

Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Implementation Grant Application Cover Sheet

To: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Requesting Institution: University of Arkansas- Fort Smith

Title of Project: Automation Academy

Project Partners: UAFS, Baldor, Pernod Ricard, Walmart, Hickory Springs, Western Arkansas Technical Center, Fort Smith Public Schools, Greenwood Public Schools, Van Buren Public Schools, Charleston Public Schools, Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative, Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Requested Budget: \$79,392.00

Date Submitted: August 31, 2015


Applicant Contact: Dr. Edward Serna

Applicant's Information: 5210 Grand Avenue, Ft. Smith, AR 72913
479-788-7925
edward.serna@uafs.edu

Authorized Signatures for Project Partners:

The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith

Lead Institution


Paul B. Beran, Ph.D., Chancellor

Authorized Official

Baldor Electric Company

Partner

Jason Green, VP Human Resources
Signature- Attachment 2

Authorized Official

Pernod Ricard USA

Partner

Melissa Hanesworth, Managing Director
Signature- Attachment 3

Authorized Official

Walmart Technology

Partner

Greg Hick, Senior Director
Signature- Attachment 4

Authorized Official

HSM Solutions

Partner

Paul Mosley, Manufacturing Engineer
Signature- Attachment 5

Authorized Official

Fort Smith Public Schools

Partner

Benny Gooden, Ed.D., Superintendent
Signature- Attachment 6

Authorized Official

Charleston Public Schools

Partner

Jeff Stubblefield, Superintendent
Signature- Attachment 7

Authorized Official

Greenwood Public Schools

Partner

John Ciesla, Superintendent
Signature- Attachment 8

Authorized Official

Van Buren Public Schools

Partner

Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, Superintended
Signature- Attachment 9

Authorized Official

Manufacturing Executives Association

Partner

Mark McCourt, President
Signature- Attachment 10

Authorized Official

Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce

Partner

Tim Allen, President
Signature- Attachment 11

Authorized Official

Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

Partner

Roy Hester, Director
Signature- Attachment 12

Authorized Official

Western Arkansas Technical Center

Partner

Dr. D. Chris Rink, Director
Signature- Attachment 13

Authorized Official

Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Partner

Tracy Chapple, WIOA Administrator
Signature- Attachment 14

Authorized Official

AUTOMATION ACADEMY

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS- FORT SMITH
PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL
REGIONAL WORKFORCE GRANT PROGRAM
2015

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Executive Summary

In the spirit of our core mission of serving the students and communities within western Arkansas, the University of Arkansas- Fort Smith is pleased to submit the following application to the 2015 Regional Workforce Grant program. By partnering with key industry and education partners for this opportunity, we can develop industry-driven programs of study that make our regional businesses more competitive and provide career opportunities for the employees it serves.

Like many regions, western Arkansas experienced significant employment loss in the manufacturing sector. Over the past several years, declines in manufacturing have resulted in higher than average unemployment and stagnant wages as local industries have scaled back or ceased operations. As technology continues to evolve and employers require a more skilled labor force to remain competitive, projections call for continued erosion in the traditional manufacturing jobs once so dominant in our region. Within this challenging labor market, opportunity exists with forecasts for significant need among “middle skill” workers.

Recognizing this trend, UAFS has partnered with local business leaders to identify a labor skill gap in the area of advanced technology manufacturing and is committed to developing an industry-driven program of study in robotics and automation to address this emerging workforce need. In order to successfully launch and sustain the program, UAFS is dedicated to assembling the optimal mix of industry and education partners. Within our proposed team, each partner will have clearly defined, value-adding role(s) that will positively impact the success of the program.

The University of Arkansas-Fort Smith intends to use the requested \$79,392 for this planning grant to develop an automation/robotics for manufacturing career path. Our approach for meeting goals and addressing core requirements is to design a comprehensive education framework which begins with awarding concurrent credit for program related courses as early as the fall semester of a student’s 10th grade year of high school. Students will continue to develop basic skills through their standard high school curricula. Our design will be built around the concept of an education/career ladder that will accommodate multiple entry and exits points for students including exit points at a Certificate of Proficiency, Technical Certificate, Associate Degree, and a Bachelor Degree. Each degree level will parallel currently available jobs which align to the skills ascertained through the program and are reflective of pay grades commensurate to the same. The design will be linear and accommodate multiple learning styles. Students will not be “penalized” for entering and exiting at different times. Further, their accumulated hours will all apply toward the next degree level.

