



Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Implementation Grant

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

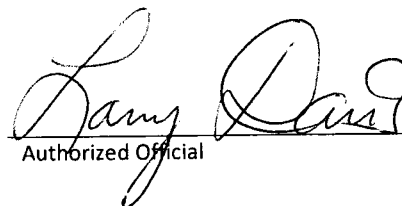
DUE JUNE 1, 2016

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton
Title of Project:	University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance
Project Partners:	1. Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas 2. Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas 3. University of Arkansas at Batesville 4. University of Arkansas at Hope 5. See attached list and letters from other Partners 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.
Requested Budget:	\$999,874.88
Date Submitted:	June 1, 2016
Applicant Contact:	Contact Name: Linda Jaramillo
Applicant's Information:	Address: 1537 University Blvd. City: Morrilton, State: AR ZIP: 72110 Phone: 501-977-2130 Email: jaramillol@uaccm.edu

Authorized Signatures for Institution

University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton

Lead Institution



Authorized Official

Act 1131 of 2015

Regional Workforce Implementation Grant Application

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2016**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that only projects that were awarded a planning grant are eligible to apply for an implementation 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 creation 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:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Need (20 Pts)	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.

The University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA), which includes the five community colleges of the UA system, developed a strong consortium designed to meet industry needs across the state by working together. They choose to focus on welding first because it was a developed program at each Alliance College. The Workforce Grant provides an ideal opportunity to help expand the welding offerings to the areas in which the Community Colleges serve. Additional partners outside the Alliance were then invited from the advisory board members of each school. These partners were knowledgeable of the programs and could identify immediate needs. The UA Workforce Alliance is not limiting partners to these original contacts as the program grows. The partnership will work to provide a central contact for industry to locate training to meet their need. Tracking of participants will also be centralized to help match employers and potential employees. The tracking will include following participants to determine if they are working in the trained field of study.

Regional Data

The Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Grant Program presents a unique opportunity for the colleges in the UAWA to develop a welding pathway to a high demand and high wage workforce occupation. The intent of the Alliance is to share resources, instructors, best practices, and redefine the delivery of certificates and degrees offered by the institutions to improve responsiveness to industry needs and assist workers and students with work readiness and employment services.

Although welding is the foundation for the Alliance work and the focus pathway for the regional workforce grant, the collaboration among the colleges will expand to construction and manufacturing occupations during subsequent years. Chart 1 shows the location of the UAWA colleges. These colleges have physical locations within four workforce regions while service areas overlap into three additional regions. The UAWA will serve seven Local Workforce Investment Areas including Central, North Central, Western, Eastern, West Central, Southwest, and Southeast. The colleges are UA Community College at Batesville, UA Community College at Hope, UA Community College at Morrilton, Cossatot Community College of the UA, and Phillips Community College of the UA.

Chart 1: Location of Alliance Institutions

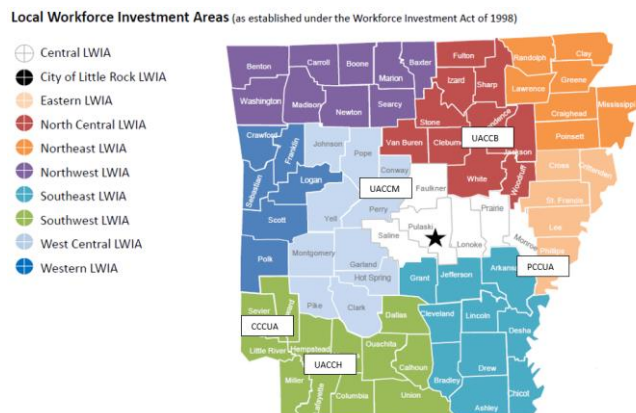


Table 1 illustrates the unemployment rates in the seven Workforce Development Regions served by the Alliance as compared to the state unemployment rate as of June 2015. Table 2 illustrates the

unemployment rates as of February 2016. Unemployment rates have decreased over this time period in all regions. Central Arkansas region continues to be below the state unemployment rates while the other six Regions remain either at or above the state unemployment rate.

Table 1: Workforce Regions' Unemployment Rate

Period	State	Central Arkansas	Eastern Arkansas	North Central Arkansas	Southeast Arkansas	Southwest Arkansas	West Central Arkansas	Western Arkansas
Jan	6.5	5.7	8.7	8.5	8.6	7.3	6.7	6.2
Feb	6.0	5.4	7.8	7.9	7.8	6.6	6.2	5.9
Mar	5.8	5.1	7.4	7.4	7.4	6.4	6.1	5.8
Apr	5.4	4.8	6.8	6.9	7.0	6.1	5.7	5.6
May	5.6	5.1	6.8	7.0	7.1	6.4	6.1	5.8
June	5.6	4.9	6.9	6.9	7.2	6.3	6.1	5.6
6-Mo Avg.	5.8	5.2	7.4	7.4	7.5	6.5	6.2	5.8

(<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/cgi/dataanalysis/AreaSelection.asp?tableName=Labforce>)

Table 2: Workforce Regions' Unemployment Rate

Period	State	Central Arkansas	Eastern Arkansas	North Central Arkansas	Southeast Arkansas	Southwest Arkansas	West Central Arkansas	Western Arkansas
Sept 15	4.6	4.2	5.9	5.9	6.0	5.3	5.1	4.8
Oct 15	4.3	3.9	5.4	5.6	5.5	5.0	4.8	4.5
Nov 15	4.3	3.8	5.5	5.7	5.5	4.9	4.8	4.4
Dec 15	4.6	4.0	5.9	6.3	5.9	5.3	5.1	4.7
Jan 16	4.7	4.0	6.1	6.7	6.1	5.3	5.2	4.7
Feb 16	4.7	4.2	6.0	6.6	6.0	5.3	5.1	4.7
6-Mo Avg.	4.5	4.02	5.8	6.1	5.8	5.2	5.02	4.6

(<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/cgi/dataanalysis/AreaSelection.asp?tableName=Labforce>)

The seven workforce regions served by the UA Workforce Alliance have also been impacted by foreign trade with one hundred and forty-three (143) separate Certification Determinations filed since January 1, 2010. Of the 143 certifications filed, ninety-five (95) were certified and four are in investigation status (www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa/taa_searc.cfm). Alliance institutions have enrolled a total of 370 TAA-eligible students in post-secondary programs since the fall 2011. These students have a short time to complete training and many need remediation courses. Some students have started their training in adult education programs to receive their GED and then enter college classes.

The 2015 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report projects 29,413 new jobs to be added to the Arkansas economy, an increase of 2.27% (<http://www.discoverarkansas.net>). This publication predicts 12,434 annual openings available annually between 2014 and 2016 with 15,466 positions as a result of growth and expansion of companies. Discover Arkansas-Projected Employment Opportunities for 2015-2016, lists a need for Hazardous Materials Technology/Technicians, Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders; and Chemical Equipment Operators, Chemical Technology/Technicians, and Chemical Process Technicians in the state. Employers, chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and community colleges all agree there is a significant shortage of workers due to the need for a qualified, skilled workforce in the welding and manufacturing sector. Industries are in the process of expanding, and others note that they anticipate

a worker replacement rate of approximately 10% per year. The following new job growth was announced in 2016; SIG SAUER is relocating its Elite Performance Ammunition manufacturing operation to Jacksonville with an estimated 50 employee in the initial phase, Sun Paper will open a bio-refinery in Clark County creating 250 new jobs, Bekaert launches a major expansion in the manufacturing plant in Rogers gradually adding 100 new jobs, and FHM Conveyors announced expansion in operation in Jonesboro which will create 110 new jobs. The UA Workforce Alliance is preparing the infrastructure to provide training as companies relocate and expand production in Arkansas.

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

According to O-Net Online, an online tool for career exploration and job analysis, welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders are classified as bright Outlook jobs. As individuals in the Alliance have attended meetings throughout the state, they report that the first occupation mentioned with a shortage is welding. As mentioned above, several of the occupations listed on the high demand, high wage lists actually required the skills of a welder even though the job titles may vary. One Alliance College conducted a 7-week welding training with all twelve participants finding employment at the end of training. Two participants were hired by Arkansas Nuclear One as welders that will be traveling to different facilities. An industry partner in Little Rock stated at an advisory meeting, they could hire 100 welder immediately if they could find people with welding skills. As reported on O-Net Online, the median wage in 2015 for welders was \$18.34 hourly which is an increase of 8% from 2014.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook projects:

“Employment growth reflects the need for welders in manufacturing because of the importance and versatility of welding as a manufacturing process. The basic skills of welding are similar across industries, so welders can easily shift from one industry to another, depending on where they are needed most. For example, welders laid off in the automotive manufacturing industry may be able to find work in the oil and gas industry.

The nation’s aging infrastructure will require the expertise of welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers to help rebuild bridges, highways, and buildings. The construction of new power generation facilities and, specifically, pipelines transporting natural gas and oil will also result in new jobs.

