

NAM Applauds Advanced Manufacturing Skills Framework Announced by Dept. of Labor

06-105

CONTACTS:

Laura Brown Narvaiz (202) 637-3104; Phyllis Eisen (202) 637-3011

"Provides Snapshot of the 21st Century Manufacturing Technical Worker," Engler Says

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 22, 2006 -- The National Association of Manufacturers applauded and pledged to promote the new comprehensive model framework of cross-cutting skills essential for a career in advanced manufacturing that was announced today by the U.S. Department of Labor.

"The NAM is proud to have played a key role in developing this ground-breaking framework of core competencies critical for today's high performance manufacturing worker," said NAM President John Engler. "The framework provides a long overdue snapshot of what the 21st century manufacturing technical worker looks like. We will take a leadership role to promote this new model of industry-wide skill requirements with our member companies, affiliated associations and educators and work with industry partners to keep it current as the skill requirements of manufacturers change."

Engler emphasized that, "This new framework does not replace sector-specific manufacturing association skills standards, but rather provides a foundation of core skills needed across-the-board to be a high performance worker in today's advanced manufacturing, ranging from personal effectiveness competencies such as integrity and motivation to technical competencies such as working with spreadsheets, interpreting Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and navigating databases. It will be especially helpful to small manufacturers who don't have huge human resource departments to track the rapidly-changing skill requirements of advanced manufacturing that are necessary to compete in today's global marketplace," he said.

"Our members tell us again and again about the difficulty of finding skilled technical workers -- from entry level to sophisticated front line -- a problem that will only intensify as the baby boomers retire with no skilled employees in the pipeline to replace them. If we are to avoid a human capital crisis in advanced manufacturing, we need to step up to the plate and actively promote these new core competencies to employers and educators," Engler said.

"We are in the race of our lives for talent, and the country with the best work force is going to be the winner," added Phyllis Eisen, vice president of The Manufacturing Institute (the research and education arm of the NAM) and its Center for Workforce Success, which helped develop the core competency framework on behalf of the NAM. "The U.S. education system is not aligned with most of the business community and is not teaching the kind of skills that are needed for advanced manufacturing to stay competitive. We will work hard to get this skills framework into every high school, community and technical college so that curricula can better reflect the skill sets needed for today's advanced manufacturing employee," Eisen said.

"This new skills framework will empower individuals, employers and educators with essential guidelines to get a great job, hire a high performance worker or teach what's necessary for a

career in advanced manufacturing," she said.

The National Association of Manufacturers is the nation's largest industrial trade association. The Manufacturing Institute is the research and education arm of the NAM. Visit www.nam.org for more information about the manufacturing economy.

Access the DOL's news release at:

http://www.doleta.gov/whatsnew/new_releases/2006-05-22.cfm