



**Act 1131 of 2015**  
**Regional Workforce Continuation Grant**

**APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

*DUE JUNE 1, 2018*

<b>To:</b>	Arkansas Department of Higher Education
<b>Requesting Institution:</b>	Arkansas State University Mountain Home
<b>Title of Project:</b>	Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing
<b>Project Partners:</b>	<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"><div style="flex: 1; min-width: 200px;">1. Ranger Boats 2. Baxter Healthcare, Inc. 3. Mountain Home High School 4. Cotter High School 5. Flippin High School 6. Viola High School 7. Salem High School</div><div style="flex: 1; min-width: 200px;">8. Norfolk High School 9. Goodwill Services 10. Ozark Center of Hope 11. Dept. of Workforce Services 12. Serenity Women's Shelter 13. Food Bank of NCA</div></div>
<b>Requested Budget:</b>	\$785,000
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	June 1, 2018
<b>Applicant Contact:</b>	Dr. Robin Myers
<b>Applicant's Information:</b>	1600 S. College Mountain Home, AR 72653 870-508-6120 rmyers@asumh.edu

**Authorized Signatures for Institution**

Arkansas State University Mountain Home \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Institution

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Official

**Act 1131 of 2015**  
**Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Application**

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2018**. Applications should be emailed to [ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu](mailto:ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu). Please note that only projects that were awarded an implementation grant are eligible to apply for a continuation grant.*

**SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED**

**20 Points**

Proposals will include a thorough description 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 continuation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

*Essential Components:*

- Regional data demonstrating the need for action - provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.
- Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs- clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations, and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas. **Applicants must also submit letters of support from at least two area employers for the proposal, citing need and outlining benefits for local industry.**
- Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals- describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Program Need (20 Pts)</b>	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11–14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)

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

### **Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing**

Manufacturing firms located in the Northwest Arkansas Region are growing as a result of the recent expansion opportunities and technological advancements that have occurred within the last year. The struggle to find qualified applicants and the development of a viable pipeline of individuals who are at various stages in becoming qualified job applicants are challenges facing local employers.

Manufacturing firms in the Twin Lakes area, which cover Baxter and Marion counties, are in need of a technically skilled workforce. Specifically, the need for maintenance technicians, machine operators, and welders have reached critical levels; over 300 positions in the Twin Lakes area alone will need to be filled within the next year.

#### **Twin Lakes Area Labor Needs/Industry Needs**

- Baxter Healthcare, Inc. (recent 40,000 square feet expansion): manufacturing technicians, extruder/blender operators, assemblers
- Micro plastics, Inc.(recently purchased by a British holding company): manufacturing technicians, material handlers
- Bass Pro Ranger Boats (expanding aluminum boat line): gas metal arc aluminum welders, machine operators, manufacturing technicians
- EZ Loader (expanding as a result of all area boat manufacturers growth): gas metal arc aluminum welders
- Bass Cat (engaged in facility expansion of 40,000 square feet; 100 new employees will be needed): gas metal arc welders, machine operators
- Legend Boats (recently purchased by Bass Pro and undergoing expansion of 120 employees): machine operators
- American Epoxyn Scientific (new startup has resulted in surpassing hiring 100 employees with plans to add 200): manufacturing technicians
- Vexus (new boat manufacturing facility): 150 employees to be hired in 2018

The Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing (Pipeline) is an integrated effort to establish a pathway for individuals to enter the advanced manufacturing workforce or advance from their current position in the workforce. The ultimate goal is to further prepare these individuals with skills qualifying them for employment in advanced manufacturing.

#### **WHERE ARE WE?**

Employers have long sought an answer to the crisis that faces them concerning the preparedness of the labor force to enter the manufacturing environment. This problem has been exacerbated by the

evolution of advanced manufacturing processes which requires a deeper level of knowledge for workers.

Understanding employers' needs is a critical element in developing a solution to the problem. The effort to implement and refine a program that addresses employer needs has been underway through the Implementation Grant. It is evidenced by the data and discussions presented by the various manufacturers in the North Central Arkansas region.

Baxter Healthcare, Inc. is one of the largest employers in Baxter County, employing approximately 1,000 people. It produces a range of products used in medical care and dialysis. In October 2015 Baxter Healthcare, working with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, announced the addition 225 jobs over the next five years. According to AEDC Chairman Lang Zimmerman, "this is by far, one of the largest economic development investments made by the state [in 2015]". The challenge however is the lack of qualified applicants applying for entry level positions and the need to train and promote incumbent workers to handle the more advanced technical jobs.

As a result of the recent expansion, Baxter Healthcare, Inc. is committed to strengthening the educational opportunities in the field of Mechatronics by referring its current employees to attend Arkansas State University Mountain Home's (ASUMH) Mechatronics Apprenticeship program. Unfortunately, the creation of a pipeline of qualified applicants for Assembler, Blender/Extruders and Production Technicians has been a struggle. According to Baxter Healthcare, mathematical skills, critical thinking skills and basic mechanical knowledge are severely lacking. Currently, Baxter Healthcare, Inc. utilizes the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) as a tool to identify those applicants that are able to solve mathematical calculations at a pre-algebra level

The salary range for an entry level employee is currently \$11.65 - \$12.20. Baxter Healthcare indicates that the entry level employee is the most difficult to find. Many of their applicants are unable to perform basic math calculations or read basic instructions found on standard operating procedures, despite having a high school diploma. The entry level positions are the gateway to the more technically skilled jobs and incumbent employees can accelerate their advancement by enrolling in ASUMH's Mechatronics Apprenticeship program. Completion of the apprenticeship program helps individuals build long-term careers, earn family sustaining wages and work with the latest robotic technology building lifesaving medical devices.

Another large employer struggling to expand is Bass Pro Ranger Boats manufacturing plant located in Flippin in Marion County. Ranger Boats currently employs approximately 1,000 people. They have numerous positions vacant and continue to struggle with a high turnover rate. Ranger Boats believes the lack of work ethic and the inability to handle full-time employment while managing day-to-day demands of life reflect a direct correlation to the high turnover in employees. Ranger Boats has developed a relationship with ASUMH Technical Center and was one of the employers instrumental in creating and piloting the *Ready2Work* initiative. *Ready2Work* is utilized as a pre-employment training program where individuals with short-term work history and a lack of basic reading, writing and math skills were trained to plan and implement a life goal regarding job maintenance.

Ranger Boats desperately needs a pipeline of qualified workers to fill entry level and mid-skill level jobs to meet current production goals and is committed to creating a career ladder for individuals who are interested in advancing in manufacturing careers.

