



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EASTERN CT SECOND CHANCE EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP CONNECTS JUSTICE-AFFECTED WORKERS TO MANUFACTURING CAREERS

EWIB, CT NAACP & EAMA RSP marry Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative & One Million Jobs Campaign to expand equitable career opportunities & grow manufacturing talent pool

FRANKLIN, CT, JULY 26, 2024 – The Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB), CT NAACP State Conference, and Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance Regional Sector Partnership (EAMA RSP) announce a partnership to prepare formerly incarcerated individuals and others whose involvement with the criminal justice system puts them at a disadvantage in the labor market for manufacturing jobs on pathways to family-sustaining careers. The partnership leverages EWIB’s national-award-winning *Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative*, the CT NAACP *One Million Jobs Campaign*, and the collective needs of EAMA RSP employer members to increase equitable opportunity for justice-affected workers.

Under the partnership, the CT NAACP has expanded its *One Million Jobs Campaign (OMJC)* to Eastern CT with support from a State of CT Social Equity Council Reentry/Reintegration Program grant award administered by the Community Foundation of Eastern CT. The OMJC, which strengthens equity and the economic status of justice-affected individuals, will recruit participants, provide job readiness services, and prepare people to enroll in the *Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI)* or other workforce programs. “The CT NAACP is excited to bring the *One Million Jobs Campaign* to the Eastern part of the state,” said CT NAACP State Conference President Scot X. Esdaile. “We look forward to working with individuals in New London, Norwich, Groton, and Windham/Willimantic, and we are really excited about providing meaningful job opportunities to people looking for a second chance.”

The MPI has earned national recognition for preparing 4,000 people, most with no prior manufacturing experience, for employment in manufacturing after just 5 to 10 weeks of industry-designed training. MPI trainees receive support services to address barriers to participation, as well as stipends and job placement services. “Connecting manufacturers, healthcare employers, and other employers who need trained workers with a population that faces structural barriers to full employment is a win-win,” said EWIB President/CEO Michael Nogelo. “Leveraging the strengths of each partner creates a sustainable partnership that serves as a model for future efforts to pull underrepresented populations into our workforce.”

EAMA RSP, an industry-driven partnership with more than 40 employer members, will compile information on its members’ hiring needs, help connect participants and employers, and support its members to ensure success for participating workers and companies. “Our members have identified

individuals impacted by the criminal justice system as an important population facing employment barriers and an underutilized source of talent with significant potential to help meet their workforce needs,” said EAMA RSP Director Tony Benoit. “EAMA RSP members see this collaboration with the CT NAACP as a clear opportunity to strengthen their companies while lifting up their communities.”

Eastern CT manufacturers, fueled by the growth of the Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, expect to hire thousands of workers each year for the next decade or more. “Many manufacturing companies in Eastern CT are hungry for workers who want to learn and grow and achieve meaningful, family-sustaining careers as welders, machinists, or other trades workers,” said Chris Jewell, Chair of EAMA RSP and President of Collins & Jewell Company in Bozrah. “Companies that give these workers a second chance can expect to gain productive and loyal employees who will help their businesses thrive.”

Eastern CT residents who have been directly impacted by the criminal justice system or have a blemish on their record and who want to advance their careers in manufacturing, healthcare, or other fields can apply at millionjobscampaign.com or by calling OMJC State Program Manager Bruce Carter at 888-693-4689.

About the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB)

EWIB is a non-profit organization that has served Eastern Connecticut since 1985. EWIB coordinates a regional workforce development system that promotes economic vitality and equitable opportunity by preparing workers for in-demand, quality jobs on career pathways. EWIB’s network of partners implement programs and initiatives including three American Job Center-East locations, industry-driven manufacturing and healthcare workforce pipelines, workforce preparation programs for youth, and services for employers. For more information, visit www.ewib.org.

About the CT NAACP State Conference

The mission of the National NAACP is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. The CT NAACP State Conference carries out that mission on a statewide scale by bolstering Black businesses, engaging in advocacy, and providing other essential services in Black and brown communities. For more information on the CT NAACP, visit www.ctnaacp.org and for more information on the *One Million Jobs Campaign*, visit millionjobscampaign.com.

About the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance Regional Sector Partnership (EAMA RSP)

The EAMA RSP is Eastern Connecticut’s industry-driven manufacturing regional sector partnership. EAMA RSP exists to advance the strategic priorities of regional manufacturers by providing a forum for manufacturers to articulate their collective needs for workforce education and training directly to regional and statewide support partners and by creating a platform for its member companies to speak with one voice to advance the region’s manufacturing agenda. For more information, visit www.ewib.org/EAMA-RSP .

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