



“Elevate” Campaign Works to Change the Perception of Advanced Manufacturing in Iowa

Common Goal Unites Industry, Education and Government to Make a Lasting Impact

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – The Iowa-Advanced Manufacturing (I-AM) Consortium and Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) jointly announce the launch of a new campaign to promote careers and educational pathways in advanced manufacturing. The “Elevate Advanced Manufacturing” campaign will begin by addressing the current public perception of manufacturing and educating Iowans on the opportunities that exist within this industry.

By 2018, there will be a shortage of 6,672 skilled workers in the advanced manufacturing sector*. These available positions offer attractive pay and benefits packages. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis in 2011, the average manufacturing worker made \$77,060 annually, including pay and benefits, while the average worker in other industries earned \$60,168.

“When you ask the average Iowan about advanced manufacturing, they think of an outdated image – a dirty, unsafe work environment,” says Mike Ralston, President of ABI. “That simply is not the case. Iowa has strong, innovative companies that make cutting-edge products and are well-regarded as leaders in their industry,” says Ralston.

A website, www.elevateiowa.com, has been launched to support this campaign with the use of video testimonials, self-assessment career guides, job search tools and training information.

“Iowa’s 15 community colleges offer a broad range of training opportunities within advanced manufacturing,” says Stephanie Ferraro, Project Manager of the I-AM Consortium. “With funding from the U. S. Department of Labor, the I-AM Consortium is building capacity in programs across the state. Colleges are redesigning and developing industry-influenced curriculum, embedding industry credentials into educational pathways and purchasing state-of-the-art equipment to replicate the technology-rich work environment found in Iowa’s manufacturing sector. Now is the ideal time for those considering careers in manufacturing to begin training at their local community college.”

Manufacturing contributes the largest share of Iowa’s gross domestic product (GDP) at an annual level of \$27.6 billion, more than 18 percent of the state’s economy. As of March 2012, Iowa’s manufacturing firms supplied 215,600 jobs to Iowans, representing 14% of the state’s total employment – and that number is growing.

In order to make a lasting impact on the state of Iowa's economy, industry, government and education have combined efforts. Key players include ABI, the I-AM Consortium, a collaboration of all 15 Iowa Community Colleges, and various programs throughout the State of Iowa including the Governor's STEM initiative, Iowa Workforce Development's online Job Bank and more. Each party has a common goal: to elevate the perception of advanced manufacturing and to arm Iowans with the skills they need to engage in Iowa's workforce.

Elevate Advanced Manufacturing's message and efforts are in action throughout the state, including:

- **The Elevate campaign website** will feature video testimonials, a self-assessment for potential career pathways, career search tools (powered by Iowa Workforce Development), information on training opportunities (at Iowa's 15 community colleges), and ways for industry to get involved. Visit: www.elevateiowa.com
- **Educational opportunities and curriculum integration** with K-12 schools involving advanced manufacturing tours, speakers and demonstrations.
- **Statewide media campaign** using testimonials from skilled employees and manufacturers in Iowa.
- **Statewide events** including exhibits at the Iowa State Fair with the American Welding Society booth, Iowa Speedway (Sept.7-8), Girls Scouts of Iowa Annual Conference and more.



I-AM CONTACT:
Susan Metheny
(515) 964-6847
semetheny@dmacc.edu

LOCAL CONTACT:
Contact Name: Kristin Kollbaum
School: Northwest Iowa Community College
Phone: 712-324-5061
Email: kkollbaum@nwicc.edu



ABI CONTACT:
Michele Farrell
(515) 419-8357
mfarrell@measuredintentions.com

The Iowa Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (I-AM) is an Iowa community college initiative to elevate advanced manufacturing, funded through a \$13 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program.

The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) has been the voice of Iowa business since 1903, and its mission is to collectively provide value to business and industry on issues impacting Iowa employers. ABI is currently comprised of over 1,400 Iowa businesses of all types and sizes employing more than 300,000 Iowans.

*State and Regional Employment Analyses

###