



## MassDevelopment's AMP it up! Program

As part of the MassDevelopment's efforts to exhibit the Commonwealth's manufacturing sector as an attractive, viable career path, the Agency provides matching grants and resources through AMP it up! Launched in 2012, this campaign promotes advanced manufacturing careers to young people and their parents, teachers, and guidance counselors.

MassDevelopment has worked with numerous community colleges and vocational schools and their partners in the four rounds of the matching grant program. The Agency provides funds to a lead organization, which works with career centers, schools, manufacturers, and other local and regional organizations to reach students and adults. This year, schools leading their partnerships are Berkshire Community College, Cape Cod Community College, Quinsigamond Community College, and Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational School District. Schools partnering with other grantees, such as workforce investment boards, include Greenfield Community College, Greater Lowell Technical High School, University of Massachusetts Lowell, and Mount Wachusett Community College. Programs range from billboard advertising and company tours to internships, job shadowing, mentoring, and "Tech Jam 2016," which will feature hands-on demonstrations and interactive workshops for more than 100 middle school students.

Grantees submit a final report that details their activities and how many students and adults their programs reached. In 2015, the grantees' reports highlighted that:

- There were 114 events that reached nearly 6,500 students and adults; and
- About 76 percent of the events came from partnerships that involved vocational schools and higher education institutions.

In addition to the matching grants, AMP it up! ran its second video challenge, which asked students to make a three-minute video that showcases a Massachusetts manufacturing innovation and what it means to the general public. Students were eligible to win prize money for their schools. Students submitted 13 videos that generated 4,800 online votes. Durfee High School won \$5,000 for its videos about Blount Fine Foods and H&S Tool, and other awards went to Melrose High School, which profiled the Avedis Zildjian Company, and Seven Hills Charter Public School, which highlighted the Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry.

As evidenced by the numbers, vocational schools and community colleges have been critical in spreading the message that manufacturing is a viable, high-tech career path. Students around the Commonwealth are taking notice: a recent Northeastern University study of career and vocational technical education, which MassDevelopment sponsored along with the Massachusetts Business Roundtable and other organizations, found that more than one-third of these schools have waiting lists, especially in Gateway Cities. What MassDevelopment has found is that creating awareness of manufacturing careers may be most effective in middle school, as students often have made decisions by the time they reach high school or community colleges. Fortunately, the educational institutions in the AMP it up! matching grant program have opened their doors specifically to middle schools across the Commonwealth, displaying their double value in training future manufacturing employees.

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