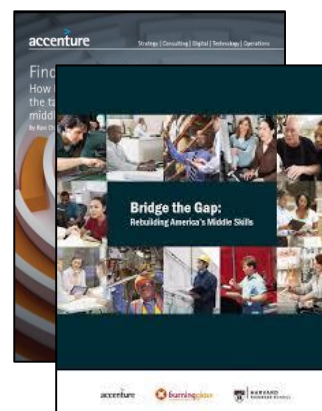
The University of Arkansas Fort Smith and its partnering organizations are committed to ensuring that western Arkansas retains and attracts “middle skill” jobs to the area. We appreciate your consideration of this application.

Section 1: Program Need

Overview of regional labor needs

Like many regions, Western Arkansas experienced significant employment loss following the 2008 economic downturn. While the employment picture and GDP in the region have improved in the subsequent years, continued un/underemployment among the region's displaced manufacturing workers remains a significant challenge. This is part of a larger national trend in many manufacturing and service sectors called technological unemployment. As the increasing use of automation eliminates traditional labor positions, it has been slow to create opportunities in those requiring greater technological skills sets. The net effect has been economic growth without significant new job creation. Rather than hiring workers, companies made capital investments in technology to boost productivity without adding to their existing workforce¹.

Within this evolving labor market, opportunity exists with projections for significant job creation among "middle skill" workers. These jobs are defined as those requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree. A recent Harvard Business School study titled "Bridge the gap: Rebuilding America's middle skills"² claimed that 25 million jobs or approximately 47% of all new job opening from 2010-20 will fall into the "middle-skills" range. Additionally, 73% of employers expect to see their need in this area grow in the next 2-3 years. The authors stated that this not only impacts the competitiveness of US companies but influenced their decision making on where to locate their operations.



For the Western Arkansas regional economy to retain and attract new "middle skill" jobs, it is incumbent on our partnership of employers, educators, and policymakers to match labor supply with industry demand at the regional level. Our partnership will shape the proposed curriculum to develop a talent pipeline that matches qualified workers with jobs. In order to remain effective, the training provided by UAFS will be industry-driven and focus on jobs that are of strategic importance to regional businesses and provide career opportunities for the employees it serves.

Current and emerging skill gaps

As technology continues to evolve and employers require a more skilled labor force to remain competitive, projections call for continued erosion in the traditional manufacturing jobs once so dominant in Western Arkansas. Recognizing this trend, UAFS will work with its local industry partners to develop and continually refine programs of study to satisfy emerging skill gaps and migrate workers into in demand occupations.

In order to target the current and emerging skill gaps faced by employers in western Arkansas, UAFS utilized data from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services to identify the 10

¹ Chanmugam, R., Smith, D., & Worrell, L. (2014). Finding the middle: How businesses can manage the talent pipeline to close the middle-skills employment gap. New York: Accenture.

² Fuller, J., & Raman, M. (2014). Bridge the gap: Rebuilding America's middle skills. Cambridge: Harvard Business School.

industry sectors with the largest net employment growth. Leveraging this data, we initiated a series of in-depth discussions with local industries in these sectors regarding their current and emerging labor needs. Recognizing the changing national labor market landscape and the needs within western Arkansas, UAFS in partnership with the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board, the Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association, and the Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce, identified skill needs in the Robotics and Automation labor sector.

Robotics and Automation is the use of industrial robots in the automation of industrial processes to achieve organizational objectives such as reducing cost, increasing speed, increasing accuracy and consistency, improving quality, and improving scalability of production. While manufacturing was one of the hardest hit sectors following the 2008 recession with significant job loss among the traditional labor workforce, experts predict it will bounce back strongly with new “middle skill” jobs in robotics and automation.³

Program and/or equipment needs

Working with our industry and K12 partners, UAFS will fully define cost-effective programming and equipment needs during the planning phase that satisfy the educational requirements to connect workers with jobs. As a preliminary outline, we have identified several programming and equipment elements that may be leveraged in the implementation phase of this program. We will work with our partners to provide greater fidelity around these requirements as we enter the planning phase.

Programming: We will align required programming with a students’ prerequisite knowledge and ability to benefit as discovered through use of the Compass Exam. Specific course requirements and sequencing will be identified through the planning phase but can be generalized to include the following: Fundamentals of Electricity, Introduction to Electronics Technology, Industrial Electricity, Electrical Circuits and Components, Solid State Components, Digital Fundamentals, PLC Applications, Introduction to Robotics, Robot Operations and Maintenance, Robot Programming.

