen, almost 4000 people are employed by six major companies in various advanced manufacturing industries such as poultry, timber, pulp and paper, and production of outdoor products. These employers anticipate over a 10% increase in employees in the next five years. In the Hope/Texarkana area, poultry, timber, and the new SWEPCO coal-fired high-tech industry need trained and skilled workers. The Highland Industrial Park in East Camden is home to numerous aerospace and defense contractors, employing several

thousand. In Union County, industries are focused on the production or refinement of chemicals and petroleum, as well as pulp and paper, timber, energy production, and waste disposal. The current employment level of just six Union County industries is 2,054 and their five-year projected employment level is 2,353, a 15% increase.

The region's poverty rate hovers around the mid-20% range, from a low of 14.9% to a high of 33.0% in the Delta counties (2009-2013 - <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/05/05133.html>). Arkansas' overall poverty rate is 19.2%. Over the past decade, the region lost thousands of higher wage jobs, with the closing of operations by Georgia Pacific, Cooper Industries, other timber-related industries and poultry companies. Unemployment rates during the recent economic downturn resulted in over 10,000 unemployed in Southwest Arkansas. Five of these counties had unemployment rates which exceeded 10%. However, the region is recovering and unemployment rates have improved to 6.3% in the Southwest Arkansas region and 5.7% in the state in June, 2015 (Unemployment rate - <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/>). While this is tremendously good news for the region and state, it exacerbates the need to develop a strong pipeline of well-trained, educated highly-skilled workers to replace retiring workers and fill new positions in the industries that are now growing and expanding.

Arkansas has made significant progress over the past 40 years in educational attainment, especially in high school completion rates. However, the lack of workers with post-secondary education and training is an economic development challenge in this global economy. In 2013, almost 50% of all adults over 25 years of age in Arkansas did not have any postsecondary education (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey). The profile of the region, along with employers' feedback on the challenges they face in finding skilled workers, supports the need to identify ways to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce in the manufacturing sector. To fill current and projected openings in the targeted high demand industries, many, if not most, of these individuals will require further education to obtain employment with the region's advanced manufacturing and engineering employers.

The most recent 2014 *Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report* lists projections for jobs to be added in the region in 2013-2015 (<http://www.discoverarkansas.net>). This publication predicts 2430 annual openings during this time frame with 362 new positions as a result of expansion. The publication, *Discover Arkansas- Projected Employment Opportunities for 2015-2016* lists a need for Hazardous Materials Technology/Technicians, Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders; and Chemical Equipment Operators, Chemical Technology/Technicians, and Chemical Process Technicians in the SWAPPD area. The region's employers, SWAPPD, chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and community colleges in the region all agree there is a significant shortage of workers due to the need for a qualified, skilled workforce in the advanced manufacturing sector. Wood and paper manufacturing is rebounding in the region. Existing industries are in the process of expanding, and others note that they anticipate a worker replacement rate of approximately 10% per year.

In addition, the region is being considered for several manufacturing plants, two related to timber mills and a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle plant for defense contractor, Lockheed Martin. These new industries could generate the need for 800-1000 skilled and trained workers in the production and advanced manufacturing fields.

As noted, job growth is projected in industry sectors that require workers with knowledge and skills across a wide range of engineering and industrial technology-related occupations. The industries indicate that new or replacement positions will require workers with at least one year or more of postsecondary training in the STEM-rich, advanced manufacturing skills areas of process operations, electronics and instrumentation, industrial maintenance technology, hydraulics, automation, and welding. These employers provide mid-level-skill jobs with good wages, often exceeding \$50,000 per year, plus paid benefits to support Southwest Arkansas' families. Regional industries anticipate some growth and/or a need for replacement workers because of retirement, attrition, increased production, or expansion, but the area currently lacks enough highly skilled, well-trained, educated workers, in the "pipeline" of potential employees.

Community colleges in southwest Arkansas have partnered with local employers in the advanced manufacturing sector to develop curriculum and training based on industry need for incumbent workers, as well as recruit and prepare new workers to meet their workforce needs. These partnerships are essential to 1) retain existing employers in the region; 2) attract more high skill jobs to the region; 3) decrease the region's high poverty rate by shifting to high wage/high skill jobs; and 4) decrease unemployment in the region.

The Southwest Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWACCC), a consortium of seven two-year colleges which includes Southern Arkansas University Tech (SAU Tech), UA-Cossatot Community College (UAC), Rich Mountain Community College (RMCC), South Arkansas Community College (SACC) and the University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana (UAHT), National Park College (NPC), and College of the Ouachitas (COTO) joined together to develop a strategic plan, which, in turn, led to a grant proposal to address the region's advanced manufacturing skills gaps and industry needs. The SWACCC received a four year grant with funding of nearly \$8.5 million in October 2013 through the U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program.

The TAACCCT grant project, Re-engineering Employer Engagement, centers on employer engagement in the development and revision of curriculum and training for technology-driven advanced manufacturing occupations. Using cutting-edge technology with a focus on science, technology, engineering and math, SWACCC is re-engineering relationships with area industries, creating partnerships that allow both entities to succeed for the ultimate benefit of the local workforce. The grant has enabled improved educational opportunities for students in STEM advanced manufacturing fields, delivering a better-trained and more highly-skilled workforce to area employers. The grant includes development of flexible instruction delivery,

such as utilization of distance learning technology, industry site course delivery, or awarding college credit for previous learning experience, offering incumbent workers a faster track to achieving a certificate or degree. The grant is still in its performance period, but many of the goals of the grant have been achieved or are in progress. Employer engagement in grant activities with area industries has resulted in the development of new and stronger partnerships between community colleges and regional manufacturing industries. Feedback from local industry advisory committees has resulted in the development of new and revised credit and non-credit trainings, designed specifically to meet the needs of area employers. Alternative methods of course delivery have been investigated and utilized, offering increased access to certificate and degree completion. New equipment and technology have been purchased and are at various stages of deployment. Various types of recruitment activities have been developed and shared among the Consortium, with a focus on veterans and TAA-eligible workers.