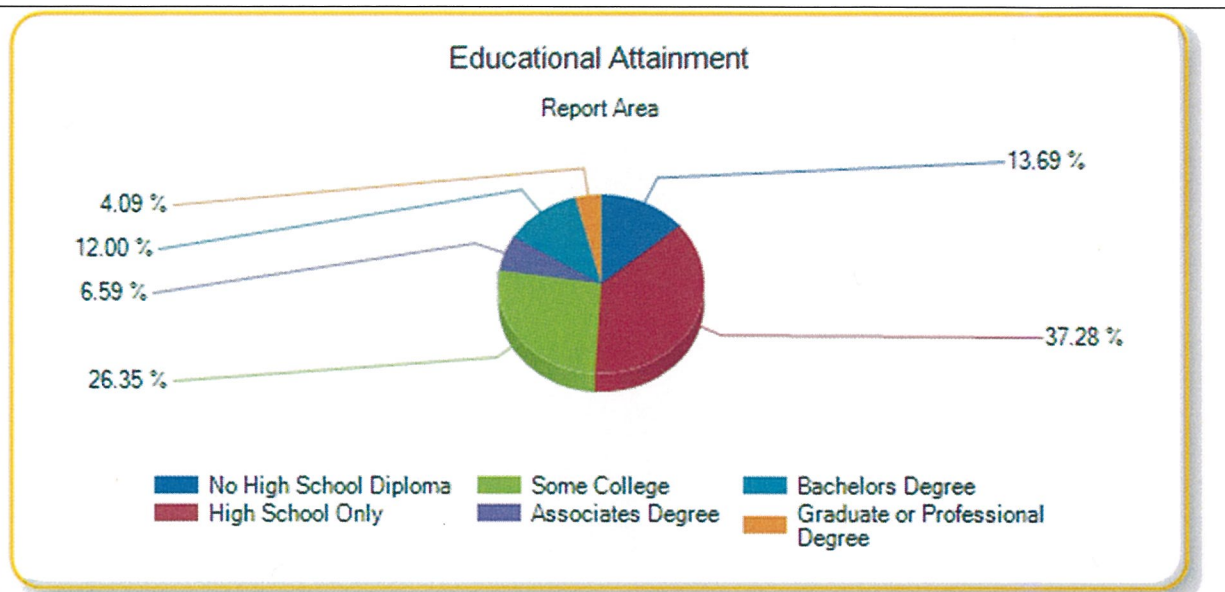
Although a myriad of services are available for self-improvement, it can be very difficult for a person to navigate the various agencies offering needed services. Community colleges have traditionally had

a curriculum for workforce preparation but the entry point requires individuals to be at or near college readiness. Many individuals who have completed high school find themselves far from the point of being prepared to enter college. Others have been out of high school for a sufficient amount of time that they need remedial work to bring their academic skills back up to an appropriate level. They lack life skills, interpersonal skills and technical competencies needed to be successful in the workforce or as college students. The answer to this situation is to create a pathway of learning opportunities with multiple entry and exit points that enables a person to begin at whatever level of academic, job and life skills they lack and transition to any one of multiple levels of development before entering the workforce. This system also allows for reentry into the educational pathway at any point during employment.

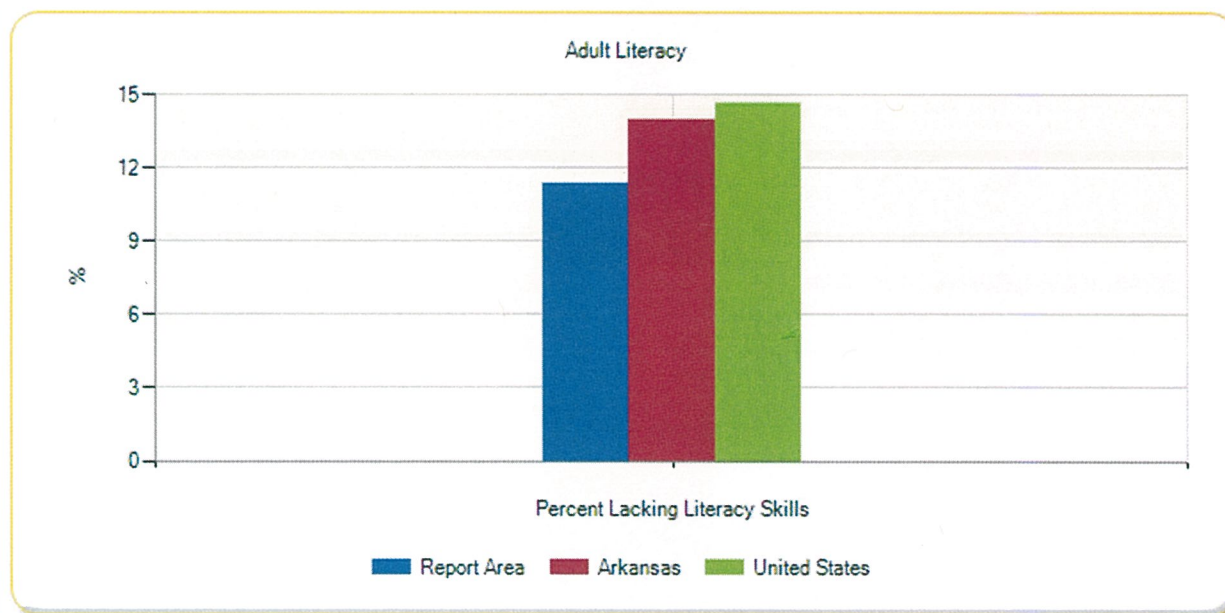
#### **WHY THE STRUGGLE TO FIND QUALIFIED APPLICANTS IN BAXTER AND MARION COUNTIES?**

Baxter and Marion counties are located in North Central Arkansas and are home to the White River, Buffalo River, Lake Norfork and Bull Shoals Lake. The landscape is inviting for outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing and boating activities. It is a tourists' destination, with a rising population, however the community continues to struggle with poverty and the lack of educated individuals. In fact according to the US Census Bureau, "the poverty rate for Baxter and Marion counties increased by 2.4% and it is estimated that there were "4,085 households or 16.24% living in poverty, which is greater than the national average of 15.59%" Marion County currently reports 18.7% of its households live in poverty.

Employment is an obvious and economically sustainable solution to lowering poverty rates, however, many of the individuals living in poverty lack not only basic life skills, but the basic education needed to be successful in manufacturing jobs. The Census Bureau reports 13.69% of the population do not have a high school diploma. Many of these people may be defined as out of school youth. Out of school youth are young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who did not complete high school and are not employed. Because of this, these individuals are perceived to be unemployable due to the lack of life skills needed to maintain employment. In regard to individuals who do not have a high school diploma, it was found that 37.28% of the population does have a high school diploma but employers are still finding a lack mathematical and critical thinking skills. In fact 77.23% of the population lack the Associate Degree needed to work as production technicians or manufacturing technicians. Employers are taking notice and are shifting their focus to training their incumbent workers through ASUMH's technical programs as long as ASUMH continues to fill the training pipeline with youth, out of school youth, middle aged workers, single parents, re-entry individuals and other individuals interested in working and who have completed technical training.



Data Source: US Census Bureau, Small Area Income Poverty Estimates. 2013. Source geography: County



## HOW WILL IT WORK?

There are nine agencies which have committed to partnering in the activities of the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing program at ASUMH. These agencies are the Department of Workforce Services, the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas, Ozark Opportunities, Goodwill of Mountain Home, Salvation Army, Twin Lakes Recovery, Serenity Women's Shelter and the Center of Hope. Additionally seven educational institutions have agreed to join the effort. These include Mountain Home High School, Pinkston Middle School, Cotter High School, Viola High School, Norfolk High School, Salem High School and Flippin High School.