Equipment: We will leverage equipment on the UAFS campus to replicate learning environments with our K-12 partners. We recognize that some of our K-12 partners will be better suited to host these programs. During the planning phase, these schools will be identified and matched with the appropriate equipment to meet their needs. Representative equipment requirements for developing such a capability include: basic electrical laboratory requirements (i.e. electrical meters, digital oscilloscopes, soldering tools, etc.), Programmable Logic Controllers, and Industrial Robots.



³ Material Handling and Logistics. (2013, August). Up to 1.5 million robotics jobs to be created by 2016. Material Handling & Logistics, p. 10.

Impact of proposed program and equipment on addressing identified labor needs

By developing industry-driven programs of study with our corporate partners during the planning phase, we will ensure that the programming and equipment fully meet their requirements for a skilled workforce. The learning environment we develop will mirror existing skill needs while remaining flexible as these needs change. We anticipate that this program will address the skilled worker shortage in robotics and automation. Further, skills learned through this program will transcend this particular industry sector to support career options outside of manufacturing.

Section 2: Program Plan

Proposed career pathway

The University of Arkansas-Fort Smith intends to use this planning grant to develop an automation/robotics for manufacturing career path. Our approach for meeting goals and addressing core requirements is to design a comprehensive education framework which begins with awarding concurrent credit for program related courses as early as the fall semester of a student's 10th grade year of high school while students continue to develop basic skills through their standard high school curricula. Our design will be built around the concept of an education/career ladder that will accommodate multiple entry and exits points for students including exit points at a Certificate of Proficiency, Technical Certificate, Associate Degree, and a Bachelor Degree. Each degree level will parallel currently available jobs which align to the skills ascertained through the program and are reflective of pay grades commensurate to the same. The design will be linear and accommodate multiple learning styles. Students will not be "penalized" for entering and exiting at different times and their accumulated hours will all apply toward the next degree level.

Our plan is to collaboratively deliver the instructional model with a blend of University faculty, K-12 faculty, and subject matter experts employed as faculty practitioners. This will ensure that the content is industry driven by current practitioners and the delivery model is tailored to meet the needs of the students. We believe this will best serve students and lend the flexibility needed to make the program most successful.

Through this process we will address existing workforce needs as they relate to automation and robotics for manufacturing. To complement academic degree attainment, it is our intention to award non-credit industry standard credentials specific to this field. Examples of this included certifications similar to FANUC Certification, ABB Robotics Certifications, or others as determined best through the planning phase.

Ensuring diversity of student enrollment

Diversity is valued at UA-Fort Smith and this program will reflect our commitment to providing educational opportunities to our diverse population in western Arkansas. In order to promote diversity, we will market the program to non-traditional career seekers (i.e. females in STEM careers). We will also use materials printed in Spanish to educate ESL learners and their parents about the opportunities this will provide. Our K12 partners provide an additional entry point for diversity into our proposed program. These school systems represent a breadth of racial and ethnic

diversity. UAFS has a long-standing commitment of working with these school systems in the development of STEM summer camps designed to expose traditionally underserved populations to STEM careers at an early age. For example, UAFS has partnered with Verizon to offer a summer 2016 STEM camp targeted at girls within the communities we serve in western Arkansas. We will leverage these existing relationships to ensure our proposed program reflects the diversity that exists with the region.

Support services that assist students in progressing along the pathway

Academic advising for career path choice will exceed standard student advising. This will be accomplished through a team advising approach where UAFS collegiate advisors work in tandem with partnering high schools advisors to ensure efficiency in course enrollment. This will mitigate any unnecessary course work, reduce cost of degree, and shorten time to degree completion. In addition to team advising UA-Fort Smith plans to recruit talented individuals by working with industry partners to make presentations for high school students. Through these presentations field professionals will explain the demands and rewards of the occupational areas to both students and their parents. We expect to recruit industry professional from minority populations to assist in the recruitment/presentations. Further, we plan to offer bi-lingual presentations to which target minority students and describe the process to their parents.

Exposing students to the world of work is centric to this proposal. Realizing that many students have not been exposed to these career fields and they may not have an understating of how a professional in these area works, learns, lives, etc... UA-Fort Smith plans to hold two-week summer camps between the students' 11th and 12th grade year. Through these camps students will be steeped in the career field through industry tours, opportunities to work, interviews and conversation with all levels of employees in their respective area. These camps will serve to expand students' vision of what they can do. They will demonstrate what it takes to be a professional in this arena and articulate reasonable expectation of rewards and salaries associated with the industry.

