



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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LIFT and Conexus Indiana to Provide Students with Work and Learn Opportunities in Lightweight Manufacturing

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana - Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow (LIFT) and Conexus Indiana today announced the *Work & Learn in Indiana: Career Exploration in Lightweight Metals Manufacturing* program to provide students with real-world experience and the opportunity to explore careers at local manufacturing companies.

“Demand for skilled workers in lightweighting-related jobs is skyrocketing, with companies in Indiana posting over 50,000 related jobs in 2015 alone,” said Larry Brown, executive director, LIFT. “The rapidly aging advanced manufacturing workforce, paired with increasing employer demand, requires a more concerted effort in developing the talent pipeline, and this program will help do that.”

The program builds on Conexus Indiana’s pioneering Conexus Interns model, which, with LIFT support, will expand throughout the state to include an additional 100 students. The additional students, designated as LIFT interns, will participate in a six-week paid internship with manufacturers across Indiana starting in June 2016. The interns will gain on-the-job training with 38 Indiana companies specializing in automotive, aerospace and lightweight metal applications.

“LIFT interns in Indiana will have the opportunity to explore lightweight manufacturing careers and develop ‘people and workplace’ skills in addition to manufacturing technical skills, all while cultivating foundational relationships with manufacturers throughout the state,” said Emily DeRocco, education and workforce director, LIFT. “Additionally, manufacturers will have an extended, first-hand look at the state’s emerging pool of talent.”

Conexus Indiana will lead the efforts to provide work-and-learn opportunities in partnership with LIFT. The project will be implemented in close coordination with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana State Workforce Innovation Council as they launch a concurrent effort to establish a statewide framework for innovative work-and-learn models in the state.

“In partnering with LIFT, we will help dispel myths about what is possible through work-and-learn models, while encouraging young Hoosiers to consider long-term, rewarding

careers in manufacturing,” said Claudia Cummings, Vice President of Workforce and Education, Conexus Indiana.

The core team will partner with education leaders from Purdue University, Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University and Indiana high schools.

The 38 participating companies include: Allison Transmission; BAE; Batesville Products; Batesville Tool & Die; Blasdel Enterprises; Bulk Truck & Transport Service, Inc.; Busche; CalTherm; Dana Holding Corporation; Elgin Fastener Group; GKN Sinter Metals; Greenville Technology, Inc.; Hayes International; Hitachi Powdered Metals; Hoosier Pattern, Inc.; IMMI; Jasper Engine & Transmission; Kessington, LLC; Koch Enterprises; Littler Diecast Corporation; Magna Powertrain; Marion Manufacturing; MSP Aviation; Mursix Corporation; Ottenweller Company; Precise Mold & Plate; Raybestos; Riverside MFG, LLC; Rolls-Royce; Subaru of Indiana Automotive; STARK Industries/JWS Machine; Super ATV LLC; Tech Castings LLC; Tru-Flex LLC; TS Tech Indiana, LLC; Ultra Electronics; USSI; Valeo; and Wabash National.

For information about the *Work & Learn in Indiana: Career Exploration in Lightweight Metals Manufacturing* program, visit www.lift.technology or contact LIFT Education & Workforce Director Emily DeRocco at ederocco@lift.technology.

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ABOUT LIFT

Lightweight Innovations For Tomorrow (LIFT) is a public-private partnership that will develop and deploy advanced lightweight materials manufacturing technologies and programs to prepare the workforce. The LIFT region includes 5 states: Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee.

LIFT is operated by the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII) and was selected through a competitive process led by the U.S. Department of Defense under the Lightweight and Modern Metals Manufacturing Innovation (LM3I) solicitation issued by the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research. LIFT is one of the founding institutes in the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, a federal initiative to create regional hubs to accelerate the development and adoption of cutting-edge manufacturing technologies.

ABOUT CONEXUS INDIANA

Conexus Indiana is an initiative to capitalize on emerging opportunities in advanced manufacturing and logistics, aligning resources and expertise to make Indiana a leader in advanced manufacturing. Conexus Indiana is the catalyst to position Indiana as the recognized global leader in advanced manufacturing and logistics. We are building industry partners and exploring new market opportunities, preparing Hoosiers to take advantage of manufacturing and logistics careers, and promoting a better understanding of the importance of these sectors to our economic future.

Conexus Indiana is focused on issues like workforce development, exploring new market opportunities and building research and supplier networks to help Indiana manufacturing and logistics firms succeed.