All of the public/not-for-profit agencies have agreed to refer their clients to the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing. Several of the agencies will take an additional active role in providing training to those in the Pipeline, especially in the area of life skills.

The Pipeline, with various entry and exit points, will begin with a series of educational experiences designed to equip a person with the knowledge and skills needed to cope with family and work issues. These educational experiences are intended to be sequential but a person may start at any point within the Pipeline deemed appropriate for their level of preparation. At any point a person can exit the Pipeline and enter the manufacturing workforce but can also stay engaged along the continuum of experiences.

### **WHAT ARE THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES?**

Many people who are currently unemployed or underemployed have missed the opportunity to acquire basic life and interpersonal skills as a result of circumstances beyond their control. These individuals would engage the workforce in an effort to experience a more productive life if the process was more easily accessible. Multiple issues such as food insecurity, personal finance, workplace rules, interpersonal expectations and technical competencies face these individuals.

A series of educational experiences delivered by a partnership between Arkansas State University – Mountain Home and the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas have been developed to create the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing. This is a unique partnership coupled with the other participating agencies that allows the Pipeline to reach individuals that previously were unable to participate in the workforce because of a lack of basic life skills.

**Shopping Matters** is a *No Kid Hungry Initiative* that is currently offered by the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas (FBNCA). This program is designed to assist low-income families, especially those receiving SNAP benefits, to maximize their food purchases. This includes hands-on-learning tours through Walmart stores or other grocery stores. Individuals and families learn about unit pricing, reading nutrition facts panels and shopping with a plan and a budget.

**Cooking Matters** is also part of the *No Kid Hungry Initiative* and is a six week course where participants not only learn to shop strategically but use practical nutrition information to guide their food choices and cook healthy, delicious meals. The participants in *Cooking Matters* courses are moms, dads, grandparents, caregivers, kids and teens who want to make simple, healthy meals on a budget.

**Move Up to Independence/Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting'-By World (Getting Ahead)** is a program designed to assist individuals and families with the necessary tools to achieve self-sufficiency. Participants explore the impact of economic class on themselves and their communities, and how to build financial, emotional, social and employment resources. They explore different employment options, including training and technical programs to broaden their career options. Participants develop life goals and create a plan to achieve their goals. This experience uses the curriculum developed by Dr. Ruby Payne and Dr. Phil Devol in the Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting'-By World text.

**Ready2Work** is a soft skills classes that address employment issues affecting success at work including resume and cover letters, job searches, interviewing skills and mock interviews, good attendance, being on time, developing plans for childcare and transportation, meeting employer expectations, job safety and communication. It was developed through a collaboration between businesses and

manufacturers to address high turnover rates and the shortage of employees with good work ethic. Every local employer involved in the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing project has identified soft skills such as adherence to attendance policies, communication skills, work ethic, budgeting for work expenses (gasoline to get to and from work, childcare, etc.) and the ability to think critically and problem solve as major skill gaps. *Move Up to Independence* and *Ready2Work* address these skills. Upon completion of the program or programs, participants will have developed a plan that has addresses potential obstacles to retained employment. An employability plan will guide the student so that he/she has not only identified potential barriers but has also created a solution to handle them as they occur.

**Pre-employment Soft Skill Training** embedded through the curriculum at the secondary schools. The pre-employment lessons focus on the soft skills identified by industry partners to be lacking or missing from the current labor market. Topics such as critical thinking skills, communication skills for the workplace, problem solving, and professionalism, along with job search techniques, were heavily emphasized.

**Pre-employment Job Skills Laboratories** have been established by ASUMH at Flippin in Marion County and Mountain Home in Baxter County. These labs are equipped with safety, mechanical and industry-specific equipment that allows for the training and skills enhancement of individuals to prepare them for the workplace. Training programs are designed for as short as one day or as long as one week for industries' employee training. Half (50%) of the local employers have identified basic technical skills such as the ability to read measuring devices, basic hand tool knowledge and basic mechanical skills as necessary skills for entry level employment. Many job applicants lack the basic technical skills needed to perform jobs successfully. These skills will be focused on in the Job Skills Labs and be customized to meet individual employers' needs.

An **Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)** is a portable credential based upon the WorkKeys® assessments that demonstrates to employers that an individual possesses basic academic and workplace skills. Earning a CRC allows an individual to demonstrate to prospective employers that he or she possesses the basic skills they are looking for. The Arkansas CRC further verifies that individuals can accomplish tasks such as reading and comprehending instructions and directions, working with figures, and finding information, all tasks common in today's workplace. Career Readiness Certificates offered by the Department of Workforce Services are required by Baxter Healthcare, Inc. and recognized by other local employers as a key indicator for job readiness.

**ASUMH Secondary Center** will prepare secondary students to enter the workforce shortly after high school graduation. Industry partners are interested in hiring students who have completed a technical certificate in any of the current ASUMH technical programs including welding, HVAC, automotive repair and Mechatronics. Each program will offer basic mechanical and industrial skills that manufacturing employers desperately need. The goal is for secondary students enroll in classes at the ASUMH Secondary Center in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. This allows students to earn a Certificate of Proficiency in their chosen career field concurrently with their high school classes. Secondary students who complete a Certificate of Proficiency during high school will be able to complete a Technical Certificate after one semester of enrollment at ASUMH Technical Center following high school graduation (based on full-time post-secondary enrollment.)

**ASUMH Mechatronics Program** is an industry-driven program that has been designed and created specifically for industry partner hiring needs. The ASUMH Mechatronics has been approved by the Department of Labor as an apprenticeship program.

Local manufacturing firms have indicated there are currently open positions for workers with training in Industrial Mechatronics. Several manufacturers have identified a need for additional employees with those same skills in the next five years. Some of these positions will be vacated by an aging workforce while other will result from plant expansions. The Mechatronics program, collaboration between Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH) and local industry, was developed as a solution to the shortage of qualified workers to fill maintenance technician positions. This industry-driven program will produce graduates that will be employable in a diversified manufacturing setting. Students will earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in Mechatronics which includes 60 hours of college credit, and may earn industry certifications such as the Manufacturing Skills Standards Certification (MSCC), Certified Production Technician (CPT), Certified Education Robot Training (CERT), Packaging Machinery Manufacturing Institute (PMMI) Certification and the SolidWorks Certification. This program is federal financial aid eligible for those students who meet the award requirement. The total amount of apprenticeship hours will equal 6700 not including the hours involving classroom instruction.

Mechatronics will involve the high school dual credit CTE programs leading to a Certificate of Proficiency thus creating a youth pipeline. A clear road map of the program, credit for prior learning, industry paid apprenticeships, stackable credentials and industry certifications will make the Mechatronics Apprenticeship program appealing to a diverse population of students, including transitioning veterans and women.

**Mechatronics and Advanced Manufacturing**

College Credit Earned: 60 Credit Hours

Stackable College Credential Earned: Certificate of Proficiency (first 15 credit hours), Technical Certificate (next 32 credit hours), and Associate of Applied Science (total of 60 credit hours).