The grant has enabled regional manufacturers to secure or maintain a better prepared workforce and SWACCC colleges to secure up-to-date equipment and curriculum. However, building the next generation of workers is proving to be a challenge. The number of high school students in secondary career programs or high school graduates pursuing engineering technician or industrial technology/mechatronics certificates and degrees is not at a level to sustain the region's workforce. Throughout the United States, the support for career technology education has been a concern and issue. As SWACCC colleges have experienced, the costs of securing and maintaining cutting-edge technology are prohibitive. The shortage of qualified and interested faculty in electrical, mechanical, and chemical engineering and welding is acute, and state-supported colleges cannot compete with the salaries of local industries. In addition, the ongoing misperception that a four-year university degree is the only avenue to higher education which leads to high-quality and high-wage jobs is difficult to reverse.

The demand for skilled workers in these high-wage, high-demand advanced manufacturing and engineering fields is increasing as the post-recession, American industrial landscape is changing in southwest Arkansas. Thus, the four community colleges in the SWACCC, which are in the SWAPPD region, propose to address these challenges by partnering with Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia (SAU-M), their various high school districts, and their regional industries in aerospace, defense, processing, energy, petroleum, chemical, poultry, timber, and industrial production to expand the goals of the **Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership** created under the TAACCCT grant to **“Build the Pipeline”** for future highly skilled engineering and industrial technicians in southwest Arkansas. The grant proposal will focus primarily on the K-12 pipeline and building a career pathway from K-16 in the engineering and advanced manufacturing sector.

SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN**25 Points**

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program. At a minimum, the plan must include a summary of expected outcomes, a description of career pathways that will be created or enhanced, a description of any anticipated equipment needs and a proposed governance and accountability structure for the program.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Plan (25 Pts)	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and identifies significant outcomes (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and identifies outcomes (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and identifies few outcomes (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or lacks apparent outcomes (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

As demonstrated by the significant need for a skilled and trained workforce for engineering and industrial technician fields in advanced manufacturing and production, the grant will focus on curriculum, recruitment, and training. The proposed **Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline** planning grant will focus primarily on the K-12 student and those individuals without higher education. The regional partners will convene as a large group and then break into smaller regional groups to achieve stated goals of a career pathway from K-16 focused on the engineering and advanced manufacturing sectors.

Outcomes/Measurable Objectives

Each college has curriculum in the advanced manufacturing sector: industrial technology/mechatronics, logistics and supply chain management technology, process technology, and welding. The outcomes for the planning year will include:

RAMP: Building the Pipeline –Measurable Objectives and Outcomes		
	Objective	Outcome
1	Identify any advanced manufacturing workforce skills training gaps in southwest Arkansas region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing Workforce Skills Gap analysis report – Consultant report
2	Identify appropriate curriculum and activities at all levels (K-12) that could be used to introduce STEM careers, coursework, and hands-on applications related to pre-engineering, advanced manufacturing, and industrial technology. The curriculum may include, as deemed appropriate, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an option for basic skills instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabi • Curriculum to be utilized • Industry based credentials • Consultant recommendation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • industry based credentials, • internships/apprenticeship/observations 	
3	Develop or expand articulation agreements for the advanced manufacturing/engineering technology fields with SAUM to allow upward mobility in employment and income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation agreements for SAUM Industrial Technology and Engineering BS programs (individual courses and 2+2)
4	Review existing college-level Industrial Technology/Mechatronics curriculum and assess against identified advanced manufacturing workforce skills gaps to determine needed revisions and enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabi • Course changes or course additions
5	Identify equipment and supplies needed to implement the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment list and budget
6	Identify any professional development and training needed to assure K-12 and college faculty are prepared to deliver curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development training recommendation (workshops, conferences, trainers, etc.) and budget
7	<p>Develop a student recruitment plan to promote and increase awareness of the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Career Pathways to a diverse population - to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media, TV, radio, video, print • Website • Career exploration activities • Faculty workshops • Industry and campus visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment plan and budget
8	Develop or identify support services available to assist students through the advanced manufacturing/engineering pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of support services and website link to career and support services
9	Develop the Workforce Initiative Implementation grant proposal and budget to support all activities listed above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Initiative Implementation grant proposal and budget

Project Timeline/Overview (Proposed)



Governance and Accountability Structure *Project governance and accountability plan- clearly describe the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director; and identify members of a project steering committee that will maintain oversight throughout the project period.*

UA-Cossatot will serve as the lead institution for the implementation of the workforce planning grant project – **Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline (RAMP:BP)**. UA-Cossatot will hire/identify a project coordinator. The lead institution will communicate regularly with SWACCC members, establish timelines for program outcomes; plan, convene, and document steering committee planning meetings; develop and convene subgroups (i.e., curriculum, recruitment, equipment, etc.) to meet program outcomes; secure and coordinate with consultants; compile grant outcomes; manage fiscal resources, and secure or share information and technical assistance provided by the State of Arkansas as needed by the steering committee.