Overall job prospects will vary with the worker’s skill level. Job prospects should be good for welders trained in the latest technologies. However, welders who do not have up-to-date training may face strong competition for jobs.

For all welders, job prospects should be better for those willing to relocate.”
(<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/production/welders-cutters-solderers-and-brazers.htm#tab-6>).

According to Discover Arkansas' job projections, jobs listed in the top ten growth jobs in each of the seven Investment Areas will need skilled welders. With the stated needs throughout Arkansas and the projected increase in job openings, the Alliance will provide an excellent training model to start a state wide training program. If funded, this proposal will facilitate the foundational work of the Alliance. With the number of plant closings and the need for retraining employees, proposed portable units would be an asset to these dislocated employees and to other employers that could employ these dislocated or unemployed individuals. Using a centralized contact location will also assist workforce centers as they try to match individual's needs and skills with prospective employers or training.

According to Daryl Bassett, Director of Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, in the 2014 ADWS Annual Report, "Now more than ever, education and workforce development opportunities are critical to a strong economy. One of the major challenges we face as a state is to improve access to training and education to enhance skills development." Working together, the UAWA will be able to provide welding training and certification in their respective local communities, as well as band together to meet immediate short-term training needs in areas throughout the state of Arkansas by using portable welding units.

During the planning period, UAWA held a two day symposium with industry partners, regional workforce leaders, secondary school representatives, state officials, and Alliance college representation. This meeting held panel discussions with the different groups represented. Some of the comments are highlighted below.

1. Industry panel comments were centered on the need for all levels of welders in many different job areas from basic welding skills, sanitary welding in food prep industry, and advanced welding on bridges. Industry leaders also indicated employees need to have realistic expectation of the field, need to be drug and alcohol free, and have good work ethic. It was discussed that better communication needs to happen between industry, colleges, and high schools regarding local versus statewide job options.
2. Secondary panel comments were centered on students' realistic knowledge of jobs and wages, having virtual industry tours available for students, and active advisory boards. Another conversation was regarding promoting technical skills as well as academic skills. Students need to be exposed to technical training. Not all students are candidates for bachelor's degrees, but need additional training in technical areas.
3. The post-secondary comments were centered on industry driven training at the college and high school levels, using secondary centers as feeders into post-secondary programs, and needing industry visits for students to see actual working conditions. There is a need for clear career pathways between high schools and post-secondary programs.
4. State leadership comments were centered on sharing of resources among agencies and creating a common language between agencies. They see a need to address soft skills in higher education, change the culture to value careers without a bachelor's degree, and recognize the value on non-credit courses.

Grant Activities and Local Need

Based on the regional data, advisory meetings, workforce meetings, and the symposium held during the planning period, the UA Workforce Alliance will conduct the following activities over the next two years: utilize a regional governing board to help identify industry needs in local areas; utilize the current workforce personnel to administer an industry specific, non-credit training program; conduct

state-wide symposiums to assure the Alliance is on-track with industry training needs; purchase equipment necessary to provide the needed training for credit and non-credit welding programs; and determine what will be the next step in local and statewide training.

During local advisory meetings, it was determined that each college service area has a slightly different need. Some advisory committees indicated the need for training at their location, while others desired all training to be conducted on the college campus and some indicated the need for a combination of both tracks. The UA Workforce Alliance's goal is to meet all of these needs. Equipment will be purchased that can meet the need of the college campus as well as be portable to move to different locations for training. This training may be taken to the industry location or be conducted at a workforce training center. The equipment will allow the Alliance to be flexible to meet the welding needs of many different industries.

To coordinate this training, workforce personnel at each campus will be utilized to communicate among colleges the development of non-credit and credit industry-driven training. The use of current workforce personnel at each campus gives the advantage of existing relationships with industry and established communication lines. UACCM's workforce director will coordinate these efforts and serve as the contact person for the Alliance in the beginning as a part-time coordinator. As the programs grow and industry partners increase, a full time Alliance coordinate will be hired. The local workforce directors will assist instructors with arranging job interview opportunities with local industry partners as students complete programs. Soft skills will be an integral part of all training conducted. This was an expressed need during the UAWA Symposium held in February, 2016.

Three campuses have welding simulators that are currently being incorporated in local welding programs. These simulators allow students to practice welding before they move to welding booths for actual hands-on welding. These also allow a safe environment especially for the high school students attending classes on the college campuses. Students can also practice multiple times without the waste of consumable supplies. As a student moves to a more advanced welding task, they can go back to the simulator to practice the new task such as different welding positions and coupons. Students then have basic expectations of the challenges presented with the new task and how to overcome them before doing the actual weld process. These simulators are great recruiting tools, also. At the state Weld Expo, students were constantly lined up to practice welding using a simulator where other booths displaying the finished products were not so popular.

Batesville has an Access database that will be used to track students who enter both the credit and non-credit programs. Program completion and employment information will also be tracked. With UACCM being the lead college, this tracking system will be housed on their campus and they will coordinate data input. Follow-up surveys will be conducted to determine the success of the participant. The Alliance will work with workforce centers to determine if there is a way for tracking student employment for three and six months after the program. Technology will be utilized to allow multiple user access to the database. Job opportunities will be coordinated through UACCM and shared with other campus.

Alignment with Arkansas Economic and Workforce Goals

According to the proposed state plan under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), there are 15 targeted industries for economic development. These industries are: Advanced Food Manufacturing and Packaging, Aerospace/Aviation, Biosciences, Data Centers, Distribution and Logistics Services, Firearms and Ammunition, Paper and Timber Products, Regional Headquarters, Smart Grid Technologies (Power Electronics), Software Development and Data Management Services,

Steel Production, Sustainable Building Products and Fixtures, Technical Support Services, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, and Walmart Suppliers. Of these 15 industries, at least nine employ welders.

Arkansas' vision states "Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace." The mission states, "To promote and support a talent development system in Arkansas that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity." The vision of the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System is "quality focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies."

The UA Workforce Alliance aligns with these goals by providing welding training that is employer-driven by working with local industry leader to determine their needs through communication on advisory committee meetings, with workforce directors, workforce center, and Alliance symposiums. The program is tailored to meet the needs of regional economies through working with local advisory boards and local WIOA boards to develop trainings that are flexible in delivery and meeting the current needs of each region. One size training will not meet everyone's needs. Welding needs differ from pipe, food production, building, and infrastructure. UA Workforce Alliance will work to meet local welding needs as well as regional welding needs. Working with other programs such as Career Pathways will provide the support services that help break the barriers to training and employment.

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.
NOTE: Equipment may not be purchased during the planning phase
- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through implementation 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:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Plan (25 Pts)	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.

Overview and Timeline

The UAWA is a partnership that leverages existing resources without the creation of any new technical programs. The UAWA will create efficiencies for the partner schools by centralizing coordination of schedules of technical training courses, credit and non-credit, and matching industry employment needs with partner school graduates. Purchasing of equipment and supplies will be combined to take advantage of economies of scale.

Initially, the career pathway of focus will be welding with the intent to expand to additional sectors in the future. The UAWA will strengthen training throughout seven workforce development regions by offering basic, advanced, and master level welding courses either in scheduled rotations or on demand. Courses will be available both for credit and noncredit to high school students, post-secondary students, unemployed, and incumbent workers. By leveraging the welding faculty at five community colleges and purchasing portable training units, the UAWA will be responsive and flexible to sudden shifts in demand due to changing industry skill needs or new industry entering the state.

Below is a timeline of scheduled meetings. A training schedule developed for the Alliance reflects meetings with local industry partners and workforce centers to determine training needs. The goal is to meet with at least one partner each month within each college's service area.

Year One Activities	
July 2016	Governing Board Meeting Launch UA Workforce Alliance Web Page
August 2016	UA Workforce Alliance College Meeting to Begin Purchasing Equipment Meet with Local Workforce Centers to discuss training needs Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meetings
September 2016	Hold Local Advisory Meeting Meet with Local High Schools Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
October 2016	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Governing Board Meeting

November 2016	UA Workforce Alliance College Conference Call Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
December 2016	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Assessment of Student and Program Success
January 2017	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Governing Board Meeting
February 2017	UA Workforce Alliance College Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting
March 2017	Symposium Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Governing Board Meeting
April 2017	Meet with local high schools Meet with Local Workforce Centers to plan Summer training Needs Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting
May 2017	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
June 2017	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Assessment of Student and Program Success

Year Two Activities

July 2017	Governing Board Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
August 2017	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting
September 2017	Hold Local Advisory Meetings Meet with local High Schools Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
October 2017	UA Workforce Alliance College Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Governing Board Meeting
November 2017	Meet with local Workforce Centers Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
December 2017	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Assessment of Student and Program Success
January 2018	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Governing Board Meeting
February 2018	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting
March 2018	Symposium Meeting Governing Board Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
April 2018	Meet with local High Schools Meet with local Workforce Centers to plan summer training needs Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15

	Attend WIOA Board Meeting
May 2018	Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15
June 2018	UA Workforce Alliance College Meeting Governing Board Meeting Monthly Narrative & Reimbursement Report Due on 15 Attend WIOA Board Meeting Assessment of Student and Program Success

Measurable Objectives

During the implementation period, the UAWA will be addressing the needs expressed at the symposium and meeting the welding needs in Arkansas as well as identifying the next industry for expansion of this collaboration. Listed below are the goals originally set by the Alliance with the plans for how they will be addressed based on feedback received during the planning period.