Salary Range: \$21,000 to \$48,000 per year -Apprentice starting wage \$12.00 - \$17.00 per hour depending on previous work history and experience.

Industry Partners: Baxter Healthcare, Inc. will be the primary partner and several other advanced manufacturing firms will absorb some of the other apprentices. Industry partners are located in Mountain Home and Flippin, Arkansas, covering both Baxter and Marion counties.

The area high schools, including Mountain Home High School, Cotter High School, Viola High School, Flippin High School, Norfork High School and Salem High School will participate by allowing the delivery of the above listed Pipeline modules to students in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

SKILL GAPS IDENTIFIED BY LOCAL EMPLOYERS IN TWIN LAKES AREA									
Company	County	Number of Employees	Job Requirements	Turnover Rate	Reasons for Employee Turnover	Wages	Skill Gaps	Future Predictions	Loss Due to Turnover
Actronix/ Sematronix	Marion	100	Ability to read and understand Standard Operating Procedures, measurement, metric calibrations	14%	Retirement; leave for higher wages		Ability to read measurements; critical thinking skills; attendance; mechanical skills	N/A	\$70,000
American Epoxyn Scientific	Baxter		High school diploma, previous manufacturing or farming experience preferred, industrial mechanical skills, knowledgeable in PLC		n/a	Depends on experience in specific job; related capabilities	Soft skills, industrial, mechanical, electrical skills; PLC - Allen Bradley; AutoCad drafting; CNC Router	200 employees within next 2-5 years	
Baxter Healthcare, Inc.	Baxter	1000	High school diploma, minimum silver CRC, pass background check, clean drug screen	15%	Can't pass random drug test; can't follow company policy and procedures; poor attendance		Silver CRC topics Locating Information, Reading for Information, Applied Math; work ethic	224 jobs in highly skilled/mid skilled technical jobs	\$750,000
EATON Corporation	Baxter	300	High school diploma, ability to follow directions, ability to read Standard Operating Procedures, basic reading and math skills	7%	Poor attendance, physical demands of the job; if applicants live with grandparents, they tend not to "want" to work	\$12-\$24 depending on the position	Soft skills, budgeting for work; attendance; work ethics	Growth planned in next 12-18 months; expansion of mfg floor; upgrade automation; modernization of equipment	\$105,000
MicroPlastics	Marion	425	Good hand/eye coordination, ability to multi-task, ability to read and comprehend directions, critical thinking skills	36%	Loss to other employers (13%); no call/no show (44%); attendance; loss of supportive services	\$8.15 - \$25.50/hr; Maintenance technicians \$18	Attendance, mechanical skills, PLC knowledge, communication skills, ability to read and write, critical thinking skills, work ethic	Plan to incorporate more robotic machinery; expansion occurring in Melbourne due to shortage of qualified workers in Twin Lakes area	\$765,000
Bass Pro/Ranger Boats	Marion	1000	Previous manufacturing or farm experience, industrial mechanical skills, welding skills for welders	39%	Attendance; job abandonment; do not follow company policies	\$10.15 - \$17.50	Soft skills, critical thinking, budgeting for work, attendance, basic hand tool knowledge, basic mechanical skills	Struggling to expand due to qualified labor shortage	\$1,950,000
Pace Industries	Boone	NA	Ability to read, write and follow basic instructions, report to work on time	21.60%	Absenteeism	\$10.96 - \$15.00	Tool room, maintenance, soft skills	Appx 10% increase over next five years	
Wabash	Boone	NA	Ability to understand and follow instructions, report to work on time	15% and 300% in Temp-to-hire	Attendance; just walk off the job; poor work ethic; physicality of work	\$15 - \$21	General machinery knowledge, math skills, ability to read measuring devices, troubleshooting skills, maintenance familiarity	Staffing wages will elevate in many positions due to the sophistication of the automation	

### **CONTINUING THE PROGRAM**

Supportive services are key to the successful continuation of the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing program. Northwest Arkansas is struggling to find job applicants that are qualified for technical positions. It has become necessary to provide potential job seekers with the necessary life and technical skills needed to achieve job success.

The Pipeline will continue to employ a grant administrator, recruiter and case manager. The recruiter will work with social agencies, such as the Department of Workforce Services, Goodwill, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas, Serenity Women's Shelter, Twin Lakes Recovery and Ozark Opportunities to receive referrals for program participants. Many of these individuals have barriers to employment, will be hard to service and are receiving government assistance. The focus will be on the chronically unemployed, single parents, veterans, at-risk unemployed young adults and those with some college experience who have not completed higher education. As the recruiter, it will be imperative that the recruiting process is relationship-based. The recruiter is also trained in delivering the *Shopping Matters* and *Cooking Matters* programs.

Once potential students have been identified, the recruiter will refer individuals to work with a case manager who will also act as a facilitator for *Move Up to Independence/Getting Ahead* and *Ready2Work* programs. The case manager will work closely with individuals to assess the current job readiness of the individual and the potential of life challenges hindering job retention. The case manager utilizes intrusive advising to identify the ability and readiness of entering a training program. The goal of the case manager is to move the individual forward into the Pipeline while assuring individuals they have the necessary life skills to be job ready. In order to qualify for the *Ready2Work* program, the individual must be prepared to enter employment.

The case manager will also work to identify individuals who are prepared to enter a technical program with ASUMH. Individuals with high school diplomas or GEDs will be encouraged to enter a technical program to advance their mechanical knowledge.

In order to insure job opportunities will be available to Pipeline participants, staff will also act as employer liaisons to create a pipeline of applicants for area employers by working closely with the Director of Workforce Development to know the needs of employers for both training and hiring and to create a smooth transition for applicants into employment ultimately leading to higher retention rates for employers.

## SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN

25 Points

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program as well as the following Essential Components:

- Detailed project timeline and overview- provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the project.
- Measurable objectives for each phase of the project- detail the metrics utilized throughout the project to track how credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers will be provided.
- 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.
- 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.
- Role of equipment request- required only for those proposals seeking equipment purchases. Outline how equipment purchase will specifically address local labor market needs; provide detailed description of equipment, educational value of equipment in preparing workforce, and justification for purchase.
- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through continuation of the plan and strategies to measure and report achievement of those outcomes. Priority will be given to programs which prepare candidates for high wage jobs or which create capacity to move candidates from unemployment to employment.
- 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 detailed project timeline and overview, measurable objectives for each phase of the project, a project governance and accountability plan, pathways articulation and support, the role of any equipment requested, and a performance assessment.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Program Plan (25 Pts)</b>	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)

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

#### **PROPOSED GOVERNANCE**

To ensure that the Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing is properly utilized and maintained for the benefit of the manufacturing industry that comprises Northwest Arkansas, a project director (ASUMH Director of Workforce Development) and a steering committee made up of representatives from each manufacturing industry partner will consult regularly to initiate, organize and oversee Pipeline activities.

It is crucial that a strong relationship is maintained with industry partners to assure the success within two years. Keeping strong communication channels open with both industry partners and secondary partners will allow for any immediate project changes on an as-needed basis. The project director will act as the spokesperson for the Pipeline success and relay all communications to the steering committee. By encouraging facilitation rather than delegation, it is expected that we will be able to respond to our industry partners' needs in a quick, strong and effective manner.