To further support students' personal issues and morale, UAFS will engage students in a process more rich than typical academic programs and advising. UA-Fort Smith will work to incorporate an executive level mentorship piece. Through this piece, successful field experts will meet weekly through electronic conference software (i.e. skype, go-to-meeting, etc.). During this time mentors will talk to students to learn about what they're studying currently, to discuss how their studies apply to the career, and to open an opportunity for the student to build a personal connection with someone who has leveraged the skills their learning into a successful career.

Anticipated equipment needs

We will leverage equipment on the UAFS campus to replicate learning environments with our K-12 partners. We recognize that some of our K-12 partners will be better suited to host these programs. During the planning phase, these schools will be identified and matched with the appropriate equipment to meet their needs. Representative equipment requirements for developing such a capability include: basic electrical laboratory requirements (i.e. electrical meters, digital oscilloscopes, soldiering tools, etc.), Programmable Logic Controllers, and Industrial Robots.

Governance and accountability structure

Through this planning grant, UAFS will identify a board to which the grant processes will be accountable. The board will consist of no less than five and no more than nine members. Minimally, the 5 board members will consist of two industry representatives, one individual representing higher education, one individual representing K-12 education, and one individual representing the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board. Other members will consist of “at-large” members representing these areas or other areas as necessary to guarantee grant success. Bylaws will be established/adopted by the charter members in order to guide board procedures and board member affiliation.

Additionally, all efforts of this planning grant will be accountable to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education, and the Laws of the State of Arkansas.

Summary of expected outcomes

Our intent with this planning grant is to fully develop a program of study in robotics and automation that meets the existing and emerging need for “middle skill” employees in the manufacturing industry within western Arkansas. By leveraging the expertise of our partners, we will develop an industry-driven program that matches the demand for a skilled automation and robotics workforce with a supply of fully trained candidates. However, we are confident that the skills we will develop in this program transcend this single sector and provide additional employment opportunities outside of manufacturing. As we will discuss in the following section, our intent during the planning phase is to expand our partnership to include additional value-adding organizations that recognize the significance of the skills we are developing in our region.

Section 3: Strength of Partnership

Plan for incorporating partner organizations

The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith has a long-standing commitment to regional economic and workforce development. Leveraging our relationships with the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board, the Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association, and the Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce, we identified a broad representation of partners with clearly defined roles who will make critical contributions during the planning and implementation phases of this effort. While we secured commitments from industry partners in the top growth sectors within western Arkansas, we will continue to proactively engage other regional industries with an interest in participating during the planning phase.

Anticipated roles for partner organizations

UAFS partnered with local business leaders to identify a labor skill gap in the area of advanced technology manufacturing and is committed to developing a program of study in robotics and automation to address this emerging workforce development need. In order to successfully launch and sustain the program, UAFS is dedicated to assembling the optimal mix of industry and

education partners. Within our proposed team, each partner will have clearly defined, value-adding role(s) that will positively impact the success of the program. Below is a description of the anticipated roles for the partner organizations on this team.

- Student recruitment
- Student engagement
- Other business partner recruitment
- Curriculum design
- Developing the degree to job “crosswalk”

For each of these five roles, a partnering organization is designated as the lead. While UAFS will take the lead in curriculum design and the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board in developing our degree to job “crosswalks”, we have commitments from our large industry partners to take leadership roles in areas that match their interests and demonstrate their commitment to the success of the program.

Large industry partners

UAFS enjoys a legacy of strong working relationships with a number of large, “anchor” employers in the regions. These companies play a core leadership role in the economic and workforce development needs for the community. Bringing these organizations into the partnership ensures that the programs developed are industry-driven and provide the talent pipeline they need to remain competitive. While each industry partner will play a critical role in several areas during the planning and implementation phases of this program, we secured commitments from the following partners to serve as leaders the listed roles on our robotics/automation program:

Baldor is the anticipated industry lead for student recruitment



ABB is a multinational corporation headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, operating mainly in robotics and the power and automation technology areas. It ranked 158th in the Forbes Ranking (2013). ABB is one of the largest engineering companies as well as one of the largest conglomerates in the world. ABB has operations in around 100 countries, with approximately 150,000 employees. ABB’s reported global revenue typically exceeds \$40 billion annually.