Goal 1: Develop a AWS testing unit in Arkansas

Based on the feedback from industry partners the AWS testing unit will not be developed.

Industry partners do not rely on these certifications for employment screening. Each company stated they test each potential candidate to determine skill level and placement in the company.

Outcome: No outcome needed.

Goal 2: Purchase the skills database software product selected in planning year to document specific mastered skills.

As the Alliance members have discussed this purchase, it was determined that one UACC Batesville already has an Access database developed that could be modified to fit the need of the Alliance in tracking participants.

Outcome: The Access database will be adapted to fit the training need and a procedure will be developed for entering data as well as a process for data tracking.

Goal 3: Develop portable training units for rapid deployment of mass industry training and customized industry training.

Based on comments from advisory boards, the purchase of training units may be different for each institution. Each institution in the Alliance will purchase equipment that can be portable and serve the local campus as well as the Alliance needs.

Outcome: Portable training units and training equipment will be purchased and ready for use by January 1, 2017.

Goal 4: Appoint a UAWA Coordinator and establish a centralized industry resource/student placement office.

This position will be part-time in the beginning and as the program grows it will be determined when a full-time coordinator will be needed.

Outcome: UAWA Coordinator, (UACCM Workforce Director) will begin working immediately to bring all workforce directors together to develop a communication strategy. The Coordinator will work with the colleges to help promote training to industry partners and develop a strategy for presenting UAWA placement services to students at all partner schools.

Goal 5: Purchase simulators and robotic trainers to enhance the welding programs and reduce material costs.

Two simulators will be purchased to enhance training with no additional supply costs and assist in recruitment of participants. Simulators are the new training tool that allows students to experience different welding challenges before actually going to the lab to confront the challenge. The simulations prepare student for what to expect in a safe environment before actual hands-on experience.

After receiving quotes for robotic trainers, the expense is too great for every school to purchase one at this time. One school will purchase a robotic training that can be shared with other colleges until the program expands and other robotic trainers can be purchased. It is more important for campuses to expand their basic equipment at this time than to purchase a robotic trainer. Only a few companies within Arkansas actually use robotic welders at this time. As robotic welders increase in use in Arkansas, campuses will expand their offerings into this areas and the hope is to purchase these trainers at a later date.

Outcome: Simulators will be purchased at two colleges and a robotic trainer will be purchased at one college.

Goal 6: Provide interview opportunities for all participants.

During the symposium, all industry partners were agreeable to interview students completing the program.

Outcome: UAWA Workforce Coordinators will work with instructors to arrange for well qualified participants to be interview by a local industry partner at the completion of both credit and non-credit training. Workforce Coordinators will work with instructors to provide job fairs highlighting the welding programs.

Goal 7: Expand UAWA into additional training pathways.

Outcome: Through the UAWA governing board, a determination of what the next step for expansion of this training program will be.

Project Governance and Accountability Plan

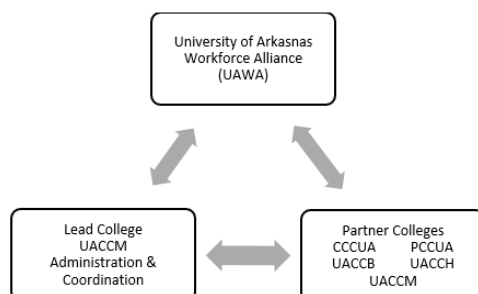
A UA Workforce Alliance will use current personnel to serve as coordinators for the program. UACCM Workforce Director will be the lead coordinator and work with other campus Directors to coordinate activities. The UACCM Director will report to the governing board. This will be a part-time position to start the program and evolve into a full-time position as the program expands and grows into additional sectors. The coordinator will have the responsibility for organizing information from partner institutions regarding program schedules, student referrals and appropriate training programs that will be disseminated to industry and workforce partners. In addition, the coordinators from each institution will provide industry partners with student contacts to fill employment vacancies and maintain a listing of current employment opportunities with industry partners for student training referrals and job placement opportunities.

Members of the UAWA governing board include the CAO of each member institution, Workforce Development Board members, chairs of local advisory boards, and a representative from public schools. The board will have oversight of the budget and monitor the stated goals for the grant. UACCM's Director of Academic Initiative will be the central contact person for grant reporting, tracking, and communicating with all partners. This person will also report to the UAWA governing board.

The fiscal management of the project will be handled by UACCM's business department personnel under the direction of Jeff Mullen, Director of Accounting. Mr. Mullen and his staff handle the financial reporting for several grants on campus, including Adult Education and the Arkansas

Partnership for Nursing's Future. UACCM has a proven capacity to administer federal and state grants. Financial reporting functions are accomplished through the campus' POISE platform, which is an integrated and comprehensive system that supports data integrity through a multi-level approval protocol. UACCM will comply with Arkansas' financial processes and federal guidelines to enable timely and accurate financial management and reporting. Chart 3 illustrates the model.

Chart 2: Administrative Model

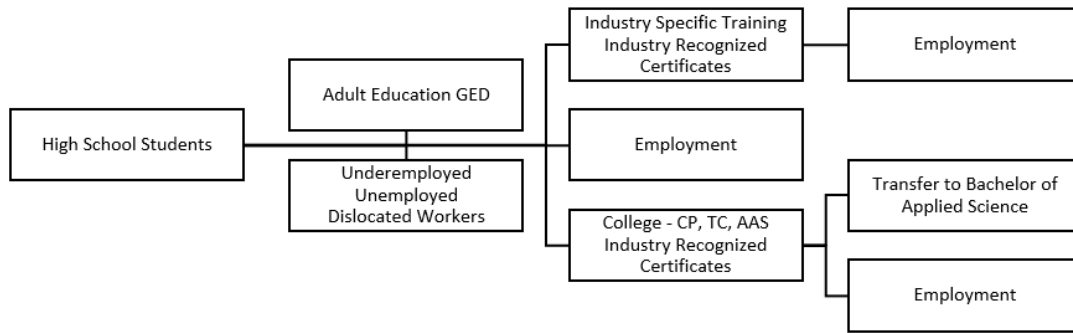


Pathways Articulation and Support

Each institution works closely with their local high schools and has established a plan of study with articulation and/or concurrent credit that fits into college's certificate or degree plans. These pathways continue to be developed and/or enhanced as necessary. Plans will be developed to enhance prior learning credit availability for industry specific training developed and provided.

As institutions strengthen their work with local high schools to build career pathways, the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) certifications will be integrated into the curriculum such as the Craft Skills taught at local high schools and tested by college instructors. These stackable credentials will be aligned with college programs; students can also receive articulated, concurrent, or prior learning credit. A student completing a college degree will have the opportunity to complete NCCER Core certification as well as the Level 1 and Level 2 certifications.

Institutions will work with industry and high school partners to develop and enhance soft skill training, including applied math and writing within the pathways. This will reduce the time to complete certificates and degrees. Chart 3 shows a pathway for participants to enter and exit training. As you can see participants may come from high schools, adult education centers, and unemployed or underemployed workers. Participants may take industry specific short-term training or college credit programs. Participants may move between these training. This will allow participants stop-out points and then the opportunity to return and receive more training. All industry specific training will be evaluated for prior learning credit that can be applied to college credit programs.

Chart 3: Progression through Pathway

Examples of how UACC Morrilton and UACC Batesville are expanding these pathways are presented below.

UACCM is in the process of expanding articulated and concurrent credit to high school students. Articulated credit is expanding to include not only basic welding but OSHA 10 and Craft Skill. UACCM's instructor will be administering the NCCER standards exam for these students. Students are being offered the opportunity to attend classes full-time in welding on UACCM's campus through concurrent credit agreements with the local high schools. Four area high schools signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UACCM on May 4, 2016, regarding the concurrent technical classes that will be offered at UACCM.

Two of the local high schools began working with UACCB this academic year and bused ten high school students each to the UACCB campus for welding classes. The first school chose to enroll their students in all four courses that comprise the Certificate of Proficiency in Welding. Nine of those students completed all the requirement for this CP. The second school chose to enroll their students in only the welding classes. Those students completed Welding I in the fall and Welding II in the spring. A third school anticipates busing ten students to welding classes beginning this upcoming academic year.

