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Perry Hughes, VP
Workforce Development
Wytheville Community College

As we close out 2020 and look towards a new year, let me say “Thanks” to everyone who has supported the MTC this past year. The year 2020 will definitely be one to remember with so many uphill battles. However, I like to look at the many positives that have resulted from these trying times.

The MTC has been able to provide training to many business and industry partners throughout the region in the midst of the pandemic. We have received new EPA grant funds, we are finalizing a new organizational structure, and we are positioned to accept what the future throws our way. Like many of our partners and supporters, we are resilient and strive to succeed. May you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! *Perry*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ASQ 8-Week Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt Begins January 14—Ends March 4, 2021
- ASQ 14-Week Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Begins February 23—Ends May 25, 2021
- Several dedicated products being offered at the discretion of the company and in compliance with the Governor.



Linda Newman

*We can all agree—year 2020 is one for the books! It will go down in history as the year that tried the patience of “We the People of the United States” and the world. COVID-19 is testing our endurance, challenging us to find new ways of doing things, showing each of us what the other is made of, causing strife, sickness and hardship, is painful and frightening for so many, and yet, we have not waived during these trials nor will we as we face future challenges! Looking back over the history of the United States, the US has faced so many similar challenges. Our ancestors were right there in the midst dealing with their own challenges. They forged a bond with those who loved this land and worked together to make it even stronger for our generation and it is up to us to do the same for the future generations. As we leave 2020 behind, let us recall the blessings and look at the hardships as lessons. Let us never forget the privileges as Americans and forge ahead to make lemonade out of lemons. There are reasons for lessons we are to learn. If we are unwilling to learn from our mistakes, we will surely repeat them. Let us not take for granted the beauty around us; take time to breathe and reflect. Life is so short. I saw a video of late that took the hours we sleep, hours awake doing different activities, working, etc. When it was over it was a bit startling—life is truly short on this earth. Make sure to make the best of your time. Never forget your roots—they are your strength. Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year! *Linda**





Shawn Wildman

Protecting Your Employees as You Re-Open Your Business

Perseverance Assessment

Manufacturers in Southwest Virginia are strained by the COVID-19 crisis by loss of sales, workforce challenges and rising operational costs. The Manufacturing Technology Center (MTC), in collaboration with Virginia's Industrial Advancement Alliance (VIAA) and Wytheville Community College (WCC) offer manufacturers in the I77/81 crossroads a free Perseverance Assessment to help identify methods to overcome the challenges of the COVID-19 event.

The Perseverance Assessment is a free evaluation of the operational efficiencies of small- and mid-size manufacturing companies located in the counties of Wythe, Smyth, Grayson, Carroll, Bland and the City of Galax. The assessment includes evaluations of the organization's production efficiencies, energy usage, environmental compliance, and compliance to the Virginia temporary standards for the threat of COVID-19. The output of the assessment is a confidential report that will include recommendations and potential savings of:

- **Production efficiencies** – methods to increase efficiency in production, logistics, inventory, and labor (utilization of an employee's full capabilities).
- **Energy usage** - ways to reduce energy demand and lower utility bills that include optimizing air compressor, HVAC and chiller usage, switching to LED lighting and optimizing heating in production areas.
- **Environmental compliance** – opportunities and cost savings for current in-bound/out-bound environmental practices, resource optimization, pollution prevention, re-use materials, recycling, and sustainable materials selection.
- **COVID-19 evaluation** – PPE protocols, incorporating touchless systems, reducing employee direct contact and creating/maintaining an infectious disease preparedness plan.

Businesses will have the opportunity to review the report and work with an Engineer from the MTC to generate a plan to implement the recommendations in the report. The program ends on February 23rd 2021 and there are only a few assessment opportunities remaining.

If you are interested in learning more about the Perseverance Assessment and how it can impact your business, please contact Shawn Wildman at (540) 320-7648 / swildman@wcc.vccs.edu or Jake Tabor at the VIAA / jtabor@viaalliance.org.

Shawn Wildman

MORE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The business world has changed during 2020 and companies are uncertain of what is to come. Businesses that recognize and take advantage of opportunities within the facility to compete and grow during this time will likely outperform their competitors.

Free E3 Assessment

The **Manufacturing Technology Center (MTC)** is offering a FREE confidential E3 assessment (Economy, Environmental and Energy) to assist small- to medium-sized businesses in the automotive manufacturing and maintenance, and metal manufacturing and fabrication sectors in Virginia. The E3 assessment is offered to businesses in Virginia free-of-charge through a grant provided by the EPA. Businesses participating in the program receive a full confidential report on the findings of the assessment. Please go to MTC's website for more information.

www.mtcofswva.org or contact Linda Newman at lnewman@wcc.vccs.edu

FastForward Grant Opportunity

Contact your Workforce Development Office at your local community college to find out how this VCCS grant opportunity can assist your company in providing training for your employees. See below.

Mountain Empire Community College: 276-523-2400

New River Community College: 540-674-4885

Southwest Virginia Community College: 276-964-7244

Virginia Highlands Community College: 276-739-2430

Wytheville Community College: 276-223-4717

IN THE NEWS

The Manufacturing Technology Center will be conducting an open Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt for the Spring Semester 2021. These courses will be offered via Zoom Video Conferencing. They have been very successful and allows the student a bit more time to work on their Green Belt company project by not having travel time. There is no company project for a Yellow Belt. Below are the dates and times. If you live within the MTC Service region, please contact your local Workforce Development Office to register. Anywhere else outside MTC's service region, please contact Linda Newman at lnewman@wcc.vccs.edu.

Lean Six Sigma Green Belt begins February 23 and ends May 25—Tuesdays 8:00 a.m.—12N—\$2400 PP*

Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt begins January 14 and ends March 4—Thursdays 8:00 a.m.—12N—\$1200 PP*

*The tuition includes the cost of the *Green Belt Primer* or *Yellow Belt Primer*, *ASQ Solutions*, *QI Macros software*, *ASQ Exam fee* and a *one-year ASQ Membership*. Students within the MTC Service Region also receive Continuing Education Units. All students receive a framed Certificate of Completion from the MTC upon passing the course. Vicki Delp, MTC, will assist all students with registration for the ASQ exam.



On behalf of the Manufacturing Technology Center and Board, we congratulate Henry Myers IV on receiving the Manufacturing Technology Center's Excellence in Manufacturing award! Henry's project was "*The Structure of a Quadcopter Drone Under Crash Conditions*" and sponsored by Katharine Davis. Henry is a student at Blacksburg High School. This is the 24th year the MTC has supported the Blue Ridge Highlands Regional Science Fair. Congratulations, Henry! We wish you much success in all your future endeavors. You are on a great path.

Be sure and periodically check out MTC and GENEDGE Alliance websites as they are updated on a regular basis.