#### **MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

##### **July 2018- December to June 2019**

##### **Year I**

##### **Measurable Objectives**

(1) Shopping Matter Completers	120
(2) Cooking Matter Completers	120
(3) Move Up to Independence Completers	120
(4) Ready to Work Completers	120
(5) Entered Employment	60
(6) Registered for ASUMH Technical Center programs	45
(7) Secondary Students	60
(8) Completed Certificate of Proficiency	30
(9) Completed Technical Certificates	20
(10) Completed Associate of Applied Science degrees	10
(11) Career Readiness Certificates	165
(12) Technical Skills Laboratories	120

##### **July 2019- December to June 2020**

##### **Year II**

##### **Measurable Objectives**

(1) Shopping Matter Completers	120
(2) Cooking Matter Completers	120

(3) Move Up to Independence Completers	120
(4) Ready to Work Completers	120
(5) Entered Employment	60
(6) Registered for ASUMH Technical Center programs	45
(7) Secondary Students	60
(8) Completed Certificate of Proficiency	30
(9) Completed Technical Certificates	20
(10) Completed Associate of Applied Science degrees	10
(11) Career Readiness Certificates	165
(12) Technical Skills Laboratories	120

#### **PATHWAY ARTICULATION AND SUPPORT**

Industry leaders have become more involved in the direction of how their current workforce is developed. The leading cause in high turnover rates relates to soft skill development. Industry consensus tells us that many of the individuals entering the manufacturing workforce lack the most basic skills necessary to remain employable.

In order to continue and expand project success in the Continuation Grant, education and training in employability, soft skills and life skills will continue to be taught. Job skills training will expand into hands-on experience using hand tools, pneumatic tools, commercial sewing machines, and industry-specific training as identified by employers and will be used as the primary tool in bolstering recruitment numbers of viable employable candidates as well as strengthening industry retention numbers.

*Shopping Matters* and *Cooking Matters* are two of the programs designed to enhance and teach basic life skills. An individual must learn how to take of the needs of his or her family unit before entering the workforce. Both of these programs offer classes that teach individuals how to plan and budget while living on a fixed income. *Cooking Matters* takes this knowledge one step further by teaching how to strategically budget an entire grocery list and turn it into meals for every night of the week. These life skills directly correlate to soft skills. If an individual does not know how to properly care for himself or herself at home, he/she will experience the same types of difficulties in a place of employment.

*Move Up to Independence/Getting Ahead* aims to empower low-income and working class families and give them control of their life through self-awareness. Assisting individuals and families with the necessary tools and knowledge to achieve self-sufficiency is the primary objective of the soft skills Pipeline modules. Participants explore the impact of economic class on themselves and their communities, how to build financial, emotional, social and employment resources. They explore different employment options, including training and technical programs to broaden their career options. Participants develop life goals and create a plan to achieve their life goals.

*Ready2Work*, in conjunction with the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), acts as a distinguishing factor that industry partners look for when hiring new members to their respective workforces. Initially implemented to bridge the gap between industry partners and local workforce, the Ready2Work program and CRC have become a measurement of basic skills ability and what it means to be a truly employable candidate to area manufacturers.

Beyond the *Ready2Work* program, participants will be referred to the Pre-employment Technical Job Skills Training Labs and ASUMH Technical Center. Because of the high demand from manufacturing

industry partners, technical skills are emphasized and the need for qualified applicants can be met. In recognizing that all facets of the Pipeline modules can be integrated and build upon each other, individuals may choose to place focus on learning and enhancing his or her technical skill set.

The Technical Job Skills Labs will provide pre-employment skills training for individuals who have limited or no work experience in a manufacturing setting. Participants will be introduced to safety equipment and industry-specific manufacturing equipment to increase their eligibility for entry-level positions. These labs will also be used by area manufacturers to provide training for new employees, at-risk employees as well as incumbent employees. Trainings will be taught by manufacturing facility team leads, supervisors and experienced workers with the goal of reducing on-the-job training time and increasing job retention. The labs are being housed at Pinkston Middle School in Mountain Home (Baxter County) and at Flippin High School (Marion County). Because the labs are on secondary school campuses, they will also be available for use by high school students which will help further the youth pipeline of applicants. Credentials such as CPR, first aid and OSHA will be options for incumbent employees allowing them to obtain training needed to move into mid-skill level positions. As the Continuation Grant progresses and employers identify additional workforce training needs, the training rooms can be expanded by adding more equipment, training options and credentialing opportunities.

Through successful completion of the modules, individuals will be equipped with skill sets to enter the workforce or go on further at ASUMH. Both the ASUMH Technical Center and ASUMH Mechatronics program are designed to increase advancement opportunities. The ASUMH Secondary Center will prepare secondary students to enter the workforce after high school graduation. Industry partners are especially interested in hiring students who have completed a technical certificate in any of the current ASUMH technical programs including welding, HVAC, Mechatronics and automotive repair. Through the Pipeline activities, a continual stream of new, viable candidates will be ready to join the workforce.

Though there is a series of modules one must successfully complete before advancing, the Pipeline modules also offer flexibility. An individual may join in at any module of the pipeline at any given point (dependent on the individual's assessment of skills). This project is designed to welcome any educational level and skill level and in doing so, removes any negative stigma surrounding lack of higher education. Through education of life skills, soft skills, technical skills and industry-related programs, there is no doubt that Northwest Arkansas will develop a workforce of career driven individuals.

### SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

20 Points

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, in a meaningful role.

*Essential Components:*

- Detailed description of role of each partner in continuation of the project- describe how each partner will continue to carry out components of the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project; describe the integration of each role into the overall project; and describe the process for implementing fully articulated pathways from K-12 through a baccalaureate degree, as appropriate.
- Capabilities of each partner in ensuring project success- discuss the unique strengths of each partner in continuing the implemented project; describe how each partner is qualified to continue to participate in the project and how each partners strengthens the overall partnership.
- Consideration of all potential partners in the region – describe the process for identifying each selected partner, including the consideration of regional community colleges, universities, public schools, education service cooperatives, businesses and industries, career and technical education programs, multidistrict vocational centers, and private partnerships.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)</b>	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)

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

During the planning phase of the workforce development grant, industry partners questioned the viability of the Twin Lakes area workforce. Was the Twin Lakes experiencing a labor shortage? This question was explored in detail and the missing element was two-fold. First, it was concluded that an effective youth pipeline was missing. It was affirmed that a partnership between industry, secondary schools and ASUMH was needed to build an accelerated pathway into the Pipeline. Recent high school graduates lacked the soft skills and technical skills to qualify for open positions, and it was decided that both soft skills and technical skills needed to be addressed simultaneously.

While developing the *Ready2Work* soft skills program, it was found that some high school students were not only first generation high school graduates but could also be identified as first generation workers. Human resource professionals were frustrated with the lack of job maintenance skills possessed by many employees who voluntarily or involuntarily left their positions within the first ninety days of employment. Community partners were identified as subject matter experts to identify the potential job skills that were needed for the chronically unemployed, job hoppers and career changers that struggle with employment. It was discovered that community partners needed an entry into the Pipeline for their clients.

