

## MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN KENTUCKY CREATE PLAN TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT LABOR SHORTAGE



Many of the different manufacturing companies in the Kentucky area have been working with one another to develop a plan that would help them to address the shortage of labor in the Kentucky area. One company, the Northern Kentucky Industrial Park Industry Partnership, has said that it is planning to use the \$65,000 grant it received from the Office of Employment and Training as a means of building a new program. This information was reported by the Kentucky Enquirer. The partnership will start off by surveying about 400 of the manufacturers in the northern Kentucky area. Surveying these manufacturers will help them figure out what these manufactures need to thrive and what skills workers should have for the positions. Another survey will be taken to get an idea of why many of the younger generation are not interested in filling this particular job positions. It is believed that there is a common misconception about the type of work performed within these companies. A lot of the industries leaders have been puzzled because of the lack of workers, especially in a time where the economy is still in recovery and many people are unemployed. Even an entry level pay for these jobs would be around \$50,000 a year which is a better pay than entry level for a number of other job positions on the market. Most importantly, a position within these companies requires workers to have a two-year degree which means they do not need to go to college for four years. The partnership has plans to start working right away and be able to provide statistical data and information in just a few short months. Prior to the partnership, many of the different companies were each taking their own approach at finding more workers. These approaches were not always very successful. Mike Vogt, the vice president of human resources for Mazak in Florence, has said, "Independently, we have taken some initiatives to try to influence students and recruit for our own businesses." He also says, "So we've got these different bodies trying to solve the same problem and we finally realized that we should probably put our heads together." The idea of putting heads together took a sudden step forward when Vogt and Richard Jordan from the Erlanger-based LSI Images met together with the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary, Joseph Meyer. Meyer encouraged a partnership between companies from the beginning and he believed it would be in the best interest of the many manufacturing companies to join together. He also suggested applying for state funding which would help them receive the answers that many of these companies had been looking for.

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