Standing members of the SWACCC workforce governing board will include the Chancellor or President of each member institution, a Workforce Development board member from each region, and chair of the regional industry advisory board. The board will have oversight of the budget and monitor the stated goals for the grant.

The full-time grant coordinator will report to the governing board. The coordinator will have responsibility of implementing the grant's initiatives, planning the advisory board meetings, ensuring the financial aspects of the grant are met, and documenting and submitting all relevant paperwork. The coordinator will track programmatic and fiscal progress against grant goals and identify issues related to achievement of goals. The board will meet quarterly to review progress toward goals and monitor the budget. UA Cossatot's policies and procedures will be followed for grant implementation and personnel.

The fiscal management of the project will be handled by UA Cossatot's business department personnel under the direction of Katy Pickens, Grants Accountant. Ms. Pickens handles the financial reporting for several grants on campus, including Adult Education, TAACCCT, and Carl Perkins. UA Cossatot has a proven capacity to administer federal and state grants. Financial reporting functions are accomplished through the campus' POISE platform, which is an integrated and comprehensive system that supports data integrity through a multi-level approval protocol. UA Cossatot will comply with Arkansas' financial processes and federal guidelines to enable timely and accurate financial management and reporting.

Career Pathways, Articulation, and Support- *clearly describe the educational pathway(s) and support services that will be developed, or existing pathways that will be enhanced, to meet the identified workforce needs. Pathways should incorporate all appropriate student outcomes from short-term industry-recognized credentials through the highest certificate or degree programs appropriate to the identified career goals and include career step-out points at the completion of each credential.*

Career Pathway

Existing career pathways, which were revised or developed under the TAACCCT grant, form the pipeline from post-secondary to employment. However, the SWACCC seeks to attract students into that pipeline even sooner, by expanding education and awareness activities down from high school to kindergarten. Consortium colleges offer several educational pathways, with skills and competencies tailored to regional manufacturer's needs, as a major focus of the TAACCCT grant is the development of training based on employer needs.

The four Consortium colleges offer nine Certificates of Proficiency, which fold into one of four Technical Certificates and, eventually, into one of three AAS degrees—all suitable for occupations in advanced manufacturing. Offering educational and awareness opportunities to younger students, and educating school counselors, faculty, and parents about the opportunities in today's advanced manufacturing environments can increase the pool of skilled workers with training designed to meet regional industry specifications.

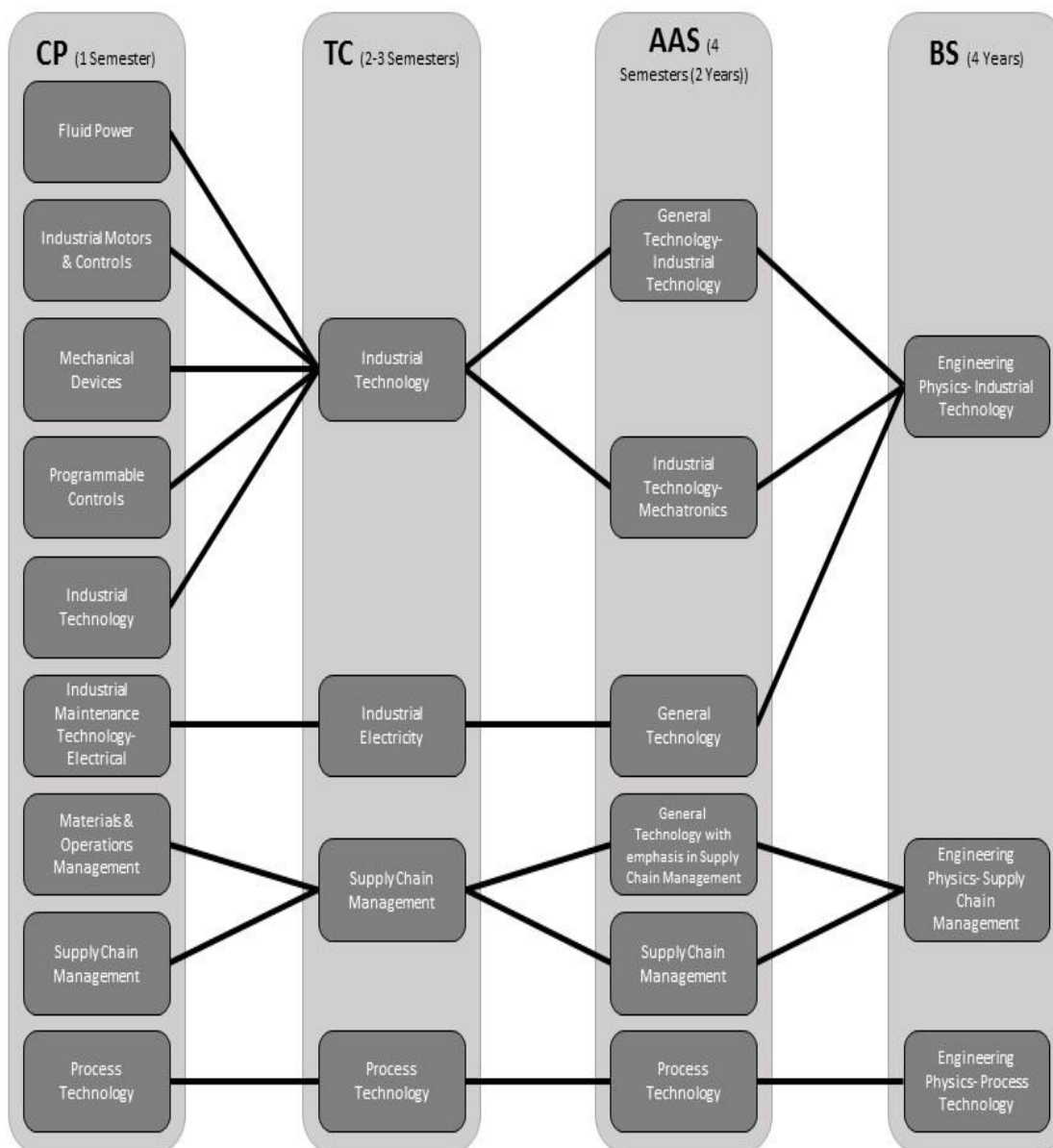
The certificates and degrees offered at the Consortium colleges align with local industry skill requirements for positions that begin at entry-level and move up through mid-level occupations that incorporate STEM-related tasks involving fluid controls, robotics, programming, computer controls, and more. The curriculum of many of these advanced manufacturing credit courses can lead to nationally-recognized, industry based credentials such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) and the Manufacturing Skills Standard Council (MSSC). The programs and courses prepare graduates for positions as machinists, electromechanical technicians (including programmable computer logic and robotics), industrial machinery repair, and chemical process operators and they expose students interested in industrial technology and engineering fields to foundational knowledge in electronics, mechanics, and robotics.