Industry partners, community partners, ASUMH and secondary schools are committed to developing the Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline. Working with those who have been identified as chronically unemployed, at-risk youth, and individuals who are re-entering the workforce, the community will not only increase the number of participants in the Pipeline program but will serve as a continued resource for referral services for Pipeline participants. The partnership between industry, ASUMH, secondary schools, and community partners will allow the partners to move as a team, communicate effectively to develop a viable workforce and to move individuals into self-sustaining career paths.

#### **INDUSTRY PARTNERS**

Baxter Healthcare, Inc. is committed to Northwest Arkansas, especially the Twin Lakes area, and through the pipeline program will employ qualified candidates into their Mechatronics Apprenticeship program at ASUMH. Mechatronics refers to the advanced manufacturing program currently offered by ASUMH. Baxter is the lead program advisor, serves as an on-site program consultant and is committed to sending a minimum of fifty newly hired incumbent workers to attend the ASUMH Mechatronics program. As a partner to the pipeline program, Baxter has committed their engineering manager to serve on the advisory board for ASUMH and the advisory board of Mountain Home High School.

As Baxter Healthcare, Inc. continues to invest in advanced manufacturing technology and is committed to investing in the local workforce, other local employers are embracing advanced technology and are committed to hiring technically trained ASUMH graduates. The benefits of this partnership are not exclusive to Northwest Arkansas; the growth of a workforce pipeline will inevitably attract additional economic development opportunities.

Micro Plastics is committed to attending quarterly meetings, utilizing hiring practices as a second chance employer, and referring at-risk incumbent workers into the Pipeline program to increase the number of applicants to their facility.

Ranger Boats is also committed to hiring individuals in the of the Pipeline program. Ranger Boats will conduct on site job interviews and will continue to serve on the advisory board. The Human Resource Manager and Plant Manager will attend quarterly industry partner meetings and will regularly review program curriculum as well as suggest new programs based on their needs.

Bass Cat Boats, another boat manufacturing company in Flippin, is in the process of expanding their manufacturing plant by adding 40,000 square feet to their facility with the intent of hiring an additional 100 workers. They too will serve in an advisory capacity regarding employer training needs for new employees.

All industry partners are committed to working with ASUMH and the Director of Workforce Development to identify skill gaps and hiring challenges. As manufacturing plants continue to explore expansion opportunities, it has become imperative that job seekers are technically qualified to handle the new positions created.

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND SOCIAL AGENCIES**

Individuals who are in need of basic life necessities are used to living in the tyranny of the moment. As described by psychologist Dr. Ruby Payne, living in the tyranny of the moment distracts the individual member from planning their lives, preventing life challenges and forces them to survive life challenges on an hour by hour basis. Living in the tyranny of the moment will inhibit an individual from completing an education, securing employment that pays a living wage and negatively affects any effort towards job retention.

Government agencies such as the Department of Workforce Services and social agencies such as Goodwill, Ozark Opportunities and the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas (FBNCA) are the entry points into the Pipeline. Many of the individuals entering the Pipeline through these entry points are not prepared to successfully begin a career pathway, let alone secure an entry level job that will pay a salary above minimum wage. To prepare individuals for success, classes in basic life skills such as *Shopping Matters*, *Cooking Matters* and *Move Up to Independence* will be offered. These life skills programs are designed to facilitate learning to handle and prepare for life challenges. The key is to guide an individual to budget, plan and make life decisions that are consistent with maintaining a stable work and family life.

The executive directors of FBNCA, Ozark Center of Hope, Goodwill and Ozark Opportunities are committed to advertising the pipeline services to their clients. Together the agencies see an average of 35,000 unduplicated individuals on an annual basis. These agencies are dedicated to serving the needs of this vulnerable population and are committed to referring clients to ASUMH's pipeline program, hosting classes at their satellite locations, and assisting the Pipeline in data sharing and client follow-up.

The Department of Workforce Services is committed to referring clients who are in need of employment to ASUMH's Pipeline and to assist clients with job services and placement. The Department of Workforce Services local offices in Mountain Home and Harrison understand first-hand the struggles employers have with high turnover rates and are committed to sharing challenges that are experienced by job seekers and employers through attendance at quarterly meetings.

Goodwill Services is committed to hosting hiring events for local employers in partnership with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. Goodwill is also committed to referring clients to the Pipeline, providing resume writing assistance programs, interview classes, interviewing clothing and

other job preparation services. Goodwill's priority is job preparation and job placement and as such will benefit from the partnership by ensuring the employers that they will have a referral base that is job ready.

Serenity (domestic violence shelter), Center of Hope (group of local church organizations that provide financial assistance for basic life needs, including rent assistance, utility assistance and referrals to other services), and Twin Lakes Recovery are committed to referring their clients and residents to the Pipeline. The Pipeline will contain individuals from vulnerable populations, such as single parents, the long-term unemployed, those with inconsistent job histories, dislocated workers, homeless persons and those who are needing guidance and training to secure employment in family sustaining wages. Each partner is committed to attending quarterly partnership meetings to discuss the success stories and identify the challenges and obstacles to ensure continuous improvement of the Pipeline program.

### **SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The secondary schools will continue to support ASUMH Secondary Center by enrolling their students for ASUMH technical center class offerings. These students will benefit from an early start on technical training that will prepare students with the technical skills needed to secure employment paying double digit hourly pay rates. Schools who are participating include Mountain Home, Cotter, Flippin, Salem, Norfolk and Viola.

The students will have the opportunities to continue their education with ASUMH after they graduate high school and to apply for apprenticeships offered by Baxter Healthcare. The "earn and learn" model afforded by the Mechatronics Apprenticeship program will enable the youth pipeline to grow.

The school counselors will work with the ASUMH Career Coach, the ASUMH Pipeline recruiter and local employers to promote a career in advanced manufacturing. The secondary schools and ASUMH will continue to identify, develop and align coursework that will qualify for articulated credit or concurrent college credit. The goal is streamline Career and Technical Education into the Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline so that students may accelerate their career goals into maintenance technicians, robotic engineers or advanced manufacturing machine operators. The secondary schools will continue to embed soft skill curriculum and other life skill curriculum, such as *Ready2Work* and *Move Up To Independence/Getting Ahead* into existing CTE programs.

ASUMH will continue to serve as a liaison between the secondary schools and industry partners to develop and enhance programs such as Young Manufacturers Academy, robotics, industry-driven career fairs, and industry sponsored Manufacturing Day events.

Industry partners will continue to support the youth pipeline by hosting plant tours, attending career fairs, sponsoring youth pipeline events and serving as mentors to secondary students. Industry partners including Baxter Healthcare, Ranger Boats and Bass Cat are committed to hiring qualified secondary students for entry level positions who complete a technical certificate.

### **ASUMH and ASUMH TECHNICAL AND SECONDARY CENTER**

The ASUMH Technical and Secondary Center is committed to recruiting, preparing and placing qualified secondary students into advanced manufacturing positions once they have reached the age of 18 and completed a technical certificate. The Center is committed to providing the students with an academic advisor and career placement professional who will guide students.

