



# News Alert

10-MI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

EMILY DEROCCO (202) 637-3426

JACEY WILKINS (610) 637-2796

## **Manufacturing Institute Receives National Support as part of Lumina Foundation's Adult Learners Strategy**

*Funded Deployment of the NAM-Endorsed Skills Certification System in 12 Additional States Will Produce High-Performance Manufacturing Workforce*

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 29, 2010 –The Manufacturing Institute (the Institute) has been awarded an \$800,000 grant from Lumina Foundation for Education to remodel manufacturing education in 12 states and position individuals for high-quality jobs in Advanced Manufacturing. The Institute will deploy the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System, creating applied science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) educational pathways aligned to manufacturing career pathways, which span from high school, through community colleges and into 4-year college and university programs of study. The large-scale effort will increase postsecondary participation and industry-recognized credential completion, enabling more students and working learners to acquire the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessary for manufacturing careers in today's complex global economy.

Over a four-year period, the Institute will work with influential manufacturers, educators, and workforce and economic development leaders to deploy the Skills Certification System as the standardized benchmark assessment of critical industry-wide manufacturing competencies in Wisconsin, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Alabama, Connecticut, Tennessee, Nevada, Mississippi, Arkansas, Illinois, and New York. The initiative will leverage work already underway in 5 other states, where nationally-portable, industry-recognized credentials are being integrated into degree programs of study and widely accepted by manufacturers as the validation of critical academic, workplace and technical skills needed in a high-paced, technology-driven manufacturing environment.

“The success and competitiveness of manufacturers depend on their capacity for innovation,” said Emily DeRocco, president, The Manufacturing Institute. “The reality is that the workforce—the people moving great designs and ideas to product—is the single most important driver of innovation. But, even in these tough economic times, manufacturers report that they cannot find skilled individuals to fill high-quality jobs. Our vision is to dually close the skills gap to support our manufacturing economy, and give more individuals opportunities to get the postsecondary degree and credentials needed to be successful in today's industry.”

About 37 million Americans have earned some college credits in their effort toward a degree or credential but, for a variety of reasons, they have not successfully completed their higher education. While the U.S. job market once eagerly found places for these workers, the “Great Recession” has destroyed that security and future employment needs will require even more degreed employees.

In light of these issues, Lumina Foundation further bolstered its commitment to adult-learners with college credits by announcing today 19 grants that seek to engage, motivate and assist them earn their degrees.

“There is growing evidence that adults who have gone to college but not received a degree are looking for a second chance but need the right kind of information and motivation to help them succeed,” says Lumina President/CEO Jamie Merisotis. “This vital work aligns directly with our goal to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees or credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Given demographic trends and attainment rates among young adults, it is highly unlikely that the nation can meet its growing need for college-educated workers only by focusing on recent high school graduates.”

Lumina Foundation and the Institute announced August 30 funding for Indiana colleges’ creation of education programs aligned to industry-recognized skills credentials for careers in Advanced Manufacturing. With the addition of a dozen states, the Lumina Foundation’s investment in the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System will now potentially impact over 30% of the manufacturing workforce in the United States and align educational pathways into manufacturing careers that average over \$65,000 in annual compensation in those thirteen states.

#### **-About the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System-**

The NAM-Endorsed Skills Certification System is a system of stackable secondary and post-secondary credentials applicable to all sectors in the manufacturing industry. These nationally portable, industry-recognized credentials validate the skills and competencies needed to be productive and successful in entry-level positions in any manufacturing environment. The credentialing partners that comprise the Skills Certification System are ACT, the American Welding Society, the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council, the National Institute of Metalworking Skills, and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

The Skills Certification System is the benchmark standardized assessment of the critical workplace traits and occupational skills an individual needs to be successful in any entry-level manufacturing position. It confirms both technical and non-technical skills, assuring that an individual has both the “book smarts” and the “street smarts” to function in a high-paced manufacturing environment. Because the certifications are integrated into degree programs of study, individuals receive college credit while earning a certification, moving them closer to a college degree. For more information about the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System, visit: <http://institute.nam.org>

#### **-The Manufacturing Institute-**

The Manufacturing Institute (the Institute) is the 501 (c) 3 affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers. As a non-partisan organization, the Institute is committed to delivering leading-edge information and services to the nation's manufacturers. The Institute focuses on developing human capital strategies through education reform and workforce development, conducting applied research to provide critical information to public policy makers on challenges and opportunities for today's industry, and advancing the innovation capacity of manufacturers operating in a global market. Visit [institute.nam.org](http://institute.nam.org).

### **-Lumina Foundation for Education-**

Lumina Foundation for Education is an Indianapolis-based private foundation dedicated to expanding access to and success in education beyond high school. The Foundation supports projects nationwide that help increase the proportion of Americans with college degrees and the necessary credentials to enter the workforce. With better access to industry-recognized, nationally portable credentials, students and workers can receive the quality education and training needed to respond to the demands of local manufacturers, who depend on talent-driven innovation for survival and growth in the competitive global marketplace.