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The Manufacturing Institute Launches Heroes MAKE America Veterans Training Program

Heroes MAKE America Training Program Prepares Transitioning Service Members for Rewarding Manufacturing Careers

Washington, D.C. – The Manufacturing Institute launched a new veterans training program called Heroes MAKE America at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Heroes MAKE America is a full-time, 10-week career skills program that launched in partnership with the U.S. Army Soldier for Life – Transition Assistance Program at Fort Riley and the USO Pathfinder Program also at Fort Riley. The program arms transitioning service members with in-demand qualifications and industry-specific certifications needed for today's manufacturing workforce.

Manufacturers highly value the core elements of military training that allow America's soldiers to be the best in the world. The teamwork, commitment to mission, communication and critical thinking skills that are essential to mission success are also essential to manufacturing. Opening a pipeline to bring these transitioning soldiers into this critical economic sector will benefit the soldiers and the manufacturers who make America strong. The Manufacturing Institute created the Heroes MAKE America program to build a pipeline from military to manufacturing careers for transitioning service members with a special focus on hard-to-fill production jobs.



Photos by David Bohrer / National Association of Manufacturers

More than 80 percent of manufacturers report a talent shortage in U.S. manufacturing. Meanwhile, nearly 200,000 service men and women return home each year, possessing not only sound leadership, strong character and an exemplary work ethic, but also rigorous technical training and experience. Over the next decade, it is estimated manufacturers will be unable to fill 2 million open positions, and more than 400,000 jobs are open in the sector today. Military veterans have the leadership training manufacturers need in their workforce, and the Heroes MAKE America program will ensure they have the skills to build successful careers in the industry.

Manufacturers such as Caterpillar, Koch Industries, Arconic, Parker Hannifin Corporation and many others have committed to contributing to the success of the program, as well as hiring veterans upon completion of the 10-week training.

“Heroes MAKE America not only supports our nation’s heroes during their transition to civilian employment, but also allows companies to reduce on-the-job training expenses and enhance productivity,” said Manufacturing Institute Executive Director Carolyn Lee. “Hiring veterans who have earned these key credentials (or who have learned these key skills) is good business, and with this program, manufacturers in Kansas and across the country will have a pipeline of talented workers coming their way.”

“We are proud to partner with The Manufacturing Institute’s Heroes MAKE America program to prepare veterans for careers in manufacturing,” said Arconic Foundation Vice President of Global Communications and Program Development Suzanne van de Raadt. “The manufacturing industry wants to provide veterans with the tools to succeed, and Heroes MAKE America is able to do just that. Veterans are extremely valuable to our workforce, and this new program will benefit manufacturers with a pipeline of needed workers.”

“As one of the nation’s largest employers, we’re proud of our commitment to hiring veterans and supporting their transition back into civilian life,” said Walmart Public Affairs Director Ryan Irsik. “The Manufacturing Institute is working to improve the lives of veterans in Kansas, and we look forward to the impact this grant will make in supporting the organization’s Heroes MAKE America program.”

“Successfully transitioning our soldiers from military to civilian life is a priority effort,” said Col. John Lawrence, Fort Riley garrison commander. “Joined by partners such as The Manufacturing Institute and Washburn Institute of Technology, our Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program offers an expanding array of career skills programs. The Heroes MAKE America program, first in the Department of Defense, will prepare and place Soldiers for Life in manufacturing jobs nationally where they can demonstrate their skills and talents translated from military service.”

“Hiring veterans is good business,” said Washburn Institute of Technology Dean Clark Coco. “Partnering with programs such as Heroes MAKE America is one way we can provide the workforce that our business and industry leaders need to grow and thrive. We appreciate the opportunity to train those who have served our country so well.”

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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 is the authority on the attraction, qualification and development of world-class manufacturing talent. For more information, please visit www.themanufacturinginstitute.org.

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