The Dean of the School of Business and Technology and the Technical and Secondary Center Director are committed to working with secondary schools to continuously improve and update course offering to reflect the current and future needs of industry.

ASUMH is committed to acting as a lead facilitator for the Pipeline program. ASUMH will coordinate quarterly meetings for industry partners, secondary schools and community partners. ASUMH will also work with industry partners and secondary schools to create career fairs that reflect current job opportunities and career pathways in the Twin Lakes Area and will collaborate with community partners by process client referrals to fast track individuals to sustainable employment or career training.

## SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN

15 Points

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan that maximizes efficient use of existing resources and a completed budget template.

### *Essential Components:*

- Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities- detailed discussion of how each component of the grant budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the program.
- Institutions may request up to \$1 million over two years that will provide resources to continue approved Phase 2 projects.
- Local match of at least 10% of the total request, with a maximum cap of \$50,000- all proposals will include a plan for local funding to match 10% of the total grant proposal. For example, a grant requesting \$400,000 in funding would be required to provide \$40,000 in matching funds. However, the local match is capped at \$50,000, meaning grants in excess of \$500,000 will have the same match as a \$500,000 project.

*Note: With a submitted written commitment and payment guarantee from an industry partner, internship wages paid during the initial twenty-four (24) months of this program may be used to offset the local match amount on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Additionally, wages paid to incumbent workers of the employer while enrolled in academic training may be deducted from the match as well. Any entity wishing to utilize this method of funding the match must include the appropriate documentation with their proposal and, if selected for funding, will be monitored to ensure compliance.*

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Budget Plan (15 Pts)</b>	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0-6 Pts)

**Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail**

Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

<b>Total Requested Implementation Grant:</b>	<b>\$785,000</b>
Section A:	
<b>Program Leadership Support Costs</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>
This cost covers salaries and fringe benefits for a 24-month period for full-time and part-time staff as well as instructors and facilitators for employer-requested trainings.	
<b>Total Travel Costs</b>	<b>\$ 20,000</b>
Travel costs include travel and conference fees for staff training as well as mileage reimbursements for industry visits, school visits and partnership meetings.	
<b>Total Partner Participant Costs</b>	<b>\$420,000</b>
Section B:	
<b>Other Direct Costs</b>	
<b>Line Item 1      Equipment</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>
This cost will be used to buy industry-specific equipment as identified employers as essential to prepare employees for technically skilled employment.	
<b>Line Item 2      Materials and Supplies</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>
Materials and supplies needed supplies to conduct partnership meetings, industry surveys, curriculum/textbooks, and operational and class supplies.	
<b>Line Item 3      Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination</b>	<b>\$ 25,000</b>
Marketing costs include advertising through local radio, newspaper and social media and promotional items to promote program.	
<b>Line Item 4      Consultant Services</b>	<b>\$      0</b>
<b>Line Item 5      Other</b>	<b>\$      0</b>
<b>C. Total Direct Costs (A and B)</b>	<b>\$365,000</b>
<b>D. Cost Sharing (Minimum 10% up to \$50,000)</b>	<b>&lt;\$ 55,000</b>
ASUMH—office space, furniture, utilities, internet and equipment for all employees \$10,000	
ASUMH—a portion of the Workforce Development Director's salary for work done with area employers \$20,000	
ASUMH—Testing Center services to cover the Career Readiness Certificate testing \$5,000	
Flippin High School and Pinkston Middle School—classrooms, utilities and internet for the technical skills labs \$20,000	

*Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input. Institutions may request up to \$1 million in grant funding for Phase 3 Projects.*

<b>Requesting Institution:</b>	ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAIN HOME
<b>Title of Project:</b>	PIPELINE TO ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

#### A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. Personnel/Stipend	\$400,000
2. Travel	\$ 20,000
3. Other (Explain Below)	\$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
<b>TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS</b>	<b>\$420,000</b>

### B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. Equipment	\$250,000
2. Materials and Supplies	\$ 90,000
3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	\$25,000
4. Consultant Services	\$0.00
5. Other (Explain Below)	\$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
<b>TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>\$365,000</b>

**C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B)**

\$785,000

**D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to \$50,000)**

\$55,000

**Total Continuation Grant Budget**

\$840,000

### Other Notes

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## SECTION 5 - SUSTAINABILITY

20 Points

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation period. Equipment requests will clearly specify how purchased equipment will continue to be linked to addressing labor and workforce needs beyond the grant period.

### *Essential Components:*

- Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation grant funding period- describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period; outline the roles and funding sources of each partner after the grant period.
- Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period;
- Identify availability of long-term resources to maintain and/or repair any equipment requested.
- Describe plan for redistribution of equipment to meet additional workforce needs once the employer needs addressed by the proposal have been satisfied.

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Sustainability (20 Pts)</b>	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)

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

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The profound need of the Pipeline project as validated by the area employers' desire to fill vacant positions at their plants is the catalyst for the sustainability of this program. Through successful development of a prepared workforce equipped with the necessary skills, area employers will see that the viability and necessity for this program will have been established. As we meet with advisory groups in years three and four, we will discuss plans for the future of the program through mutual support and the ability to demonstrate recruitment and placement for the vacancies these employers are experiencing. It is our plan to develop a program budget and strategy with their participation for the future and beyond.

## SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2018

Email to [ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu](mailto:ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu)

*Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded an implementation grant.*

### CONTINUATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
<b>Program Need</b>	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11–14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
<b>Program Plan</b>	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)	25 Pts
<b>Strength of Partnership</b>	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
<b>Budget Plan</b>	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13–15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10–12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7–9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	15 Pts
<b>Sustainability</b>	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15–17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11–14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
<b>Total Points Possible</b>					<b>100 Pts</b>

# FISHING HOLDINGS, LLC

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RE: ASUMH Workforce Development – Implementation Grant

Dear Approving Board:

Ranger Boats is interested in strengthening the relationship between ASUMH by continuing to serve in an advisory role making recommendations to equipment updates, visiting ASUMH students, conducting job fairs, hiring ASUMH students during and/or upon degree completion, plus encourage incumbent workers to increase their technical knowledge.

Ranger Boats is also committed to identifying and encouraging incumbent workers to attend classes at ASUMH Technical Center, so that incumbent workers may increase their technical skills and apply for mid skill level jobs. Once a Ranger Boats employee has registered for classes at ASUMH, Ranger is committed to sharing wage information and/or income increases for employees that attend ASUMH as well as any market adjustment changes including job description updates.

The ASUMH Technical Center offers programs that are compatible to the needs of Ranger Boats, including welding classes, employability training classes such as Redy2Work and Advanced Manufacturing machine repair.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at 870-704-2622.

Sincerely,



Jason Brown

Divisional Human Resource Manager

White River Marine Group



Letter of Support from Baxter Healthcare, Inc.

RE: ASUMH Workforce Development Continuation Grant

Dear Approving Board,

Baxter Healthcare is the largest employer in Baxter County for advanced manufacturing. The current partnership with ASUMH includes the continuation of developing an employee pipeline for maintenance technicians. Baxter Healthcare is strongly committed to the creation of a technically skilled pipeline of qualified employees. As such, Baxter has donated \$1.9 million of advanced manufacturing equipment that is housed at the ASUMH Technical Center. Baxter would like to see the pipeline of potential job candidates fast-track into the ASUMH Mechatronics Apprenticeship program.