Baldor Electric Company, a division of ABB, is headquartered in Fort Smith, AR. Baldor markets, designs, and manufactures industrial electric motors, mechanical power transmission products, drives, and generator sets. The company manufactures its products in 19 U.S. locations, 1 in Canada, 2 in China, and 1 in England. Its strategy is to be the highest value provider, focusing on quality, service and time.

Pernod Ricard is the anticipated industry lead for student engagement



Pernod Ricard is a French company that produces distilled beverages. It employs approximately 19,000 people in 80 countries with annual global revenue typically exceeding \$9 billion. The Pernod Ricard production facility in Fort Smith employs approximately 220 people and is one of the most automated facilities in Western Arkansas.

Walmart and Hickory Springs are the anticipated industry leads for identifying and recruiting other business partners



Walmart is an American multinational retail corporation that operates a chain of discount department stores and warehouse stores. Headquartered in Bentonville, Arkansas, it is the world's largest company by revenue, has over 11,000 stores in 28 countries, and is the biggest private employer in the world with 2.2 million employees

Hickory Springs Manufacturing, (HSM) is an American company globally manufacturing discrete components and integrated solutions for transportation, furniture, bedding and other markets. The company operates 50 plants employing nearly 2,500 workers in 17 states. It also operates a plant in the Guanlan industrial park area of Shenzhen, China, that produces recliner mechanisms. HSM's Fort Smith facility employs approximately 240 people.

Small industry partners

In addition to these ‘anchor’ partners, UAFS recognizes that small businesses represent a key area for job growth in both the Western Arkansas region and the nation. A 2015 Hanover Research Study titled “Workforce Development Needs and Practices”⁴ reported that businesses with fewer than 500 employees spend nearly twice as much on training per employee as do larger businesses and rely more on external training to meet their needs. Dr. Michael Pakko, economist with University of Arkansas- Little Rock’s Institute for Economic Advancement noted that “most job growth comes from smaller firms, particularly young, small firms. They are often unnoticed, adding a few jobs here and there but they are important in driving overall economic and employment growth”. UAFS recognizes the value of bringing smaller businesses into the planning phase and will work with our “anchor” partners to identify appropriate small businesses providing a broad representation of regional employers.



⁴ Hanover Research. (2015). Workforce development needs and practices. Washington D.C.: Hanover Research.

Education & workforce development partners

UAFS also teamed with key K12 and other educational and workforce development partners to participate. These school systems and organizations provide a vital role as an entry point into our proposed talent pipeline. As mentioned in section 2, our educational partners serve the diverse communities represented in western Arkansas. UAFS is committed to working with these vital partners to identify and recruit a diverse group of students for inclusion in the program.

K12 Educational Partners
Western Arkansas Technical Center
Fort Smith Public Schools
Greenwood Public Schools
Van Buren Public Schools
Charleston Public Schools
Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative
Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Each one of the partner organizations listed above play an important role on the program team. We believe strongly that by implementing leads based on organizational strengths, we can more fully leverage their participation in the program. We are confident that the leader organizations for the 5 core areas will provide direction and positive momentum as the effort moves forward. The table below summarizes the anticipated leadership role each partner will play in the program.

Lead	Student Engagement	Student Recruitment	Business Recruitment	Curriculum Design	Degree to Job "Crosswalk"
Baldor		✓			
Pernod Ricard	✓				
Walmart/HSM			✓		
UAFS				✓	
WAPDD					✓

Commitment letters from our robotics and automation team partners are included in the attachments.

Section 4: Budget Plan

Overview

The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith has an experienced team for managing federal, state, and private grants. We have a demonstrated track record of being good stewards of the public's trust and money. In preparing the budget for the planning phase, we made every effort to identify efficiencies and leverage existing University infrastructure and processes to maximize the use of the available funding. We are confident that the resulting request for \$79,392 will enable us to effectively meet our stated objectives during the planning phase of this program at a cost that represents significant value to Arkansas and its citizens. The following budget narrative provides details for the completed Budget Template included in Attachment 15:

Planning Phase Budget Narrative

PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS		
Personnel		
Salary	\$36,000.00	Coordinator to serve as the primary liaison with our partner organizations during the program Planning phase.
Fringe	\$11,880.00	
Total Personnel	\$47,880.00	
Travel		
Local	\$1,512.00	0.42 x 100 miles per week x 36 weeks Estimated five Little rock trips for two people (10 trips total) Two out of state trips to see best practice programs (two people x one trip)
In-State	\$2,000.00	
Out-of-State	\$5,000.00	
Total Travel	\$8,512.00	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$56,392.00	
OTHER DIRECT COSTS		
Equipment	\$2,500.00	Computer and printer
Supplies	\$1,000.00	Office supplies
Postage	\$1,000.00	Printing and duplication through UAFS Print Services
Publication/Print Materials	\$1,500.00	
Consulting Expenses	\$5,000.00	Bring outside experts to Fort Smith
Other: Partnership Meeting Expenses		
Space	\$2,500.00	Estimated five large meeting at \$500 per meeting
Meals	\$4,500.00	300 total meals x \$15/meal
Stipends	\$5,000.00	\$50/person/meeting x 100 people
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	\$23,000.00	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A +B)	\$79,392.00	

Attachments

Attachment 1: Intent to Submit Letter



Act 1131 of 2015 Regional Workforce Planning Grant

INTENT TO SUBMIT

DUE AUGUST 1, 2015

The Intent to Submit a Proposal form is a tool used by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education staff prepare for and manage the application review process. Please provide all information that is available at the time the form is completed. This form must be submitted to ADHE by August 1 in order to continue the application process.

Workforce Initiative Lead Institution:

University of Arkansas-Fort Smith

Workforce Initiative Alliance Partners:

University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, USAF 188th Wing, Pernod-Ricard, Walmart, Hickory Springs Manufacturing, Western Arkansas Technical Center, Fort Smith Public Schools, Greenwood Public Schools, Van Buren Public Schools, Charleston Public Schools, Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative, Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Proposal Contact Information:

First Name	Dr. Edward
Last Name	Serna
Title	Director
Program/Dept.	Grants Management and Compliance
Phone Number	479-788-7925
Email	edward.serna@uafs.edu (cc ken.warden@uafs.edu)

If you have a title for the project, please include it below.

TBD

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Planning Grant
Intent to Submit

Attachment 2: Baldor Commitment Letter



Jason Green
Vice President – Human Resources
Baldor Electric Company
5711 R.S. Boreham, Jr. Street
Fort Smith, AR 72903
479-649-5188
www.baldor.com

August 30, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

Baldor Electric Company is a leading marketer, designer and manufacturer of energy-saving industrial electric motors, mechanical power transmission products, and adjustable speed drives. The company was founded on the premise that a better motor is one that uses less electricity, a belief that stands true today.

The company was founded in 1920 in St. Louis, Missouri and was acquired by ABB Ltd of Zurich, Switzerland in 2011. Baldor has been based in Fort Smith, AR since 1967 and employs over 6,000 employees around the world, with close to 2,000 of those employees working in the greater Fort Smith region.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith. For many years, Baldor has partnered with UAFS on many projects and initiatives and has been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase of this proposal. We look forward to engaging in the planning process to help design a system that benefits students and the community, while creating a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions that Baldor has available.

Best regards,

Jason Green
Vice President – Human Resources

"To be the best as determined by our customers"

Attachment 3: Pernod Ricard Commitment Letter



August 25, 2015

Melissa Hanesworth
PO Box 2409
7401 Hwy 45 South
Fort Smith, AR 72903
August 25, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

Pernod Ricard is a global leader in the spirits and wine industry. Our 18,000 employees work in 85 affiliates and 100 production sites around the world. We current have more than 200 employees in our Fort Smith, Arkansas production facility. Our decentralized culture is built upon the entrepreneurial spirit of our employees. Attracting and retaining the best talent is crucial to our ongoing success.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have already been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process to help design a system that benefits students and the community, while creating a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions that Pernod Ricard has available.

Sincerely,


Melissa Hanesworth
Managing Director

Attachment 4: Walmart Commitment Letter

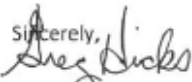


August 27, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

Walmart helps people around the world save money and live better -- anytime and anywhere -- in retail stores, online and through their mobile devices. Each week, more than 245 million customers and members visit our nearly 11,000 stores under 65 banners in 28 countries and e-commerce websites in 11 countries. With fiscal year 2015 net sales of \$482.2 billion, Walmart employs 2.2 million associates worldwide.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. Walmart has been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process to help design a system that benefits both students and the community. The result will be a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions Walmart will need in the future. This program will help keep talented Arkansas high school and college students living and working in our great state.

