

PRESS RELEASE



From:
The Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board
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www.explore-manufacturing.org

ICR-IOWA Region – The Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board has released an online portal (www.explore-manufacturing.org) designed to be a resource for educators and students, to create awareness about the manufacturing industry and the careers within it.

Technological advances and industry changes have transformed manufacturing work and created a demand for more skilled workers. Middle-skill jobs currently represent about 56 percent of Iowa’s workforce and typically require education and training beyond high school, but less than a bachelor’s degree. They can be found in all of the state’s industries and offer relatively high pay. Recent studies have shown that two-year degree holders, especially in high-demand occupations, can earn salaries that surpass those of four-year college graduates.

Seventeen local businesses, along with Kirkwood Community College, sponsored the project to engage the potential workforce and help them explore the many manufacturing careers. Last year, the Architecture, Construction and Engineering Sector Board released their portal, www.explore-ace.org to highlight career exploration within their industry. Both portals use the O*NET Interest Profiler to help students identify their personality traits and interests and match them to manufacturing careers for which they have an aptitude. It has already been identified by local educators as a tool to assist students in learning about the industry by featuring videos of each business, local statistics on job outlook and salary ranges.

“The website is impressive, easy to navigate and user friendly,” said Jaci Hilmer, a North Linn High School professional school counselor. “Personally, I can see myself using it with my students when we do our career planning. It is a fast way to direct them to different careers.”

About the Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board: The Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board is one of six boards in the ICR Region where industry and educational leaders work together to promote the area’s most in-demand industries. Their mission is to work together to create an awareness of the careers within the industry and increase the potential future workforce pipeline. For more information about the sector boards, go to www.icriowa.org/companies/workforce.

About Kirkwood Community College: With the most credit programs of any community college in Iowa, Kirkwood Community College boasts nearly 20,000 annual college-credit students, while maintaining one of the lowest tuitions in the state. All students are eligible for federal financial aid and the college offers more than \$3 million in scholarships each year to students from all walks of life. Kirkwood is a convenient, innovative and visionary educational leader that strives to remain affordable and accessible.

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