Role of Equipment Requested

Welding simulators will be used in the classroom and as a recruitment tool. Simulators allow participants to experience different types of welding, different positions, and different welding coupons. Simulators enhance the quality, quantity, and efficiency of welder training. This computer based training system allows students to practice their welding skills and techniques before actually starting to weld in the booth thus reducing material waste and energy consumption associated with traditional welding training. The simulator provides immediate feedback about how well a student completed a weld. The student and instructor can discuss the process and assistance given to improve the weld and the student can practice the weld again with immediate feedback to follow.

The simulator provides a safe learning environment which is very useful for the recruitment of students into the welding field. At the Weld Expo in Little Rock in December 2015, the welding simulator was the most popular booth at the Expo. There was always a line of students waiting to experience the simulator. These were high school students from around the state of Arkansas. These high school students will remember the college that had the simulator when thinking about a college to attend.

Robotic systems have become commonplace in industry for everything from production runs to prototyping. Unfortunately, robotic systems are not yet commonplace in many industries in Arkansas. During the planning period a robotic welding trainer was quoted at over \$77,000. With the lack of robotic welders and the high price of the trainer, it was decided that only one robotic trainer would be purchased at this time. Most campuses need to build their basic welding program and the goal is to include robotic welding in the future as industry demand increases.

Portable training units will be purchased for delivery of hands-on instruction in both industrial and community settings. The portable units will consist of welders located in trailers or on trucks, some with generators. Portable training units will allow the UAWA to be responsive to partner requests by combining the resources from each campus, when necessary, to deliver large scale training opportunities. Some industry partners expressed the preference to have trainers come to their site and use their equipment to train employees rather than have portable units moved to their facility. That is one reason all equipment purchase using grant funds can be used on campus as well as portable enough to be taken on-site for trainings.

Performance Assessment

Program success will be measured by the number of students completing training certifications; CP, TC, and AAS degrees; and whether the participant enters the workforce or transfer into a bachelor's degree program. The Alliance will compare past completion rates to the completion rates of students enrolled in the Alliance programs. Employer surveys will be conducted as students get jobs in the industry. These surveys will cover the technical skills as well as soft skills knowledge of the student. Students will be given exit surveys to determine how well the programs meet the students' need. Pre- and post-test will be given to measure what the students have learned and if the training needs to be adjusted for future trainings.

Table 3 below shows the number of graduates from welding program from the last two years as well as to the number of proposed increase in graduates.

Table 3: Number of Welding Graduates From Certificate and Degree Programs		
Institution	Graduates Last 2 Years	Proposed Increase
Cossatot Community College UA	93	40
Phillips Community College UA	63	30
UA Community College Batesville	65	76
UA Community College Hope	44	64
UA Community College Morrilton	44	18

Table 4 shows the number of courses currently articulated with high schools and the number of anticipated courses to be added to articulated agreements. Most of the partner school anticipate increasing the number of welding courses but all anticipate increasing the number of students served by the articulated courses.

Table 4: Number of Courses Articulated with High Schools		
Institution	Number Courses	Proposed Increase
Cossatot Community College UA	5	1-2
Phillips Community College UA	4	1
UA Community College Batesville	0	1
UA Community College Hope	4	8
UA Community College Morrilton	3	1-2

Table 5 indicated the number of high school students served by UA Workforce Alliance colleges during the 2015-16 academic year. Each school anticipates an increase in the number of high school students served as the number of articulated or concurrent agreement are increase with the local high schools.

Table 5: Number of High School Students Served in Welding Programs During 2015-2016 Academic Year		
Institution	Number of Students	Proposed Increase
Cossatot Community College UA Career Center	122	40
Phillips Community College UA	17	13
UA Community College Batesville	20	40
UA Community College Hope	5	25
UA Community College Morrilton	0	18

The UA Workforce Alliance will be tracking the number of student enrolled both as high school students and as college students. Not only will the number of students be tracked but the job placement information for students will be tracked. The UA Workforce Alliance wants to know if students are getting job after they complete the program and if those jobs are in the welding field. This data will be analyzed and adjustment made where appropriate.

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 implementation of the project- describe how each partner will 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 executing planned proposal; describe how each partner is qualified to participate in the proposed 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:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)	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.

Role of each Partner

Workforce Development Boards

The UAWA will serve seven of the nine Arkansas Workforce Development Regions including Central, North Central, Western, Eastern, West Central, Southwest, and Southeast. Representatives from local boards attended the workforce symposiums held in February 2016. Members were also invited to serve on the governing board for the Alliance. The Workforce Development Boards will help strengthen the direction of this project to provide regional and state training needs. The local Workforce Centers will help with recruitment of participants to enter the program. They will also advise participants on other available supportive services available in the area.

Partner Colleges

Each institution will provide training in their local areas using existing degree programs and workforce training programs. Training will also be provided using the portable units and by adding additional welding instructors. Institutions will be the lead in developing the partnerships and training opportunities as well as the tracking system. Institutions will provide participants with academic advising, career counseling, tutoring services, and information on available financial aid. Training will lead toward Certificates of Proficiency, Technical Certificates, Associate of Applied Science degrees as well as industry specific non-credit courses. The non-credit courses will each be evaluated for prior learning credit that can be applied to degree programs should participants desire to return for more training.

Industry

Industry partners will provide their expertise in multiple training areas as well as recommendations for training and equipment needs and can provide supplies to the different programs. Industry partners will serve on local and UAWA advisory boards. Partners will also help recruit participants into the program. They will work with the local community college to develop industry specific training for the area. Industry partners will also be involved in presenting information to participants as to the starting pay, working conditions, and realistic expectations for the field of welding. Employers will be invited to conduct mock interviews as well as employment interviews for qualified participants who complete training programs.

High Schools

High schools will help identify students who are interested in welding and work with local institutions to develop the seamless flow for students wishing to continue their education. They will be involved with curriculum development to assure high school as well as college standards are met. The Alliance partners will work with area high schools and career centers to develop concurrent and articulated courses. Examples of the collaboration are listed below.

UACCM is working with local high schools to provide concurrent courses in welding as well as other technical areas. The number of articulated credits available to high school students is being increased. Previously the only welding course articulated with local high school was basic welding. This past year that has been increase to include OSHA 10 and Craft Skills. The college instructor is working together with the high school in training and testing students. In the Craft Skills course, college instructors will test students to determine the student's placement based on NCCER standards. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on May 4th with four local high schools for concurrent credit in technical areas which included welding.

UA Community College at Hope has been invited to participate in the Department of Education's Pell Grant Experiment. The Department of Education is inviting 44 postsecondary institutions to participate in an experiment that – for the first time – allows students taking college-credit courses to access Federal Pell Grants as early as high school. As part of this experiment, an estimated 10,000 high school students will have the opportunity to access approximately \$20 million in Federal Pell Grants to take dual enrollment courses provided by colleges and high schools throughout the nation. Nearly 80 percent of the selected sites are community colleges (*US DOE Fact Sheet: Expanding College Access Through the Dual Enrollment Pell Experiments*).

All Alliance colleges have worked closely with local school districts the past two years to increase opportunities for high school students to receive training and education that will lead to a post-secondary credential and prepare those student to enter the workforce or continue with their education.

Capabilities of Each Partner

With the assistance of this grant, two-year colleges will have more up-to-date equipment with which to train participants in either credit or non-credit programs. New faculty will be hired to increase the number of participants that can be served to build capacity of the local and state workforce. Colleges are in a unique position to work with high schools to prepare career programs to help students identify their interest and receive the training they need to be successful in their chosen field. Programs such as career day visits and summer career exploration programs will help with this process. Colleges will continue to work with industry leaders to provide the training programs to meet the employment need within the state of Arkansas. This training may be in the degree programs offered or specific short-term training for current employees.

High Schools are willing to work with local colleges to develop or enhance trainings that will provide students high demand, high wage jobs. High schools and colleges will work in local agriculture courses to give students basic welding skills that will articulate to college degree programs. Through the articulated credits or concurrent programs students are given the opportunity to advance their training in a shorter amount of time. Public schools can expose student at a younger age to job opportunities in the local areas as well as opportunities through-out the state. Giving students more options for advanced educational training in high wage, high demand careers.

Industry partners are the experts in their field. They can provide information to colleges and high school to help build the educational programs that will benefit students. This will help build capacity in the workforce to meet industry needs. This is accomplished through local advisory committees in all areas of education.

The workforce boards can help bring all these partners together to build capacity for the state of Arkansas through promotional materials. Boards can feed information to different partner regarding changes they see in the economy. Assuring new industry prospects that Arkansas can and will train employee to meet their industry need. An example is the petroleum program at one college that was established to meet the need of the Fayetteville Shale project.

Potential Regional Partners

The partnership for the UA Workforce Alliance began with the five community colleges of the UA system deciding they could meet industry need across the state by working together. The Alliance colleges wanted to focus on welding because each college had a program and all programs shared

some similarities. Additionally, each member had distinctive features for the welding program which, if shared with others, could improve overall welding outcomes for all members of the Alliance. The Workforce Grant is an excellent chance to help expand the welding offering to the state. The partners outside the Alliance were then invited from the advisory board members of each school. These partners were knowledgeable of the programs and could help identify immediate needs. The UA Workforce Alliance is not limiting partners to these original contacts as the program grows.