Sincerely,


Greg Hicks
Senior Director
Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
702 South West Moberly
Bentonville, AR

Attachment 5: HSM Commitment Letter



Paul Mosley
4108 State Line Road
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72916
August 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

HSM Solutions is focused on creating diverse solutions for our ongoing furniture and bedding customers, as well as for rapidly growing transportation, healthcare, packaging and government markets. We have decades of experience in the manufacture of foam, metal, wire, converting and fiber to the latest integrated assemblies and systems. Our Fort Smith, Arkansas Metal Plant work force consists of approximately 175 skilled workers who manufacture recreational vehicle entry steps, network power trays, school bus seat frames, furniture components and many other metal parts and robotically welded assemblies.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have already been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process to help design a system that benefits students and the community, while creating a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions that HSM Solutions has available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Mosley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul Mosley
Manufacturing Engineer

Attachment 6: Fort Smith Public Schools Commitment Letter



Office of the Superintendent

3205 Jenny Lind • P.O. Box 1948
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72902-1948
479-785-2501
Fax: 479-785-1722

August 12, 2015

Dr. Ken Warden, Dean
College of Applied Science and Technology
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649

Re: Regional Workforce Planning

Dear Dr. Warden:

The Fort Smith Public School District is pleased to support the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith. This process holds great promise as local school districts and the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith collectively plan to address the needs of our region in supporting job growth and economic development.

This process is a continuation of the relationship which the Fort Smith Public Schools have established in the past as FSPS and UAFS collectively address educational needs PreK-16. FSPS staff members have been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase and look forward to engaging in the planning process. The opportunities which this Regional Workforce Grant can help provide for students in our secondary schools and higher education will help build a highly skilled workforce for the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benny L. Gooden".

Benny L. Gooden, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

pc; Dr. Barry Owen

Attachment 7: Charleston Public Schools Commitment Letter



Charleston School District

P.O. Box 188
Charleston, AR 72933
Phone (479) 965-7160
Fax (479) 965-9989

Superintendent
Jeff Stubblefield

Elementary Principal
Bruce Womack

Middle School Principal
Melissa Moore

High School Principal
Shane Storey

Curriculum Specialist /
Federal Coordinator
Susan Brown

Board President
Trey Gage

Board Vice-President
Brian Verkamp

Board Secretary
Joel McDonald

Disbursing Officer
Michele Schmitz

Board Member
Jeff Hayes

August 12, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have already been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process and to the opportunities the Regional Workforce Grant will provide students in the Charleston School District.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Stubblefield".

Jeff Stubblefield,
Superintendent

Equal Opportunity Employer

Attachment 8: Greenwood Public Schools Commitment Letter



Greenwood School District

August 24, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. The Greenwood School District has already been working collaboratively with UAFS during the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process and to the opportunities the Regional Workforce Grant will provide our students.




The member schools of the Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative have enjoyed a long-standing partnership with the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. This is evidenced by the success of programs such as the Western Arkansas Technical Center. I am excited about the opportunities this grant will present as we bring various stakeholders together to better align education with the needs of our workforce.

Sincerely,

John Ciesla
Superintendent

420 North Main Street • Greenwood, AR 72936 • PH: (479) 996-4142 • FAX: (479) 996-4143

Attachment 9: Van Buren Public Schools Commitment Letter

 OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT 2221 POINTER TRAIL EAST VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS 72906 479.474.7942 PHONE 479.471.3154 FAX WWW.VBSD.US VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT 	<p>August 27, 2015</p> <p>Dr. Ken Warden, Dean College of Applied Science and Technology University of Arkansas - Fort Smith PO Box 3649 Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649</p> <p>Re: Regional Workforce Planning</p> <p>Dear Dr. Warden,</p> <p>I am pleased to represent the Van Buren School District and express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have already been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process and to the opportunities the Regional Workforce Grant will provide students in the Van Buren School District.</p> <p>Sincerely,  Dr. Harold Jeffcoat Superintendent</p> <p>EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER</p>
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Attachment 10: Manufacturing Executives Association Commitment Letter



Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association
Mark McCourt, President
P.O. Box 11015
Fort Smith, AR 72917
July 30, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

The Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association is a non-profit organization that exists in order to support the manufacturing industry sector in our region. Our goal is to advance the regional manufacturing environment and promote corporate citizenship through professional development opportunities, policy influence, professional networking, and by fostering economic development for the River Valley.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have already been working collaboratively with UAFS and we look forward to engaging in the grant planning process to help design a system that benefits students and the community, while creating a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand, manufacturing positions in our region.

