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NEW HAMPSHIRE MANUFACTURERS GO BACK TO SCHOOL
NH MEP and New Hampshire Community Technical College – Claremont Partner to Offer Lean Enterprise Certificate Program, Additional Courses Added in October

CLAREMONT, NH – The New Hampshire Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NH MEP) and New Hampshire Community Technical College (NHCTC) – Claremont are addressing the need to educate New Hampshire manufacturers on the importance of incorporating Lean principles to eliminate waste and improve any processes in the workplace.

The Lean Enterprise Certificate Program is a comprehensive nine-credit educational program that is designed to simulate shop floor and office work environments. The 21 eight-hour courses incorporate hands-on experience to demonstrate the benefits of becoming a Lean enterprise. The program also combines classroom instruction, workshop simulations and case studies in order to provide participants with the concepts, tools and methodologies used in a Lean workplace.

By collaborating with NHCTC, several different companies are able to participate in this program in one location. At the most recent session, four companies joined the program, and were not only able to share in the cost, but had the benefit of interacting with people from other businesses, as well as learn from their individual experiences. In addition, each student from the participating companies receives college credit from NHCTC.

The program was first introduced in 2004 to the Markem Corporation in Keene. Eighteen employees from the product identification solutions company participated in the initial program.

“Offering this program to our employees has given them a head start, as we try to develop a group of experts in continuous improvement at our company. The students are seen as leaders in the company and the certificate gives them extra confidence,” said Dan

Belluscio, the Continuous Improvement manager at Markem. “We continue to be pleased and will continue working with NH MEP.”

Students have made suggestions on how to even improve the course for the future. Due to the success of the program, additional courses are being added to the curriculum this year.

“As a result of the feedback from students, the NH MEP has done some restructuring of the training and continues to monitor and make changes based on what they learn as they go along,” said Jim Britton, director of Continuing Education at NHCTC. “As a college, we are also connected with grant dollars and can assist some of these manufacturers in obtaining funding for some of the training. There are plans in the future for NH MEP and the NHCTC to partner for the U.S. Department of Labor Training Grant. Working together and partnering to assist with grants makes the program extra attractive.”

“The learning by doing approach we use in the delivery of this program will not only help students acquire new transferable skills that enhance their professional growth, but will enable them to make an impact on the bottom line of their organizations” said Zenagui Brahim, NH MEP Director of Operations. “The success of the NH MEP and NHCTC partnership has also paved the way for launching the Black Belt Six Sigma Program, which begins in October 2007.”

The NH MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP system is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information, please visit www.nhmep.org, or phone 1-800-MEP-4MFG.

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