Work-and-learn in Indiana: Career Exploration in Lightweight Metals Manufacturing

An Education & Workforce Development Initiative for
LIFT ... Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow



THE PROBLEM

A leaky talent pipeline represents a major obstacle for manufacturers in Indiana and nationwide. With misconceptions about manufacturing jobs, students are often unaware of the exciting career opportunities in manufacturing – particularly lightweight metals manufacturing. As a consequence, few students understand the new age of advanced manufacturing filled with high-tech, innovative, and creative technologies offering stable, high-paying jobs.

Between 2014 and 2015, demand for workers in occupations related to lightweight metals manufacturing nearly doubled, with companies in Indiana posting over 50,000 related jobs in 2015. The rapidly aging workforce in many of these in-demand manufacturing occupations exacerbates the supply-demand gap. The growing demand from employers requires a more concerted effort toward filling the pipeline.

To combat this, work-and-learn strategies such as internships, co-ops, apprenticeships, and others have been a staple in Indiana in the past. However, manufacturing work-and-learn strategies targeted toward the emerging Hoosier workforce have had limited success and sustainability due to myths about age restrictions, liabilities, and impacts on productivity. With these myths prevalently held by employers and educators in Indiana, students were engaged in work-and-learn experiences that only superficially exposed them to manufacturing careers such as plant tours, job shadowing, or other short-term work experiences.

THE SOLUTION

Conexus Indiana, an initiative to capitalize on emerging opportunities in advanced manufacturing and logistics, developed *Conexus Interns*, a cutting-edge model in which select students compete for internships in manufacturing companies throughout the state. Launched in 2015, *Conexus Interns* dispels myths about what is possible through work-and-learn models and encourages young Hoosiers to consider long-term careers in manufacturing. These interns gain real-world experience and the opportunity to explore careers with manufacturing companies. In addition, the internships provide manufacturers with an extended look at an emerging pool of talent.

PROJECT LEAD

CONEXUS
INDIANA

EXPECTED OUTCOMES



100 students participate in internships with lightweight manufacturers in 2016 and 2017 as LIFT Interns



300+ students exposed to lightweight metal technologies and career opportunities in lightweight manufacturing during the *Conexus Interns* Summit

ALIGNMENT TO LIFT STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



Expanding work-and-learn opportunities for students



Attracting more young individuals to manufacturing careers



Offering on-the-job training solutions for industry partners

SCHEDULE TO INITIATE

June 2016

Student interns
begin work

Conexus Interns
Summit

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In the *Conexus Interns* model, high school students participate in a six week paid internship with manufacturers across Indiana. Conducted over the summer months, interns also participate in an overnight intern summit at Purdue University. Once accepted into the pool of qualified applicants, students are then selected by Indiana manufacturers with help from *Conexus*.

In its first summer, the *Conexus Interns* program had 84 high school students participating in internships with manufacturers in central Indiana. Ninety percent of participants reported that their experience was valuable. In addition, 40 percent of students reported they plan to pursue careers in advanced manufacturing because of their internship. With LIFT support, the program will expand throughout the state to an additional 100 students and will target these additional positions toward work-and-learn opportunities specifically with lightweight manufacturing companies. These added positions will be designated as LIFT Interns.

In addition to providing work-and-learn opportunities to 100 LIFT Interns, *Conexus* will dedicate efforts to information sharing and collaboration with the State Workforce Innovation Council and the ACT Foundation as they convene leaders throughout Indiana to develop an overarching work-and-learn framework and thought leadership in Indiana.

PARTNERS



38 Indiana companies specializing in automotive, aerospace, and other lightweight metal applications

From Industry

- Allison Transmission
- BAE
- Batesville Products
- Batesville Tool & Die
- Blasdel Enterprises
- Bulk Truck & Transport Service, Inc.
- Busche
- CalTherm
- Dana Holding Corporation
- Elgin Fastener Group
- GKN Sinter Metals
- Greenville Technology, Inc.
- Haynes International
- Hitachi Powdered Metals
- Hoosier Pattern, Inc.
- IMMI
- Jasper Engine & Transmission
- Kessington, LLC
- Koch Enterprises
- Littler Diecast Corporation
- Magna Powertrain
- Marion Manufacturing
- MSP Aviation
- Mursix Corporation
- Ottenweller Company.
- Precise Mold & Plate
- Raybestos
- Riverside MFG, LLC
- Rolls-Royce
- Subaru of Indiana Automotive
- STARK Industries/JWS Machine
- Super ATV LLC
- Tech Castings LLC
- Tru-Flex LLC
- TS Tech Indiana, LLC
- Ultra Electronics, USSI
- Valeo
- Wabash National

From Education

- Purdue University
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Vincennes University
- Indiana high schools