Please feel free to contact me should you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark McCourt".

Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association
Mark McCourt, President

Attachment 11: Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce Commitment Letter



August 27, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

The Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce provides vision and leadership to enhance the quality of place for businesses and individuals in the Greater Fort Smith Region. Representing 1200 members, the Chamber works to grow the economy, provide networking and training opportunities for members, and is the legislative advocate for the region. Our focus on economic development drives our work to recruit new and retain existing jobs in our region.

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We have a long history of working with UAFS and we recognize the need to educate our workforce on the new skills in modern-day manufacturing. The Chamber works tirelessly to ensure we have a work force ready for the needs of both our current members and prospective companies that want to locate to Fort Smith. Manufacturing is in the DNA of Fort Smith; a Robotics and Automation program would be an outstanding addition to the curriculum at UAFS.

Sincerely,

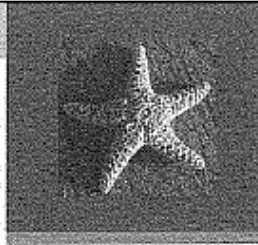
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Allen'.

Tim Allen
President/CEO
Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce

612 Garrison Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72901
479-783-3111 • Fax: 479-783-6110
www.fortsmithchamber.com

Attachment 12: Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Commitment Letter

*Roy Hester, Director
3010 E Hwy 12 Suite A
Branch, Arkansas 72928*



*Phone: 479-965-2191
479-635-5201
Fax: 479-965-2723*

*Guy Fenter
Education Service Cooperative*

August 12, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express our support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. UAFS has played an instrumental role in the Regional planning and development for the workforce in the River Valley Area.

The Guy Fenter Cooperative has been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We eagerly anticipate engaging further in the planning process and to the outstanding opportunities the Regional Workforce Grant will make available to the students in the Guy Fenter Cooperative Service area.

Sincerely,

Roy Hester
Director

Attachment 13: Western Arkansas Technical Center Commitment Letter

Western Arkansas Technical Center

28 August 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in total support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. WATC, with its school district partners, has been working closely and collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase of this great opportunity for the students of the Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative sending schools. We look forward to collaborating with those schools and UAFS in the planning process. The Regional Workforce Grant will provide students in this cooperative area with new and innovative educational opportunities.

WATC staff and faculty stand ready to assist in any way possible. It is our hope that this grant is awarded to UAFS so that the good work we have established in the WATC program can be expanded to include many more students who can benefit from a regionally connected workforce program.

Sincerely,



Dr. D. Chris Rink, Director
Western Arkansas Technical Center (WATC)
5210 Grand Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649
479-788-7701

Attachment 14: Western Arkansas Planning and Development District Commitment Letter



August 24, 2015

Ken Warden, Dean
College of Applied Science and Technology
University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649

RE: Regional Workforce Planning Grant

Dear Mr. Warden:

I am writing this letter to express support for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant Proposal being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. We are pleased to have already been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase. We look forward to engaging in the planning process to help design a system that benefits students and the community, while creating a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions needed by our area industries.

Sincerely,

Tracy Chapple
WIOA Administrator
Western Arkansas Planning & Development District, Inc.

Attachment 15: Completed Budget Form

Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Implementation Grant Proposed Budget

Requesting Institution: The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith

Title of Project: Automation Academy

Project Partners: UAFS, Baldor, Pernod Ricard, Walmart, Hickory Springs, Western Arkansas Technical Center, Fort Smith Public Schools, Greenwood Public Schools, Van Buren Public Schools, Charleston Public Schools, Western Arkansas Education Service Cooperative, Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Manufacturing Executives Association, Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce

Requested Budget: \$79,392.00

Program Start Date: November 1, 2015

Project Budget: \$79,392.00

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. PERSONNEL	\$47,880.00
2. TRAVEL	\$ 8,512.00
4. OTHER <u>N/A</u>	\$ 0

TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$56,392.00
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B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. EQUIPMENT	\$ 2,500.00
2. MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	\$ 1,000.00
3. PUBLICATION COSTS/DOCUMENTATION/DISSEMINATION	\$ 2,500.00
4. CONSULTANT SERVICES	\$ 5,000.00
5. OTHER : <u>Partnership Meetings</u>	\$12,000.00

TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	
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C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A AND B)	\$79,392.00
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D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to \$50,000)	\$0
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Total Requested Planning Grant Budget	\$79,392.00
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