



## **North Carolina Manufacturing Institute's educational programs and partnerships provide opportunities for career seekers within the manufacturing industry**

Home to over 300 manufacturing companies, Iredell County is abundant with opportunities within the manufacturing industry. In fact, manufacturing is Iredell County's largest sector employing over 14,000 people. To meet the demand of this growing industry, Iredell County has partnered with the North Carolina Manufacturing Institute (NCMI), a collaboration between industry partners and community organizations, with the goal of closing the manufacturing skills gap.

North Carolina Manufacturing Institute's (NCMI) Certified Production Technician (CPT) program is an eight-week program administered by Mitchell Community College (MCC) in Iredell County, providing job seekers with the free training to secure an entry level job in manufacturing. The program first began in Rowan County and Cabarrus Counties in 2015 and expanded in Iredell in 2016. Upon graduation, participants receive a Silver Career Readiness Certification and a Certified Production Technician Certification, as well as a solid foundation to begin their career in the manufacturing industry. Graduates can also transfer credits to the Mitchell Community College, providing them with the option to continue their education or pursue a degree in engineering.

The CPT program is a mix of lecture and hands-on training. Throughout the course of the program, participants visit various labs including welding, electrical, Advanced Integrated Manufacturing Systems (AIMS), proving them with broad exposure to technical components of manufacturing. Instructors are skilled professionals from the manufacturing industry, bringing in their real-world experience and practical knowledge. Students are exposed to a variety of manufacturing companies including automobile, aerospace and defense, biotechnology, advanced materials, plastics and chemicals, and food manufacturing.

NCMI has partnered with 46 employers across Rowan, Iredell, and Cabarrus counties and matches program participants with employment opportunities upon completion of the CPT program. Of the 46 partners, 17 are in Iredell County, 16 in Rowan County, and 13 in Cabarrus County.

One of NCMI's 46 partners, Cardinal FG, has benefited greatly from their partnership with NCMI. Cardinal FG, located in Mooresville, is part of Cardinal Glass industries and works 24/7 to produce 700 tons of float glass per day. At Cardinal FG, employees work with various types of machines including a furnace that burns at over 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit, forklifts and RICO equipment. What impresses Cardinal FG most about NCMI's CPT program is their education on the history of manufacturing, as well as the safety measures and educating students on the expectations of the industry. The skillset taught during the CPT program is significant and allows Cardinal FG to build on those skills and further train their employees within the glass industry. Since partnering with NCMI,



Cardinal FG has hired 15 NCMI graduates. Cardinal FG prides itself on their company culture and offers several avenues for employees to advance and further their career at Cardinal FG.

Denso Manufacturing, another of NCMI's 46 partners, is the world's second largest automobile supplier, shipping about 38 million motors per year worldwide. Denso's Statesville location serves as the U.S. headquarters and currently employs over 400 full-time employees. Denso's partnership with NCMI has transitioned several talented and trained students to full-time roles at Denso. Beyond hiring NCMI graduates, Denso is active within NCMI's CPT program by giving presentations to students and participating in job fairs. Employees at Denso work with various types of machines including CNC machines, mechatronics, and programmable logic controllers (PLCs), and NCMI provides the ideal candidates due to their education and training.

NCMI's employer partnerships offer unequalled resources for job seekers to not only begin their career in the manufacturing industry, but to further their career within these companies. Iredell County is one of North Carolina's largest hubs for the manufacturing industry, with their manufacturing educational programs and opportunities, such as NCMI's CPT program, continuing to provide skilled technicians to meet the industry's increasing demand.

To learn more about the North Carolina Manufacturing Institute and the Certified Production Technician program, please visit <https://mitchellcc.edu/ncmi/>.