Three of the colleges, SAU-Tech, UA-Cossatot, and SouthArk, have secondary career centers, offering career technical training to high school juniors and seniors in their county or service area. SouthArk was recently approved by the Arkansas Career Education Division to offer the Industrial Maintenance/Technology track at their Center. Other colleges are investigating this offering. The Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) currently offers manufacturing pathways for students through programs such as Project Lead the Way (PLTW). With PLTW, 7th and 8th grade students can begin taking related advanced manufacturing coursework in subjects such as Engineering Technology Education and Automation & Robotics. Those students can continue along the advanced manufacturing pathway as they enter high school by taking additional coursework approved by ACE. The high school coursework provided by ACE involves programs of study in Advanced Manufacturing, Industrial Equipment Maintenance, and Mechatronics. This high school curriculum builds on previous knowledge and skills and prepares students to continue along the advanced manufacturing pathway, entering the two-year college. The next level of instruction is college coursework in programs such as Process Technology and Industrial Technology-Mechatronics. These programs prepare the students with entry-level knowledge and skills employers are seeking. These programs include internship opportunities with local employers, thus offering students the opportunity to gain additional

training.

The colleges each have an Industrial Technology Certificate program with a common core curriculum. These common core courses are transferrable between the Consortium colleges and can lead to an academic Technical Certificate credential and Associate of Applied Science degrees. The SWACCC colleges have established various 2+2 articulation agreements with SAU-Magnolia. Articulation agreements are in place or under development with SAU Magnolia to enable students to continue to a B.S. in Engineering-Physics in Supply Chain Management or Industrial Technology. There is an agreement in place for the Process Technology program. The existing career pathway incorporating the various certificates and degrees that may be earned via the Consortium colleges is illustrated below.

Current SWACCC Colleges Industrial Technology Career Pathways



The purpose of this grant is to create new relationships and expand the existing advanced manufacturing pipeline to encompass K-8 by increasing awareness and familiarity with today's advanced manufacturing occupations, including the incorporation of STEM-related, hands-on and other interactive experiences. Working with our industry partners, we will widen the exposure to industrial and engineering technology for younger students, introducing them to basic engineering concepts, robotics, computer controls, and other elements of advanced manufacturing. Goals of the grant include expanding the existing career pathways to include career exploration and applicable coursework at the K-8 level (i.e., Project Lead the Way) and to identify, modify, or develop the 9-12 career pathway in the advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors for a better-skilled, better-trained workforce so needed in our region. The 9-12 career pathway will provide coursework to qualify students for entry-level industry positions, continuation into associate degree programs, or for four-year university programs.

Articulation

SWACCC college academic representatives will work with SAU-M academic deans or directors to develop or expand existing articulation agreements for the advanced manufacturing/engineering technician fields. Articulation agreements assist students in their chosen career pathway by assuring the transferability of coursework. In turn, the articulation agreements decrease the time to completion of degrees. In addition, associate to bachelor's degree articulation agreements will allow and encourage upward mobility in employment and income.

Support

The SWACCC colleges provide support services to all students. Student support services will be a consideration during the development of the Workforce Initiative Implementation grant proposal. The Consortium colleges currently offer support to students to include:

- Financial Aid Office - coordinate grants, scholarships, and loans
- Student Advisors or Coaches - provide "intrusive advising" to students to aid in degree selection and execution, and "early alert" programs to focus on students who may need special attention to stay on track to course and degree completion
- Personal and professional counseling - address students' academic and life needs, as well as soft-skills and career development training
- Disability services - provide reasonable accommodations to students with special challenges
- Testing and Learning Centers - offer standardized testing and academic tutoring
- Soft-skills and career development training
- Student organizations and student activities - engage students in campus life
- Concurrent enrollment and secondary career center programs for area secondary students so that they may earn college credit while still in high school

Description of Equipment Needs

As this is a planning grant, we do not anticipate the need for any equipment. Some items may be purchased such as a computer and printer for the coordinator, but it is anticipated these items will qualify as supplies.

