

# EAMA Regional Sector Partnership (RSP) Meeting

April 26, 2022

## Minutes

A) **Welcome - Committee Co-Chairs** - The Co-Chairs (*Andrew Bond (EB), Chris Jewell (C&J), & Ed Martins Web Ind.*) welcomed participants.

- **SECTOR PARTNERSHIP: *Why We Have Merged into One Strategic Body*** - EAMA has brought the Eastern CT Regional Sector Partnership for Manufacturing (2021) under their auspices to continue building on Eastern CT's well-established manufacturing initiatives such as the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI), and our Youth MPI w/ High Schools, etc. Coalescing under one EAMA umbrella will provide a unity of purpose and leverage the strengths of both our existing programming, while adding a collective forum for discussing new strategies for issues raised by the region's manufacturing industry (*i.e., the RSP member companies under EAMA*).
- **Importance of Manufacturers Speaking with One Voice** - Ray Coombs provided a brief overview of EAMA's history & stressed the important role partnerships have played & will continue to play going forward. He asked EWIB Special Advisor, John Beauregard to describe the role and responsibilities of our support partners.

Mr. Beauregard described how our support partners (*Colleges, Economic Development, etc.*) are at these RSP meetings to monitor and listen to the challenges & priorities discussed by the manufacturing employers. In turn, they participate in our RSP's public-private partnership committees to transform these challenges into opportunities and solutions for the region via programming. This action-oriented group, seeking to create solutions for Eastern CT's manufacturers was the basis for the region's Manufacturing Pipeline ability to leverage \$18M in Federal, State, and private investments to benefit the region's manufacturing workforce that's supporting employer needs.

B) **Status Report: Preparing Our Adult Talent: *The MPI*** -

- **Performance To-Date** - Mark Hill shared an overview of MPI's accomplishments noting over 2,300 job placements to-date.
- **Student Experience in Classes at TRCC MAC & QVCC Mfg. Centers** - Bret Jacobson & Steve LaPointe informed the group on the history of the Three Rivers Community College Manufacturing Apprenticeship Center (*TRCC MAC*) and Quinebaug Valley Community College Advance Manufacturing Technology Center (*QVCCAMTC*), programs offered, & growth opportunities. An open invitation was extended for companies to tour the facilities and to discuss ways they can work with employers to meet their needs.

C) **Status Report: Growing Our High School Talent: *YMPI*** -

- **YMPI Curriculum Outline** - John Murphy provided an overview of the Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (*YMPI*) program, noting similarities to the adult MPI program. He informed the group of opportunities for regional employers to meet the YMPI students (*Visit High School Classes, Evaluation Day at the MAC, Career Expos, Signing Days*), & informed the employers that there are opportunities to provide students tours of their facilities as well.

D) **Re-Investing in Your Workforce** - Carol LaBelle informed the group there are programs available to improve the skillset of their current workers such as Incumbent Worker Training, or new hires through On-the-Job Training reimbursement. She noted that employers should contact the region's Business Services Team of hiring opportunities to access graduates of the MPI and YMPI programs, as well as funding and reimbursement opportunities.

Eastern CT Business Services Team:

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- E) **Business-to-Business Connections** - Charles Daniels shared that the group encourages CT businesses to do business together with a goal to support and promote CT manufacturers to retain as much business in-state as possible. He noted the group is partnering to build one directory that contains a list of CT manufacturers and their competencies.
- F) **Statewide Expansion via “CareerConneCT”** - Mark Hill reported that the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) has endorsed the EAMA RSP model. He also added that that Eastern CT’s MPI model is being expanded statewide via *CareerConneCT*, a new state program for jobseekers.

A question was raised as to whether the RSP would cover business issues outside of workforce development. Mr. Hill responded yes, that this RSP is the employer’s forum, and that employers determine the priorities, and the support partners role is to respond accordingly.

In closing, Chris Jewell encouraged employer involvement and reiterated that they are at the center of EAMA’s RSP.

A question was asked on how our manufacturing group differs from other statewide “Next Gen” RSP efforts being launched by the State. Mr. Jewell responded that the EAMA RSP is exactly aligned with the statewide RSP design. The only difference being that we adopted the employer led RSP design several years ago and have leveraged it to develop nationally recognized programming. So, rather than confuse people into thinking we were scrapping prior efforts by adopting the “Next Gen” moniker, we simply coalesced all regional and State efforts under the EAMA umbrella to provide efficiency and less duplication for our volunteer private sector members.

Questions, comments, and feedback can be submitted to Sheila Taurianen at: [taurianens@ewib.org](mailto:taurianens@ewib.org).