Baxter is also interested in continuing to serve in an advisory role for the Mechatronics program including, but not limited to, reviewing curriculum, equipment needs and updating ASUMH on technological advancements.

Baxter is committed to visiting ASUMH students, conducting job fairs, and hiring ASUMH students during and/or upon degree completion. It is important for our current workforce to increase their skill knowledge and we are committed to sending incumbent workers to increase their technical skills and to pursue the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Workforce Technology: Mechatronics Emphasis. Baxter and ASUMH have agreed to share employee/student information including wage information and career advancement and achievements of Baxter employees who are also ASUMH students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Pinson", followed by the date "5/4/2018".

Chris Pinson, SPHR  
HR Manager



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.

NWAEDD PLAZA

818 Highway 62-65-412 North • P.O. Box 190

Harrison, Arkansas 72602-0190

(870) 741-5404

May 4, 2016

Dr. Robin Myers, Chancellor  
Arkansas State University –Mountain Home  
Technical Center  
1600 S College Street  
Mountain Home, AR. 72653  
RE: Workforce Regional Continuation Grant  
ASUMH – Manufacturing Programs

Dr. Myers:

The Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board would like to offer this letter of commitment to ASUMH in their Regional Continuation Grant application to support manufacturing entities as part of the WIOA regulations. Regional manufacturing entities continue to struggle in finding qualified job applicants to fill their mid-skilled and high-skilled advanced manufacturing employment vacancies. If the training needs are not met, local industry will not be able to meet the needs of their customers. Many of our smaller manufacturing firms are linked in the supply chain to the larger firms. Workforce development is essential to economic development.

ASUMH has an active workforce development program and works collaboratively with industries found in the Twin Lakes area. They are committed to creating industry-driven workforce training programs that focus on the needs of industry. ASUMH is also committed to working with the education partners in K-12 and ASUMH is training students at the technical center. ASUMH is committed to and will continue growing this partnership through the expansion of articulated credit, concurrent course offerings and alignment of education curriculum. As the partnership with K-12 educators increases, the NWAEDB supports the partnership of ASUMH and North Arkansas College as they pursue a collaborative approach for identifying and addressing regional industry needs.

NWAEDB is committed to supporting the work of ASUMH.

Sincerely,

Joe Willis, Executive Director



RE: ASUMH Business and Technology Program

To Whom It May Concern:

Please allow this letter to serve as Goodwill Industries of Arkansas letter of continual support for ASUMH's Grant application. Goodwill's mission is assisting individuals that need help on the job, finding a new career, or are facing difficulties through unemployment. Goodwill's Career Centers are designed to provide resources to individuals seeking employment or enhancement of job skills. Some of the services Goodwill assists individuals in our community with are: Resume Assistance & Job Readiness Skills, Job Search and Skills Training, Career Counseling, Adult Education and Training Classes and Support Services and Community Referrals.

Having preformed intake assessments of our clients-Goodwill Career Specialists can determine educational barriers that keep these clients from getting and keeping employment. Goodwill Career Specialists are in a unique position to communicate client educational challenges to ASUMH. We are still committed to referring potential students to ASUMH's Business and Technology programs and we have witnessed the impact the classes are making on our clients. Goodwill is also willing to serve as a member of an advisory board to communicate with ASUMH the skill gaps that are common with our client base.

Sincerely,

Kim Markowski

Career Specialist  
Goodwill Industries of Arkansas  
[kmarkowski@goodwillar.org](mailto:kmarkowski@goodwillar.org)  
870-508-0042



Changing lives through education, training and employment.

7400 Scott Hamilton Drive, Suite 50, Little Rock, AR 72209 | 501.372.5100 office | 501.372.5112 fax | [GoodwillAR.org](http://GoodwillAR.org)

# Mountain Home Public Schools

Jake Long, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



Leigh Ann Gigliotti, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent

2465 Rodeo Drive  
Mountain Home, AR 72653  
870-425-1201(phone) 870-425-1316 (fax)

RE: ASUMH Workforce Development – Implementation Grant

Dear Approving Board:

As a secondary school in rural Arkansas, advanced manufacturing has grown into a viable career option for our youth. The technological advances into the field of automated manufacturing have piqued the interest of our high school students, the school counselors as well as the math and science teachers. Our industry partners such as Baxter Healthcare, Inc. and EATON, Corporation are committed to the continued creation of the youth pipeline that was created by Arkansas State University-Mountain Home and we would like our secondary students to benefit from this partnership.

Alignment of career and technical education programs with the technical degree programs offered by Arkansas State University-Mountain Home is currently underway with some of the classes qualifying for articulated credit and others as concurrent credit. The Ready2Work curriculum, the Move Up to Independence curriculum, and other employability curriculum will continue to be embedded into the career courses.

We are committed to supporting Arkansas State University-Mountain Home's Business and Technology Center by sending our students to attend the secondary center so that they may earn a certificate of proficiency and continue their education to earn an Associate Degree.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at

Sincerely,

Jake Long  
Superintendent  
Mountain Home Public Schools

Committed to Excellence in Education  
*Every Student - Every Time*

# VIOLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**\*HOME OF THE LONGHORNS\***

P.O. BOX 380  
VIOLA, ARKANSAS 72583  
870-458-2323  
FAX 870-458-2214

## Administration

John May  
Superintendent  
870-458-4001

Charolette Bridges  
District Treasurer  
870-458-4002

Vicki Hurst  
High School Principal  
870-458-4004

Andy Burden  
Elementary Principal  
870-458-4006

James Kerr  
Assistant Principal  
870-458-2213

## Board of Education

Shawn Batterton  
President  
Position No. 5  
Member 2020

Andy McCandlis  
Vice President  
Position No. 2  
Member 2022

Darick Brown  
Secretary  
Position No. 1  
Member 2021

Max Ray Shrable  
Position No. 3  
Member 2018

Ken Cotter  
Position No. 4  
Member 2019

June 1, 2018

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Dear Approving Board:

As a secondary school in rural Arkansas, advanced manufacturing has grown into a viable career option for our youth. The technological advances into the field of automated manufacturing have piqued the interest of our high school students, the school counselors as well as the math and science teachers. Our industry partners such as Baxter Healthcare, Inc. and EATON, Corporation are committed to the continued creation of the youth pipeline that was created by Arkansas State University-Mountain Home and we would like our secondary students to benefit from this partnership.

Alignment of career and technical education programs with the technical degree programs offered by Arkansas State University-Mountain Home is currently underway with some of the classes qualifying for articulated credit and others as concurrent credit. The Ready2Work curriculum, the Move Up to Independence curriculum, and other employability curriculum will continue to be embedded into the career courses.

We are committed to supporting Arkansas State University-Mountain Home's Business and Technology Center by sending our students to attend the secondary center so that may earn a certificate of proficiency and continue their education to earn an Associate Degree.

Sincerely,



John R. May  
Viola Superintendent

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**