Performance Assessment

For the purposes of the workforce planning grant, performance assessment is defined by the deliverables listed in the outcomes section. Ultimately, the work of the steering committee will result in a defined K-16 career pathway with curriculum related to advanced manufacturing and engineering, a recruitment plan, equipment list, professional development/training recommendations, consultant reports or recommendation, and the Workforce Implementation Grant proposal.

SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP**25 Points**

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, and other regional partners who can contribute significantly, in a unique and meaningful role. Describe the anticipated role for each member of the alliance. **Include with the proposal a commitment letter from each partner and the Local Workforce Development Board.**

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Strength of Partnership (25 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions (22–25 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined (18–21 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan (14–17 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

As stated in the Workforce Initiative Act Regional Workforce Grant Guidelines, “The primary goal of this program is to create long-term relationships between employers and regional workforce alliances to identify and address the challenge of job candidate skills gaps in the regional workforce pool. By ensuring that post-secondary educational institutions are producing the credentials employers need through consortia and data driven decision-making, Arkansas can meet the needs of current employers and also be more effective in recruiting new industry to the state.”

The SouthWest Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWACCC) has been actively meeting, planning, and implementing initiatives to address the regional workforce needs since forming in 2010. As noted above, the DOL TAAACCT grant has done much to further the SWACCC Strategic Plan related to the advanced manufacturing sector. The SWACCC presidents and chancellors have worked to cultivate new and strengthen existing partnerships with advanced manufacturing and production industries in their regions, as evidenced by the list of 20 employer partners listed in this grant proposal.

The SWACCC has engaged employers, secondary career centers, and K-12 partners throughout the process. The colleges have actively participated in local, state and national initiatives targeted at educating youth about manufacturing careers in an effort to create a pipeline of skilled workforce to fill new jobs and replace retirees. During the past year, colleges have hosted high school students for Manufacturing Day, coordinated career orientation visits between manufacturing representatives and area 8th grade students, and participated in the Arkansas State Chamber program -Young Manufacturers Academy - for area 7th and 8th grade students.

In addition, our colleges are active participants on the SWAWIB, with employees serving on the board. The colleges have and will continue to work with the SWAPPD/SWAWIB in these endeavors. As well, SAU-Magnolia has been a familiar and good partner for our colleges to assure the readily transferrable courses and credits for many of the colleges' credit programs. In addition, our colleges work closely with area chambers of commerce and economic development councils, as well as the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

PARTNERS: The proposed project includes the partners listed below. The Consortium colleges anticipate that other partners may be added during the planning year.

Community Colleges: SAU-Tech, South Arkansas Community College, UA-Hope/Texarkana, UA-Cossatot

All colleges are fully accredited comprehensive community colleges offering traditional academic and occupational education with service areas which extend from western to eastern borders of southern Arkansas. Each serves as resources for accessible higher education, workforce training, partnerships and economic development for the region.

Secondary Career Centers: SAU-Tech, South Arkansas Community College, and UA-Cossatot have Secondary Career Centers on their campuses. UACC-Hope/Texarkana does not have a Secondary Career Center but pledges to work with their partnering high schools to deliver courses/training in the advanced manufacturing/engineering areas.

	UA Cossatot	SAU-Tech	SouthArk	UACC Hope/Texarkana
K-12 School Districts (23)	De Queen Nashville Ashdown Horatio Foreman Mineral Springs Umpire Murfreesboro Kirby	Camden-Fairview Harmony Grove Bearden Hampton Sparkman Magnolia Rison	El Dorado Junction City Parkers Chapel Smackover/Norphlet Strong-Huttig	Hope Texarkana, AL
Employers (20)	Domtar Industries Ash Grove Cement Weyerhaeuser Tyson Foods Husqvarna Outdoor Products	Aerojet Rocketdyne Esterline Defense Technologies General Dynamics Lockheed Martin Spectra	Chemtura/Great Lakes Solutions Clean Harbors El Dorado Chemical Lion Oil/Delek Martin Operating Partners (Cross Oil)	Georgia Pacific

		Technologies Raytheon	Tetra Technologies	
University	Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia			
Other Key Partners	Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development			
	Southwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board			

Role of Partners in Alliance

1. Community Colleges:

Lead College: UA-Cossatot will hire/identify a project director. The lead institution will communicate regularly with SWACCC members, establish timelines for program outcomes; plan, convene, and document steering committee planning meetings; develop and convene subgroups (i.e., curriculum, recruitment, equipment, etc.) to meet program outcomes; secure and coordinate with consultants; compile grant outcomes; manage fiscal resources, and secure or share information and technical assistance provided by State of Arkansas as needed by the steering committee.

Consortium Colleges: The four Consortium colleges will provide faculty and staff to serve on the various committees to meet the grant goals. Academic deans and CTE faculty will participate as curriculum experts and be involved in equipment selection. Academic deans and vice-presidents will assure that course additions or changes are made and approved at appropriate levels. College student services personnel will be involved in identifying support services required to support the program initiatives especially as they relate to recruiting, advising, career counseling, and support services.

2. School Districts: During the planning year, the school district representatives will provide one or more representatives for career pathway and curriculum development and alignment and to serve on other committees. Once established, the school districts will assist in providing program information to students and assist colleges with recruitment of interested students for the programs.

3. Employers/Industries: The industry partners' role may include serving on industry/program advisory committees; developing credit and non-credit curriculum; assisting with equipment selection; teaching as adjunct faculty in the program; providing internship/apprenticeship/observation sites; supporting internship courses through selection and evaluation; donating funds, equipment, tools, or supplies; and hiring qualified graduates.