In order to build a welding workforce for Arkansas, the Alliance will align training for high schools within the service areas of the colleges. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) coordinator with Arch Ford Education Cooperative was invited to become a partner and serve on the Governing Board to give input from the CTE program at multiple schools. Individual schools are also involved in creating career pathways for students interested in the welding field. In February 2014 a statewide welding training consortium was formed with the intent and purpose to provide business and industry with trained workers. This started the cooperation between colleges and high schools to work together and share welding curriculum, new ideas, and best practices. The UA Workforce Alliance will continue working with high schools to enhance the welding career pathway from high school through college to work.

Industry partners are critical to the success of this endeavor because they provide current workforce needs, new processes and best practices. Industry is the driver for what skill set employees need in different areas across the state. With this information, the UA Workforce Alliance will play a role in building capacity for the workforce of Arkansas.

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 implement approved Phase 1 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:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Budget Plan (15 Pts)	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.

Alignment of Funds and Activities

The UA Workforce Alliance has budgeted \$55,000 for partial salary reimbursement for workforce directors at each of the five colleges to coordinate activities, a total of \$25,000 to offset accounting activities at the lead college, and \$15,000 to offset the lead college's grant coordinator's salary. Total administrative and coordination cost of the grant is budgeted at \$95,000 total. This will cover salary and fringe over the two year period. A total of \$2,000 is budgeted for administrative supplies.

Travel expense is budgeted at \$38,500 over the two-year period. This expense covers travel and meals for eight governing board meetings, meals for ten local advisory committee meetings (2 at each college), and meals, lodging and travel for two state wide symposiums. These meeting will be conducted to make sure the Alliance is meeting the needs of local and state wide industry partners. The meeting will also assist with determining the next step in local and statewide training needs.

To equip each college with portable equipment, a total of sixty-six new portable welders will be purchase at a budgeted cost of \$335,861.90. These welders will assist colleges meeting on the industry site or at the college with both credit and non-credit classes. Although the welders will be portable, these still serve the need of on-campus classes. When purchasing these welders, the Alliance college will work together to get the best price by combining purchases.

Two of the colleges are requesting the purchase of a truck and cargo trailer to haul the portable units to sites off-campus. The cost of two trucks and two trailers is budgeted at \$122,472.53. Again the two colleges will work together to get the best price available when purchasing the trucks and trailers.

Forty-three welding booths are requested. Eighteen of the booths will be portable drawn draft tables that can be moved to other sites as well as utilized on campus. The total cost of these welding booths will be \$107,512.05. These booths will help colleges increase the number of students in the credit programs as well as assist industry partners with off-site training. The portable down draft tables can also be used in workforce non-credit training on campus also.

Two VRTEX welding simulators and one robotic welding trainer are budgeted at \$123,334.50. These trainers are portable. The simulators will be used in recruiting participants into welding training. They are also a very valuable tool in training basic welding techniques before putting a participant in a welding booth. These simulator will save time and consumables as participants learn the welding process. The robotic trainer can be shared among the colleges. More robotic welder are anticipated for future use as industry use increases in Arkansas.

Other equipment needed such as torch sets, plasma cutters, beveling machines, swivel vices, metal handling carts, Spool-Matics, wire feeders, and welding rod oven are budgeted at a total of \$36,831.45.

Supplies needed such as TIG torch power blocks, oil drain and filter kits, stick leads, and a supply of loaner hoods, gloves, and jackets for participant use are budgeted at a total of \$19,162.45.

A total of \$16,800 is budgeted for truck insurance, fuel, and maintenance. Advertising for the trailers is budgeted at \$2,400 is also included in the budget amount. The salary and fringe of one additional instructor is budgeted at \$100,000 over the two-year period.

Local Match

All five Colleges in the Alliance have at least one full-time welding instructor. These faculty members' salary ranges from \$32,000 to \$55,000 plus fringe. The colleges will be providing these faculty services to support the UA Workforce Alliance projects.

Industry partners donate supplies on average \$10,000 to \$30,000 to colleges over the last two years. This support is expected to continue with the hope of increasing donations as additional partners and identified.

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

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 2 Projects.

Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton
Title of Project:	University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. Personnel/Stipend	\$95,000.00
2. Travel	\$38,500.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	\$2,000.00
Office Supplies	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	\$135,500.00

B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. Equipment	\$726,012.43
2. Materials and Supplies	\$19,162.45
3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	\$2,400.00
4. Consultant Services	\$0.00
5. Other (Explain Below)	\$116,800.00
Truck maintenance, fuel, and insurance: Instructor	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	\$864,374.88

C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B)

\$999,874.88

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

\$50,000.00

Total Implementation Grant Budget

\$1,049,874.88

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 implementation 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 implementation 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.

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Sustainability (20 Pts)	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 for the Future

The UA Workforce Alliance is committed to continuing the work started during this grant period. Each college pledges to working together to provide a state-wide training not only in welding but advance manufacturing and other programs as will be determined through meeting with industry partners.

The Alliance will continue to work with industry partners through local advisory boards to identify local training needs. They are also committed to giving consideration to hiring qualified trainees. Industry partners are willing to help with donations of scrap metal and some equipment to help colleges prepare the local workforce they need.

Colleges will work with high schools to enhance and expand career pathways for their students. The welding pathway will be the focus during the grant period but other pathways will be created or enhanced as conversations continue during and after the grant period. The pathways will be enhanced by increasing articulated and concurrent course offerings as determined between the colleges and high schools.

Maintaining Communication

The symposium held in February 2016 was a huge success and provided good information from and to all partners present. This type of meeting that will be conducted on a yearly basis as the UA Workforce Alliance implements the current plans and into the future as plans expand to other areas. These meetings along with local advisory committees will keep communication strong among partners. This communication will help the state build capacity in its workforce.

Availability of Long-Term Resources

Colleges will budget for maintenance and/or repair of equipment. The partnerships with industry will allow for resources to be shared between industry and colleges and high schools. Each College partner is committed to continue the project as it expands into other industry sectors.

Redistribution of Equipment

Currently the colleges are trying to expand capacity to meet industry needs. Current equipment and programs will be examined on a periodic bases to determine if they are still relevant. As equipment needs change with industry needs, colleges will work with high schools and other partners to see where the equipment can be best utilized for the future.

SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2016Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu*Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded a planning grant.***IMPLEMENTATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC**

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	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
Program Plan	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)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	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
Budget Plan	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
Sustainability	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
Total Points Possible					100 Pts

University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Support Letter List

Industry Partners

Adams Fertilizer Equipment
Amerimax Coated Products, Inc.
Ash Grove
Blackhawk Warehousing and Leasing Company
BPS, Inc.
Cormier Rice Milling Co., Inc.
Domtar Ashdown Mill
Enviro Tech, Inc.
Harcros Chemicals, Inc.
Helena Industries, Inc.
Hoffinger Industries, Inc.
KBM Industrial Services, Inc.
Menard Mfg. Company, Inc.
New Millennium Building Systems
Norac Additives, Inc.
Prospect Steel, A Division of Lexicon, Inc.
Smith-Blair
Tyson Foods, Inc.
United Initiators, Inc.
Weyerhaeuser Company, Dierks Lumber

Public Schools

Barton Lexa School District
Helena, West Helena School District
Hope Public Schools
KIPP: Delta Public Schools
Marvell – Elaine Public Schools
Nemo Vista School District (Sent directly to ADHE)
Stuttgart School District
Texarkana Arkansas School District

Workforce Investment Boards

Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas
Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board
West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Chancellors

Deborah J. Frazier, UACCB
Dr. Steve Cole, Cossatot Community College of the U of A
Chris Thomason, University of Arkansas Hope Texarkana
Dr. Larry Davis, UACCM
Dr. Keith Pinchback, PCCUA

U.S. Senator John Boozman (Sent directly to ADHE)



May 24, 2016

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

Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education and State Workforce Development Partners,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support on behalf of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance's application to the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Regional Workforce Grant Program. As the chancellor of the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville (UACCB), I whole-heartily endorse the efforts created through the collaborative network of the five sister institutions of the University of Arkansas System.

As Arkansas continues to find opportunities to develop a skilled workforce, the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA) demonstrates with this grant application the synergy that can be created when broad partnerships are developed. The UAWA seeks to accomplish the goals of the grant by leveraging and expanding their collective partnerships with business and industry, public school systems and local Workforce Development Boards.

The University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville fully supports the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance and the application for an implementation grant to carry out the initiatives developed by the UAWA during the planning cycle. Henry Ford made this observation, "if everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." It is the desire of UACCB to promote economic prosperity for Arkansas and agrees that committed partners are essential to ensuring the success of this project. UACCB is such a partner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Deborah J. Frazier'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ms. Deborah J. Frazier
Chancellor

University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville

P.O. Box 3350 / Batesville, Arkansas 72503-3350 / 870-612-2000 / Fax 870-793-4988
UACCB is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.



