

VERMONT TECH

In the October issue of this newsletter, VMEC generously included an article from the college about our strategic investments in support of the manufacturing industry. We were able to introduce our upgraded academic labs and learning facilities, reinforce our commitment to hands-on, applied technical education and speak to the breadth of our capabilities. The expanded equipment and improved facilities funded by last year's state capital bill are already at work in new labs and teaching spaces that give Vermont Tech students practical, hands-on experience and lead to remarkable job placement rates.

In addition, we shared that the initial funding from the state was just the first phase of potential investment in support of the manufacturing industry. The capital bill included an additional commitment to Vermont Tech of another \$500,000 for FY17, contingent on the college raising \$500,000 to match. Since October, the manufacturing industry, banks, partners and private individuals have stepped up to support the college with contributions and in-kind donations. In just a few short months, commitments have grown as manufacturers and affiliated organizations recognize Vermont Tech's unique impact and ability to create a workforce pipeline for the many, high-quality jobs available across the state.

The comprehensive investment in labs is part of a multi-pronged set of VTC initiatives that support the manufacturing industry. The initiatives also include a new Bachelor of Science in Manufacturing Engineering Technology that launched this fall, an expanded commitment to the applied technical associate degrees that support the industry, and expanding employer partnerships. Enrollment in the new BS degree includes a number of traditional students continuing their education as well as a group from GE Aviation, who attend bundled labs on weekends and participate in lectures via distance learning technology in place at the Stafford Technical Center in Rutland.

The college is more than halfway to the matching requirement, but we still have a gap to close. In the aggregate, the legislature has made a unique commitment: \$1,500,000 of state capital money to support innovation in Vermont Tech's engineering labs. These labs are a remarkable resource for the Vermont manufacturing industry. If we raise the remaining amount, it will be because the industry, related businesses and partners are willing to invest their resources alongside the state's commitment. Every dollar committed drives an additional dollar from the state. If we raise the full matching amount, it will be because the industry and stakeholders recognize the high quality nature of manufacturing jobs in the 21st century, the need for a strong technical workforce pipeline and the connection of Vermont Tech's programs to the industry. A high participation rate among Vermont manufacturers will demonstrate a shared commitment to addressing the workforce challenge. We hope you will consider supporting the effort.

For those interested in supporting the advanced manufacturing industry in Vermont and Vermont Tech, contact the office of the college's president, Dan Smith, and ask for additional information about the lab project and the matching fund. The president's office can be reached at president@vtc.edu or (802) 728-1252.