4. SWAPPD/SWAWIB: The South West Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (SWAWIB) and Workforce Development Centers will assist in outreach, intake, screening, individual case management, linkage with the colleges for Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and career coaching activities. The local Centers will engage with

college student personnel to identify potential recruits. These activities, coupled with strong training and placement strategies, will ensure that participants find jobs for which they are both suited and adequately prepared.

5. **SAU-Magnolia:** The University will assist in curriculum development, recruitment, and articulation of coursework from secondary career center and community colleges to the university industrial technology or engineering programs. Sharing of equipment resources between and among the colleges and universities will be encouraged to assure appropriate training at all levels of post-secondary education.

SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN**20 Points**

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan assigning cost estimates to all proposed planning activities and a completed budget template. Efficiency in planning grant expenditures is expected.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Budget Plan (20 Pts)	All requested resources are essential and clearly support the goals of the plan. (18–20 Pts)	Most requested resources are important and clearly support the goals of the plan (15–17 Pts)	Plan includes some questionable resource requests (11–14 Pts)	Budget includes requests deemed unnecessary (0–10 Pts)

Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail

Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

The lead college, UA-Cossatot, will hire one full-time Project Coordinator to oversee and initiate planning activities. Stipends will be available for selected instructors working on curriculum. A third party consultant will be engaged to review and align existing curriculum, as well as provide assistance to instructors with the development of new or revised curriculum. Another third party consultant will be engaged to develop a skills-gap analysis to assist in creating targeted programs of study and courses in pre-engineering/industrial technology for Consortium colleges. Funds are also requested for travel and supplies for meetings, as well as office supplies, a computer, printer, and laptop for the Project Coordinator.

A. Partner participant support

Salary/stipend (\$35K 1.0FTE; 13K stipends)	\$48,000
Benefits (34.5%)	\$14,000
Travel	\$ 3,000
Other	

B. Other Direct Costs

Materials/supplies	\$ 4,500
Publication costs/documentation/dissemination costs	\$ 500
Consultants (Workforce Skills Gap analysis; Curriculum Development)	\$30,000
Other	

TOTAL REQUESTED**\$100,000**

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input.

A. Partner Participant Support Costs

1. Personnel/Stipend	\$62,000.00
2. Travel	\$3,000.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	\$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$65,000.00

B. Other Direct Costs

1. Materials and Supplies	\$4,500.00
2. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	\$500.00
3. Consultant Services	\$30,000.00
4. Other (Explain Below)	\$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	\$35,000.00

C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS

\$100,000.00

SUBMIT BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2015Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu*Applications that are received without an Intent Form (Due August 1) will not be accepted.***PLANNING GRANT SCORING RUBRIC**

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region (26–30)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region (21–25)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region (16–20)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area (0–15)	30 Pts
Program Plan	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and identifies significant outcomes (22–25)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and identifies outcomes (18–21)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and identifies few outcomes (14–17)	Plan lacks significant requirements or lacks apparent outcomes (0–13)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions (22–25)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined (18–21)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan (14–17)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully (0–13)	25 Pts
Budget Plan	All requested resources are essential and clearly support the goals of the plan. (18–20)	Most requested resources are important and clearly support the goals of the plan (15–17)	Plan includes some questionable resource requests (11–14)	Budget includes requests deemed unnecessary (0–10)	20 Pts
Total Points Possible					100 Pts



183 College Drive • De Queen, AR 71832 • 870.584.4471 • 800.844.4471 • www.cc.ua.edu

August 13, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

As Chancellor of Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot) I am pleased to support the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. This grant will enable UA Cossatot to develop well defined and articulated career pathways for students from high school to community college and finally to a university. We will also focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as faculty and counselor education.

For many years UA Cossatot has been committed to continued development and strengthening of the workforce in our community by providing the skills and knowledge for entry into the workforce, supporting the employers, and providing leadership for economic development in our service area. We will assist with this grant in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steve Cole
Chancellor

UA Cossatot embraces diversity and is committed to improving the lives for those in our region by providing quality education, outstanding service, and relevant industry training.

UA Cossatot Mission Statement

SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**P.O. Box 767, 101 Harvey Couch Blvd.
Magnolia, AR 71754
(870) 235-7510 Fax: (870) 234-0135**

August 14, 2015

Dr. Brett Powell, ADHE Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Director Powell,

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board and Arkansas Workforce Centers in Southwest Arkansas support Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA-Cossatot), South Arkansas Community College (SACC), University of Arkansas Community College at Hope (UACCH), and SAU-Tech in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the Colleges to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the colleges will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

These colleges have had a long standing commitment to the ongoing development and strengthening of our regions workforce. They provide opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within their respective service area and support the needs of employers.

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board and Arkansas Workforce Centers are pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our regions industries to thrive and grow. We will assist in outreach, intake, screening, individual case management, linkage with the colleges for individual education plans, individual employment plans, and career coaching activities. These activities, coupled with strong training and placement strategies, will ensure that participants find jobs for which they are both suited and adequately prepared.

Sincerely,



Gina Frederick
Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Staff

Cc: Tammy Coleman, Director
UA-Cossatot



**SOUTHERN ARKANSAS
UNIVERSITY**

Office of the President

Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia (SAUM) to act as a partner to the four community colleges in the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWACCC) – SAU-Tech, South Arkansas Community College, UA Hope-Texarkana, and UA-Cossatot, as well as local industries and area school districts in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application - "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline."

Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the colleges to work with school districts, Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia, and area industries to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university in the industrial technology or engineering fields. It is our understanding that there will be a focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia is pleased to support the SWACCC colleges' endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified industrial technology/mechatronics/pre-engineering graduates needed for our industries to thrive and grow. Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia will assist with the grant by providing assistance and input on curriculum development, recruitment, and articulation of coursework from high school to community colleges to the university industrial technology or engineering programs.

Best regards,



Trey Berry, Ph.D.
President



Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia (SAUM) to act as a partner to the four community colleges in the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWACCC) – SAU-Tech, South Arkansas Community College, UA Hope-Texarkana, and UA-Cossatot, as well as local industries and area school districts in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application - "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline."

Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the colleges to work with school districts, Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia, and area industries to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university in the industrial technology or engineering fields. It is our understanding that there will be a focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia is pleased to support the SWACCC colleges' endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified industrial technology/mechatronics/pre-engineering graduates needed for our industries to thrive and grow. Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia will assist with the grant by providing assistance and input on curriculum development, recruitment, and articulation of coursework from high school to community colleges to the university industrial technology or engineering programs.

Best regards,

Ben Johnson, Ph.D.
Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Letter of Commitment

July 14, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant partnership

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the South Pike County School District to act as a partner to the University of Arkansas, Cossatot and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium. Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by UA Cossatot and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection. I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, UA Cossatot, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Featherston".

Roger Featherston

Superintendent, South Pike County Schools

Horatio Public Schools

Office of Superintendent
PO Box 436, Horatio, Arkansas 71647 • (870) 832-1940 • Fax (870) 832-6466
www.horatiopublicschools.org

July 13, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant partnership

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Horatio School District to act as a partner to the University of Arkansas, Cossatot and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium. Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by UA Cossatot and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection. I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, UA Cossatot, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Sincerely,



Lee Smith, Superintendent
Horatio Public Schools



August 12, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs/Madam:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Smackover-Norphlet School District to act as a partner to the South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium as well as local industries in the state Workforce Planning Grant, "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline". Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by South Arkansas Community College and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection.

The Smackover-Norphlet School District currently has a K-12 Plan for STEM Education. We believe that the foundation for STEM education begins in elementary school which is why we are offering Project Lead the Way's (PLTW) Launch program at both elementary schools this year. In addition, we are offering PLTW's Gateway program to our middle school students beginning this year as well. Middle school students will take two semester-long courses each year including Design & Modeling, Automation and Robotics, Flight and Space, Science of Technology, Computer Science, and the Magic of Electrons. We plan to offer PLTW's Engineering program on the high school campus beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

With this K-12 STEM Plan in mind, we are so very excited to partner with South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium on this Workforce Planning Grant. With all of the STEM related jobs available in South Arkansas (including Lockheed Martin, Aerojet Rocketdyne, and the other defense industries at Highland Park in East Camden, to Cross Oil Refinery and Martin Transportation in Smackover, to all of the chemical companies, Lion Oil, and Murphy Oil in El Dorado, and finally to all of the local independent petroleum producers and contractors servicing those industries in South Arkansas), the Smackover-Norphlet School District feels an obligation to begin building the pipeline for STEM education at the early grade levels so that our students will develop the knowledge, skills, and motivation to pursue the necessary post-secondary education which will help them obtain these jobs and sustain the local workforce.

We believe that the partnership with this consortium and South Arkansas Community College will change our K-12 STEM plan to a K-16 STEM plan.

I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, SouthArk, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,


Dave Wilcox, Superintendent


Jennifer Lee, Curriculum Director



EL DORADO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Administrative Offices • 200 West Oak • El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Keeping the Promise

Teaching and Learning for All

Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the El Dorado School District to act as a partner to the South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium as well as local industries in the state Workforce Planning Grant, "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline". Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by South Arkansas Community College and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection.

I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, SouthArk, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,

Jim Tucker, Superintendent, El Dorado School District

Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Junction City School District to act as a partner to the South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium as well as local industries in the state Workforce Planning Grant, "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline". Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by South Arkansas Community College and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection.

I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, SouthArk, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,



William R. Lowe
Superintendent, Junction City Schools

Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Parkers Chapel School District to act as a partner to the South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium as well as local industries in the state Workforce Planning Grant, "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline". Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by South Arkansas Community College and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection.

I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, SouthArk, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,



Michael J. White

Superintendent, Parkers Chapel Schools

Letter of Commitment

August 11, 2015

Re: Workforce planning grant – Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment on behalf of the Strong-Huttig School District to act as a partner to the South Arkansas Community College and the South West Arkansas Community College Consortium as well as local industries in the state Workforce Planning Grant, "Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline". Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by South Arkansas Community College and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection.

I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations for program alignment that will meet the needs of both my district, SouthArk, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students.

Best regards,

Jeff Alphin
Principal
Strong-Huttig School District



August 14, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Tyson Foods, Inc. of Nashville, Arkansas supports Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot) in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grants funds will enable the College develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

UA Cossatot has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment educations to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Tyson Foods, Inc. of Nashville, Arkansas is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Tyson Foods, Inc. will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

Ken Young
Complex HR Manager
Tyson Foods, Inc.
Nashville, Arkansas

Tyson of Nashville
Paul Britt – Complex Manager
100 East Cassidy Street, Nashville, AR 71852
Phone: 870-845-1455
Fax 870-845-7632
www.tyson.com



Domtar
Ashdown Mill
285 Highway 71 South
Ashdown, AR 71822
Tel : (870) 898-2711

August 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Domtar's Ashdown Mill fully supports Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot) in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application.