P.O. Box 960/183 College Drive • De Queen, AR 71832 • 870.584.4471 • 800.844.4471 • www.cccua.edu

May 5, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas has partnered with the four University of Arkansas community colleges to form the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA) to address workforce needs. The Workforce Initiative Act of 2015's Regional Workforce Grant program presented a unique opportunity for this Alliance to meet the welding need in the state. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

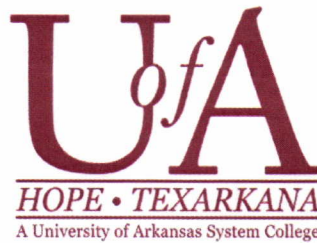
UA Cossatot looks forward to collaborating with local industry, public schools, and local workforce centers in developing short-term career and technical training as well as college degree programs to meet industry needs. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge for all industries. The proposed welding pathway will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of educational and training needs. UAWA's intent is to share resources, instructors, and best practices to be responsive to industry needs state wide.

UA Cossatot is committed to continue this collaboration beyond the grant period by providing opportunities for Alliance meetings on a regular basis, support for personnel needed to carry out industry-driven trainings, and resources to maintain equipment necessary for the training opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Cole", is written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Steve Cole, Chancellor
Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas



May 25, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

As a member of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance, we are excited to show our support to the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015, Regional Workforce Grant Program. This program presented a unique opportunity for this Alliance to meet the welding need in the state. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

UAHT looks forward to collaborating with local industry, public schools, and local workforce centers in developing short-term career and technical training as well as college degree programs to meet industry needs. The proposed welding pathway will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of educational and training needs. UAWA's intent is to share resources, instructors, and best practices to be responsive to industry needs state wide.

UAHT is committed to continue this collaboration beyond the grant period by providing opportunities for Alliance meetings on a regular basis, support for personnel needed to carry out industry-driven trainings, and resources to maintain equipment necessary for the training opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CT', located below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Chris Thomason, Chancellor
University of Arkansas Hope Texarkana

your bridge to the future



1537 University Boulevard, Morrilton, Arkansas 72110

1-800-264-1094 | (501) 977-2000 | fax: (501) 977-2134 | www.uaccm.edu

May 18, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

The University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton has partnered with the four other University of Arkansas community colleges to form the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA) to address workforce needs. The Workforce Initiative Act of 2015's Regional Workforce Grant program presented a unique opportunity for this Alliance to meet the need for additional trained welders in the state. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

UACCM looks forward to collaborating with local industry, public schools, and local workforce centers in developing short-term career and technical training as well as college degree programs to meet industry needs. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge for all industries. The proposed welding pathway will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of educational and training needs. UAWA's intent is to share resources, instructors, and best practices to be responsive to industry needs state wide.

UACCM is committed to continue this collaboration beyond the grant period by providing opportunities for Alliance meetings on a regular basis, support for personnel needed to carry out industry-driven trainings, and resources to maintain equipment necessary for the training opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry Davis'.

Dr. Larry Davis, Chancellor
University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton



May 16, 2016

Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant Review Committee
Attn: Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Members of the Grant Review Team:

Phillips Community College partnered with the four University of Arkansas community colleges to form the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA). The UAWA was funded for a Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Planning Grant. The UAWA is now requesting a Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant (2016). The University of Arkansas System colleges share some of the same processes, procedures, and purchasing policies which make the implementation of this Workforce proposal and the Alliance a good use of resources. The Alliance has identified welding as the most critical need and has developed a plan to meet the industry shortage. All of the UAWA colleges have implemented a strong guided pathway in welding which will result in more students entering the workforce in higher paying jobs. The Alliance's collaboration with industry has resulted in the development of work readiness skills which have been integrated into the curriculum (applied math, blueprint reading, writing skills).

PCCUA is fully committed to the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance and to the implementation of the welding workforce development initiative. Not only has the UAWA spent the year planning the welding pathway, but also industry has been more involved in the process than in the past. The implementation grant will provide the resources necessary to begin implementing the Alliance work.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss PCCUA's role as a member of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance or the Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant application.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Pinchback

PCCUA

P.O. Box 785

Helena-West Helena, AR 72342

870-338-6474, Ext. 1233

pinchback@pccua.edu



Manufactured by Industrial Iron Works, Inc.
P.O. BOX 628 1503 South Whitehead Drive
DeWitt, Arkansas 72042

May 24, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas with campuses in DeWitt, Helena and Stuttgart as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Our company has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. We will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaun Hodge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "H" and "D".

Adams Fertilizer Equipment
Sales/Marketing
Industry Partner



Amerimax Coated Products, Inc.
215 Phillips, 324 Road
Helena, Arkansas 72342
870/572-5074
870/572-5594 FAX

May 9, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Amerimax Coated Products has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Amerimax Coated Products will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Onika Shirley, Production Manager
Amerimax Coated Products



Letter of Commitment

May 11, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Ash Grove Cement has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Ash Grove Cement will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clint Nelson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Clint Nelson
Production Manager

BLACKHAWK

**WAREHOUSING and
LEASING COMPANY**

P.O. Box 809
Helena, AR 72342
Phone. 870-572-6764
Fax: 870-572-7749



May 12, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Blackhawk Warehousing and Leasing has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Blackhawk Warehousing and Leasing will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Charlie Tappan, President
Blackhawk Warehousing and Leasing

BPS, INC.
794 Phillips Road 311, Helena, AR 72342
Phone (870) 572-7771 - Fax (870) 572-7775

BPSINC
CUSTOM CONTRACT PACKAGING SERVICES

May 10, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

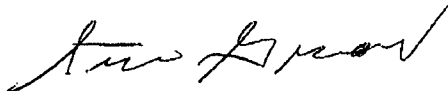
Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. BPS, Inc. has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. BPS, Inc. will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,



Steve Groves, Operations Manager
BPS, Inc.



501 W. Third -- P.O. Drawer 152 -- DeWitt, Arkansas 72042-0152 -- Phone (870) 946-3561 -- Fax: (870) 946-3029

May 24, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance. Students from our district will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

I look forward to continuing to work with PCCUA DeWitt, local industry partners, and local workforce centers in developing trainings to meet the needs of the state of Arkansas. Enhancing career pathways from high school to college training to industry position will be a benefit to students and the local economy. Better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Ellis", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert Ellis
Treasurer

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



May 16, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal – Letter of Commitment

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Domtar's Ashdown Mill is actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this partnership. Finding skilled workers with a strong work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. The mill will give consideration to interviewing and hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tammy Waters', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tammy Waters
Manager, Communications & Govt. Relations



May 12, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Enviro Tech has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Enviro Tech will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Brian Krigbaum, General Manager
Enviro Tech, Inc.



Harcros Chemicals, Inc.

May 10, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Harcros Chemical has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Harcros Chemical will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Stan Herrington, Plant Manager
Harcros Chemical



HELENA INDUSTRIES, INC.

P.O. Box 2338
West Helena, AR 72390
Phone: (870) 572-3434
Fax: (870) 572-3435

May 10, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Helena Industries has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Helena Industries will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Jason Fitts

Jason Fitts, Plant Manager
Helena Industries, Inc.



May 16, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Hoffinger Industries has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Hoffinger Industries will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Hollowell", is written over a horizontal line.

Doug Hollowell, Owner/CEO
Hoffinger Industries, Inc.

315 North Sebastian • West Helena, Arkansas 72390-2417
P.O. Box 2457 • West Helena, Arkansas 72390-0457
870/572-3466 • Fax: 870/572-9711

Operating Divisions: Doughboy Recreational, Lomart Industries, and Arkansas Manufacturing



KBM INDUSTRIAL SERVICES, INC

May 19, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. KBM Industrial Services, Inc has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. KBM, Inc will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

Kelly D Mabry

KBM Industrial Services, Inc
Industry Partner

Menard Mfg. Co. Inc.

PO Box 21
Gillett, AR 72055

www.menardsales.com
1-888-764-3130 Toll Free
1-870-946-2757 Fax
menardproducts@gmail.com

May 24, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas with campuses in DeWitt, Helena and Stuttgart as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Our company has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. We will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,



Bill C. Menard,
Menard Mfg. Company Inc.
Industry Partner



NEW MILLENNIUM
BUILDING SYSTEMS

May 18, 2016

Dear Grantor:

This letter of commitment assures that as an industry/manufacturing partner, we will be actively engaged in the work of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA) Welding Consortium. UAWA is committed to undertaking the task of educating and training today's workforce for a sustainable economy in Arkansas.

The approval of Phase Two of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education Workforce Initiative grant, will allow UAWA to develop well defined and articulated educational/career pathways from secondary institutions to Arkansas' community colleges or universities.

