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**U.S. Chamber Foundation, NAM's Manufacturing Institute  
Release New Paper Outlining Employer-Led Opportunities for  
Workforce Development**  
*Business Community Aims to Increase Employer Investment in  
Workforce Training*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**— The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the National Association of Manufacturers' Manufacturing Institute today released a new paper advancing a solution for increased employer leadership and investment in earn and learn pathways, including apprenticeships, internship programs, vocational education, and on-the-job training. The paper, entitled "[Quality Pathways: Employer Leadership in Earn and Learn Opportunities](#)," highlights the importance of employer leadership in developing a growing workforce that meets the needs of a modernizing United States economy.

"Last year, President Trump charged the business community with finding solutions to help close the skills gap and connect workers with opportunities to develop skills they need to be successful in a 21st century economy," said U.S. Chamber President and CEO Thomas J. Donohue. "By putting forward this solution, the U.S. business community isn't sitting on the sidelines – we're leading the way. Together, we've developed a bold solution to improve employer leadership and investment in quality on-the-job learning opportunities. We look forward to implementing this model across the country so today's students are prepared to be the workers and business leaders of the future."

"Quality Pathways" aims to empower both learners and employers by establishing a business-led recognition system for high-quality earn and learn opportunities based on business best-practices. Creating employer-led earn and learn pathways will also help build stronger connections between employers and their workforce and close the skills gap by connecting job creators with more ready-to-work Americans. To ensure long-term sustainability and success of the system, the paper also calls for an ongoing process to organize businesses across industries.

“Manufacturers are proud to be leading the business community in preparing Americans for rewarding, well-paying modern manufacturing careers,” said Jay Timmons, President and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers and Chairman of the Manufacturing Institute. “Across America, manufacturers have an urgent need for talent, and employers are stepping up to provide opportunities for workers young and old to gain new, in-demand skills. It’s a generational challenge, and manufacturing’s future – indeed America’s future – depends on our ability to prepare workers for the millions of manufacturing job openings we expect in the coming years. We look forward to working with President Trump, leaders in Washington, and our state and local partners to equip and inspire the next generation of manufacturing workers.”

“Quality Pathways” provides a five-step roadmap for employers – as well as business and industry associations – to create and scale new earn and learn pathways:

1. **Identify willing early adopters** of earn and learn programs built through industry-specific initiatives coordinated through leading national business and industry associations.
2. **Organize an industrywide Coordinating Council** comprised of associations managing early adopter industries along with key national associations. The Coordinating Council would define the shared quality assurance standards and systems to be pilot tested as well as how early adopter industries would share lessons learned and best practices to continuously improve the system.
3. **Develop models for pilot testing** to define quality assurance elements as well as how technical assistance and recognition will be managed.
4. **Engage companies and states in pilot testing** and make revisions as necessary to improve the cost-effectiveness of the system and reduce barriers to employer participation across industries.
5. **Develop and test federal and state incentives** to promote employer participation and evaluate them through the course of pilot testing to determine the most effective options.

The full paper is available online [here](#).

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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](http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org).*

**-U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation-**

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*thrive, how business positively impacts communities, and emerging issues and creative solutions that will shape the future.*

*The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.*

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