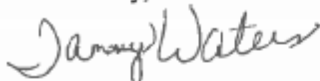
The approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the additional funding will provide the college the opportunity to focus on recruitment and career awareness activities, as well as teacher and counselor education.

UA Cossatot has had a long standing commitment to developing and strengthening the workforce in the local community. Not only do they provide resources and training for individuals needing employment education, but they also take into account the specific needs of local employers such as Domtar.

We are pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Domtar's Ashdown Mill will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs.

Your consideration of their timely grant request is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Tammy Waters
Manager, Communications & Govt. Relations



Dierks Lumber

PO Box 38
Dierks, AR 71833

August 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Weyerhaeuser Dierks Lumber supports Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot) in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

UA Cossatot has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Weyerhaeuser Dierks Lumber is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Weyerhaeuser Dierks Lumber will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

WEYERHAEUSER COMPANY

Lilly Bell-Johnson

Human Resources Generalist
Dierks Lumber / Idabel Lumber

Office: 870-286-4223

500 NORTH WEST AVE. • P. O. BOX 231 • EL DORADO, AR 71731 • (870) 863-1400



CHEMICAL COMPANY

August 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

El Dorado Chemical Company supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

El Dorado Chemical Company is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at El Dorado will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Gregory Withrow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregory Withrow
General Manager

August 14, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Martin supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Martin is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Martin will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,



Keith West
Martin Operating Partners
Senior VP Refinery Operations
Smackover, AR 71762



LION OIL COMPANY

EL DORADO REFINERY
1000 McHENRY
P. O. BOX 7005
EL DORADO, ARKANSAS 71731-7005
(870) 882-8111

August 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Lion Oil Company supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Lion Oil Company is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Lion Oil will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

Steve Cousins
Vice President/General Manager
SMC: cab



Great Lakes Chemical Corporation
A Chemtura Company
PO Box 7020
El Dorado, AR 71731-7020
870-862-5141 tel
www.chemtura.com

August 11, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Great Lakes Solutions supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Great Lakes Solutions is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Great Lakes Solutions will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

Brian Macconnachie

South Arkansas Site Manager

TETRA Technologies, Inc.

August 13, 2015



To Whom It May Concern:

TETRA Technologies, Inc. supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

TETRA Technologies, Inc. is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at TETRA Technologies, Inc. will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Sincerely,
TETRA Technologies, Inc.

David A. Gasper
Facility General Manager
El Dorado, AR



August 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Clean Harbors supports South Arkansas Community College in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College to develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

SouthArk has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Clean Harbors is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Clean Harbors will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Roblee".

Dan Roblee
Facility General Manager



August 12, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Ash Grove Cement Company supports Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot) in the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant application. Approval of the requested grant funds will enable the College develop well defined and articulated career pathways from high school to community college to university. Additionally, the college will focus on recruitment and career awareness activities as well as teacher and counselor education.

UA Cossatot has had a long standing commitment to ongoing development and strengthening of our community's workforce by providing opportunities for those needing employment education to gain competence in skill areas and knowledge for entry into the global workforce, supporting the needs of employers, and leadership for economic development activities to enhance employment opportunities within its service area.

Ash Grove Cement Company is pleased to support the College's endeavor to ensure a flow of the qualified workers needed for our business to thrive and grow. We at Ash Grove Cement Company will assist with the grant by providing feedback on the needs of the service area and how the program can best address those needs. We will also give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clint Nelson".

Clint Nelson
Production Superintendent
Ash Grove Cement Company
Foreman Arkansas

GENERAL DYNAMICS
Ordnance and Tactical Systems

6345 AR 203 HWY
Hampton, AR 71744
Tel: 870-798-4171
Fax: 870-798-4946

July 27, 2015

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Arkansas Workforce Initiative
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear ADHE:

As an aerospace defense contractor in the Highland Industrial Park, General Dynamics has a vested interest in the development of a career pathway to train more entry level workers for specific skillsets related to our contract execution. General Dynamics will support Southern Arkansas University Tech's efforts to develop secondary to post-secondary STEM pathways through the SWACCC Workforce Planning Grant project by providing equipment as available, expert consultation to faculty, and career placement as opportunities become available.

General Dynamics supports SAU Tech in this effort and in all other activities of the college that result in successful training programs that impact the company's ability to secure a qualified workforce into the future.

For more information regarding our participation with SAU Tech, please contact me anytime via email or phone.

Sincerely,



Erik Perrin, CSP
Production Manager
General Dynamics Ordnance & Tactical Systems
Camden Operations

Office: 870 798-4171 ex 287
Cell: 870 818-1737
erik.perrin@gd-ots.com



Georgia Pacific
Wood Products South LLC
#1 GP Lane
Gurdon, AR 71743
Phone (870) 353-4474

August 19, 2015

Re: Regional Workforce Planning Grant Partnership

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment for the Workforce Initiative Act Regional Workforce Grant on behalf of Georgia Pacific, LLC to act as an employer partner to the Southwest Arkansas Community College Consortium. One of our goals is to strengthen our workforce by encouraging and preparing high school students, incumbent workers, and unemployed individuals for careers that will benefit the manufacturing sector.

With many of our experienced employees retiring from the field, it is important to replace the knowledge and skills with individuals who are ready and willing to help our company prosper. I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations to meet the needs of my company, our local high schools, and the College. Increased coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education and training that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janye Bell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janye Bell
Learning and Talent Development Specialist
Georgia Pacific, LLC