Our roles as an industry/manufacturing partner will be to:

- Remain engaged with our local UAWA
- Provide resources such as instructors, supplies, and provide work experiences for training purposes
- Interview grant program completers who qualify for job openings and where appropriate, hire qualified participants who complete the grant-specified training

We will continue to offer support to the UAWA as they execute the implementation of curriculum, professional development, and equipment with the deliberate outcome resulting in students and potential employees who will have competence in specific industrial skill areas that will increase employment opportunities.

As UAWA continues to grow and more workforce needs will need to be met, we will give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies within our organization. Our involvement in these activities will ensure that trainees will possess workforce skills needed in these high demand occupations.

Sincerely,

J David Santifer
Production Manager



Norac, Inc.
360 Phillips 311 Road
Industrial Park Road
Helena, Arkansas 72342-9033

Customer Service: (888) 786-6722
Customer Service Fax: (870) 572-4650
Phone: (870) 572-9061
Fax: (870) 572-4689

May 10, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Norac has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Norac will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who compete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Sewejkis', written in a cursive style.

Bob Sewejkis, Plant Manager
Norac, Inc.



Letter of Commitment

May 13, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

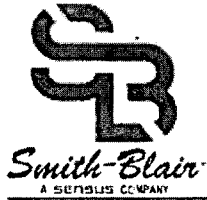
It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Prospect Steel Company has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Prospect Steel Company will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,


Steve Belew, Plant Manager
Prospect Steel Company
Industry Partner



Johnny Bickham
Applications Engineer
P.O. Box 5337, Texarkana, TX 75505
30 Globe Ave, Texarkana, AR 71854

Phone: 870-773-5119
Fax: 800-648-6792
www.smith-blair.com
johnny.bickham@smith-blair.com

May 18, 2016

Dear Grantor:

This letter of commitment assures that as an industry/manufacturing partner, we will be actively engaged in the work of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA) Welding Consortium. UAWA is committed to undertaking the task of educating and training today's workforce for a sustainable economy in Arkansas.

The approval of Phase Two of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education Workforce Initiative grant, will allow UAWA to develop well defined and articulated educational/career pathways from secondary institutions to Arkansas' community colleges or universities.

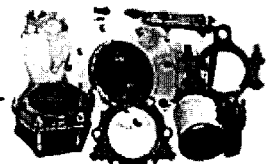
Our roles as an industry/manufacturing partner will be to:

- Remain engaged with our local UAWA
- Provide resources such as instructors, supplies, and provide work experiences for training purposes
- Interview grant program completers who qualify for job openings and where appropriate, hire qualified participants who complete the grant-specified training

We will continue to offer support to the UAWA as they execute the implementation of curriculum, professional development, and equipment with the deliberate outcome resulting in students and potential employees who will have competence in specific industrial skill areas that will increase employment opportunities.

As UAWA continues to grow and more workforce needs will need to be met, we will give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies within our organization. Our involvement in these activities will ensure that trainees will possess workforce skills needed in these high demand occupations.

Sincerely,



Letter of Commitment

May 11, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

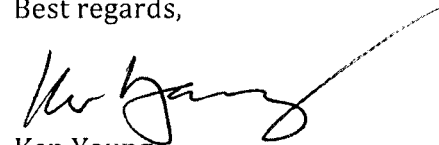
Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Tyson Foods has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Tyson Foods will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,



Ken Young
Complex Human Resources Manager
Tyson Foods, Inc. Nashville Arkansas Complex

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

Dear Grantor:

This letter of commitment assures that we, as industry/manufacturing partners, will be actively engaged in the work of the Southwest Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWACCC) members who are undertaking the task of educating and training a young, up and coming, workforce.

The approval of Phase Two of the Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline grant will allow SWACCC Partners to develop well defined and articulated educational/career pathways from middle/high school to community college to university.

Our roles as industry/manufacturing partners will be to:

- Remain engaged with our local SWACCC partners
- Provide resources such as instructors, supplies, and provide work experiences for training purposes
- Interview grant program completers who qualify for job openings and where appropriate, hire qualified participants who complete the grant-specified training.

We will continue to offer support to the SWACCC partners as they execute the implementation of curriculum, professional development, and equipment with the deliberate outcome resulting in students who will have competence in specific industrial skill areas that will enhance employment opportunities.

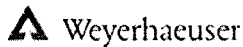
As RAMP: Building the Pipeline continues to grow and graduating high school/post-secondary students begin to enter the workforce, we will certainly give consideration to program completers as we fill vacancies within our organization.

Our involvement in these activities will ensure that graduates will possess workforce skills needed in these high demand occupations.

Sincerely,



GENERAL DYNAMICS



Southwest Arkansas Industry Partners for RAMP: Building the Pipeline

Industry Name/ Site Location:	Signature/Title:	Date:
Ash Grove Cement, Foreman, AR		
Chemtura, El Dorado, AR		
Clean Harbors, El Dorado, AR		
Domtar, Ashdown, AR		
El Dorado Chemical, El Dorado, AR		
General Dynamics, Camden, AR		
Georgia-Pacific, Gurdon, AR		
Husqvarna Outdoor Products, Nashville, AR		
Lion Oil, El Dorado, AR		
Lockheed Martin, Camden, AR		
Tetra Technologies, Inc., El Dorado, AR		
Tyson Foods, Inc., Nashville, AR	<i>Ku Young / Complex HR Manager</i>	<i>5-11-16</i>
Weyerhaeuser, Dierks, AR		

REPORTING

United Initiators, Inc.

334 Phillips 311 Road
Industrial Park Road
Helena, Arkansas 72342-9033

Customer Service: (800) 786-6722
Customer Service Fax: (800) 987-0845
Phone: (870) 572-2935
Fax: (870) 572-1416

May 16, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

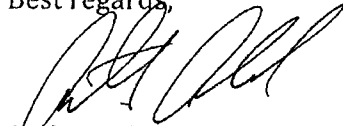
Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions throughout Arkansas and the nation. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. United Initiators will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,



Anthony Arnold
United Initiators Inc.



Doc. ID No. 1428 r1.4

Letter of Commitment

May 11, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

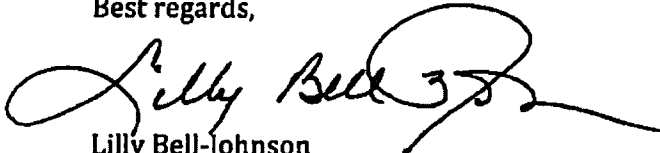
Dear Regional Workforce Grant Committee:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

There is a large need for welders in different manufacturing positions through-out Arkansas and the nation. Weyerhaeuser Company has been actively involved in the planning of this program and looks forward to continuing this. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in the workforce. The proposed credit and non-credit training programs will provide skilled workers that will meet different levels of industry needs.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. Weyerhaeuser Company will give consideration to hiring qualified participants who complete the grant-funded education and training programs.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lilly Bell-Johnson', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Lilly Bell-Johnson
Human Resource Manager
Dierks Lumber / Idabel Lumber



May 16, 2016

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

Dear Members of the Review Team

As Superintendent of the Barton-Lexa School District, I fully support our partnership with Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA). In an effort to create a better prepared graduate, one who will be ready to enter the workforce, the UAWA is using a strengthened pathway designed to integrate career readiness in the training received at the PCCUA Secondary Center. I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations to meet the needs of my district, PCCUA, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students. The Barton-Lexa School District will actively engage in advising, developing curriculum, endorsing on site tours of industry for our student and helping develop positive relationships with industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Tollett".

David Tollett, Superintendent
Barton Lexa School District
9546 Hwy 85 South
Lexa, AR 72355



HELENA WEST HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 24, 2016

John Hoy
Superintendent

Linda English
Assistant Superintendent

Johnny Key
Board of Education

Advisory Board
Andrew Bagley
Chair

Sanetta Davis
Vice Chair

Lynn Boone

Lynn Chadwick
Secretary

Marvin Jarrett

Earnest Simpson

Adrian Yarbrough

305 Valley Drive
Helena-West Helena, AR
72342
Phone
(870) 338-4425
Fax
(870) 338-4434/4411
<http://hwhschools.org>

Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant Review Committee
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Members of the Review Team:

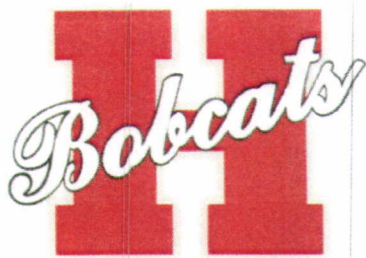
The Helena-West Helena School District supports its partnership with Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA). Students from this district actively participate in Secondary Career Center programs offered by PCCUA and will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection. Knowing that industry partners will eventually employ our students, we understand the importance of this commitment and resolve to actively engage in the UAWA implementation efforts.

Workforce training is important for our students and makes them more prepared to meet the worker demand in our region of Arkansas. We want our students to be able to access the education and training needed for career placement. The Helena-West Helena School District will actively engage in advising, developing curriculum, endorsing on site tours of industry for our students and helping develop positive relationships with industry.

Sincerely,

John Hoy, Superintendent
Helena-West Helena School District
305 Valley Drive
Helena-West Helena, AR 72342

*An Equal Opportunity
Employer*



Hope Public Schools
117 East Second St.
Hope AR 71801
(870) 722-2700
Fax (870) 777-4087

May 26, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Hope Texarkana and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance. Students from our district will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

I look forward to continuing to work with UAHT, local industry partners, and local workforce centers in developing trainings to meet the needs of the state of Arkansas. Enhancing career pathways from high school to college training to industry position will be a benefit to students and the local economy. Better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. H. H.', is written below the text 'Best regards,'.



KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

415 Ohio Street
Helena-West Helena
Arkansas, 72342
Phone: 870.753.9035
Fax: 870.753.9440
www.kippdelta.org

May 16, 2016

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

Dear Members of the Review Team:

KIPP Delta Public Schools supports the submission of a proposal for an Arkansas Workforce Implementation 2016 Grant by Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA). KIPP students attending the Secondary Center at PCCUA will benefit from a strengthened pathway with clear entry and exit points. This effort will also facilitate movement through high school to post-secondary and/or to industry. The proposal focuses on developing a work ready framework for students which will improve the current and future workforce. These efforts will increase our graduates' chances for placement in a good job. This will have a positive impact on both local and regional economic development.

Coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement. The KIPP Delta Public Schools administration and faculty will actively engage in advising, developing curriculum, endorsing on site tours of industry for our student and helping develop positive relationships with industry.

Sincerely,

Scott Shirey
Executive Director
KIPP Delta Public Schools
415 Ohio Street
Helena-West Helena, AR 72342

**KIPP DELTA
COMMUNITIES**

HELENA-WEST
HELENA

BLYTHEVILLE

MARVELL - ELAINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

P.O. BOX 1870
MARVELL, ARKANSAS 72366
870-829-2101

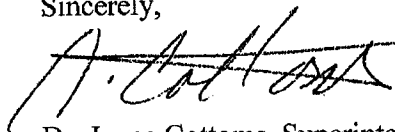
May 16, 2016

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

Dear Members of the Review Team

On behalf of the Marvel-Elaine School District, I support Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA). Many of the students from this school district participate in Secondary Center activities. We support the Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant because we know funds from this grant will be used to develop a stronger work ready high school and college graduate. There are many benefits from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection. I look forward to offering my insights and recommendations to meet the needs of my district, PCCUA, and the industry partners who will eventually employ our students. The Marvel-Elaine School District will actively engage in advising, developing curriculum, endorsing on site tours of industry for our student and helping develop positive relationships with industry.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joyce Cottoms, Superintendent
203 North Pine Street
Marvell, AR 72366

Stuttgart School District

2501 South Main Street
Stuttgart, Arkansas 72160
Phone: 870-673-8701
Fax: 870-673-7337

May 12, 2016

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

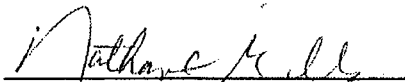
Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

Stuttgart Public School District supports the submission of a proposal for an Arkansas Workforce Implementation 2016 Grant through the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance (UAWA), a consortium to which Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas (PCCUA) belongs. Other UAWA members include the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton-lead college, the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, the University of Arkansas Community College at Cossatot, and the University of Arkansas Community College at Hope. Students from our district will greatly benefit from a strengthened pathway with clear entry and exit points. This effort will also facilitate movement through high school to post-secondary and/or to industry. The proposal focuses on developing a work ready framework for students which will be beneficial for the current and future workforce.

Stuttgart Public School looks forward to continuing to work with PCCUA and the UAWA, local industry partners, and local workforce centers in developing trainings to meet the needs of the state of Arkansas. A better work ready high school graduate makes it more likely that the student will find a good job or enter into a technical training program at PCCUA. These efforts will increase his or her chances for placement in a good job. This benefits for both local and regional economic development are significant.

Sincerely,



Nathan Gills
Superintendent, Stuttgart Public School District



3512 Grand Avenue
Texarkana, Arkansas 71854
www.tasd7.net

Administration Building
(870) 772-3371
Fax: (870) 773-2602

**Little Business &
Technology Center**
(870) 772-3371
Fax: (870) 772-2047

ABC Program
(870) 773-0995
Fax: (870) 774-4171

College Hill Elementary
(870) 774-9111
Fax: (870) 773-0643

Fairview Elementary
(870) 774-9241
Fax: (870) 774-0236

Kilpatrick Elementary
(870) 774-9691
Fax: (870) 772-4386

Trice Elementary
(870) 772-8431
Fax: (870) 773-1492

Union Elementary
(870) 772-7341
Fax: (870) 772-8017

College Hill Middle School
(870) 772-0281
Fax: (870) 773-0068

North Heights Junior High
(870) 773-1091
Fax: (870) 772-2722

Arkansas High School
(870) 774-7641
Fax: (870) 773-8408

Washington 4-A Academy
(870) 772-4792
Fax: (870) 774-2185

**Texarkana Area
Vocational Center**
(870) 772-3662
Fax: (870) 772-3267

Adult Education
(870) 774-4414
Fax: (870) 772-7952

Athletic Department
(870) 774-8532
Fax: (870) 774-4504

**Food Service
Maintenance
Transportation**
(870) 772-1401
Fax: (870) 772-6396

**W.T. Daniels
Special Education
Gifted and Talented**
(870) 772-9815
Fax: (870) 772-1867
(870) 774-2534
Fax: (870) 774-8525

May 25, 2016

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

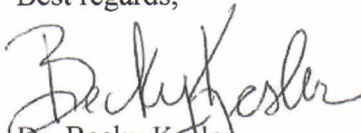
Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the University of Arkansas Hope Texarkana and the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance. Students from our district will greatly benefit from a strengthened high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

I look forward to continuing to work with UAHT, local industry partners, and local workforce centers in developing trainings to meet the needs of the state of Arkansas. Enhancing career pathways from high school to college training to industry position will be a benefit to students and the local economy. Better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies and result in more students accessing the education that will provide the most relevant skills and proper career placement.

Best regards,


Dr. Becky Kesler
TASD Superintendent

Workforce Investment Board *of Eastern Arkansas*

P.O. Box 1388
West Memphis, AR 72303

Telephone: 870.733.0601
Fax: 870.735.0618
www.thewib.org

May 16, 2016

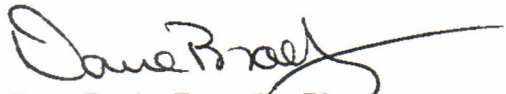
Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant
Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Members of the review Committee:

Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas Workforce (UAWA) are submitting a proposal for a Workforce Initiative Act Implementation Grant. The Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas fully supports this proposal and believes funding for these efforts will have a significant impact on industry in Eastern Arkansas. The demand for welding, which is the major focus of the proposal, is very high. Trained welders find high paying jobs and there is a wide variety of types of welding job opportunities. The Workforce Investment Area has been engaged in the industry efforts made by PCCUA through this initiative. We will remain engaged at the implementation level.

The Workforce Investment Board has much to offer about industry needs and workplace readiness and wants to participate as a partner in the Alliance activities.

Sincerely,



Dave Brady, Executive Director
Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas

SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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

May 11, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal

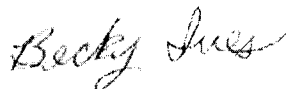
Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

It is my pleasure to write a letter on behalf of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board in support of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program in welding. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened elementary to high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board and the Workforce Development Centers of Southwest Arkansas will continue to assist in outreach, intake, screening, individual case management, linkages with the colleges for Individual Education Plans (IEPs), career coaching activities, etc. These activities, coupled with strong training from the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance's welding program and placement strategies, will ensure that students find jobs for which they are both suited and adequately prepared.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance.

Sincerely,



Becky Ives, Chairman
Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board

West Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board
Gary Sams, Chairperson

May 17, 2016

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

Re: University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance Planning Proposal


Dear Arkansas Department of Higher Education:

It is my pleasure to write a letter on behalf of the West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board in support of the University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance as they implement an industry-driven training program in welding. Communities and industries will greatly benefit from a strengthened elementary to high school to post-secondary to industry connection in educating current and future workforce pools.

The vision of the One-Stop Centers under WIOA is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. The West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board looks forward to continue to offer their insights and recommendations while working with local industry, the UA Alliance colleges, and public schools in the development of short-term career and technical training as well as college degree programs in welding. Finding skilled workers with a good work ethic is a challenge in industry today. The proposed University of Arkansas Workforce Alliance program will provide skilled workers who possess different levels of education and training.

This better coordination of workforce training needs, worker demand, and program referral will certainly create economic efficiencies. This coordination will result in more individuals accessing the education that provides the most relevant skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages.

Sincerely,



Gary Sams, Chair
West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board