

Five Beaufort County industries recently joined a countywide effort to recruit and train workers to fill available manufacturing jobs.

Participating industries include AAF Flanders, idX Impressions, Camfil Farr, PAS USA and Iconic Marine Group.

The recruitment and training program is funded by a \$50,000 Maximize “Max” Carolina Sector Grant from the N.C. Department of Commerce to the Region Q Workforce Development Board.

The grant was awarded to the board in cooperation with Beaufort County Schools, Beaufort County Community College and Beaufort County Economic Development, and the Beaufort County NCWorks Career Center.

The Maximize Carolina Sector Grant will finance projects to address skills gaps in the Advanced Manufacturing Industries. Locally, those industries are energy, advanced manufacturing, environmental sustainability, aerospace, defense, and industrial maintenance.

The Max Carolina Grant is being used to address challenges employers face when connecting with workers who lack the skills needed to be successful on the job. Once participants successfully complete the training program, employers can benefit from the work-based learning opportunities offered by the Board.

The grant required participating employers to match the state funds and required the training address specific industry needs. The local needs included training and credentials in Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt, OSHA 10, National Career Readiness Certification, Basic Shop Math, Basic Blueprint Reading and Interview and Resume Writing.

Students completing all seven modules receive multiple industry-recognized credentials and are guaranteed an interview with at least one of the five local employers.

To date, 18 students have enrolled in or completed the program. Of these, seven students completed a pilot program under the grant resulting in four gaining full-time employment. In addition, seven completed the fall program, with one gaining full-time employment under the On-the-Job Training Program.

In interviews, those participating in the grant program said they were seeing a career, not just a job.

Lydia O’Neal, a program participant, says she “was tired of being laid off from jobs and was ready to find a long-term career.”

With the unemployment rate continuing to fall, employers are faced with the challenge of finding a skilled workforce.

In preparation for the next training class, the Region Q Workforce Development Board and the Beaufort County NCWorks Career Center will host a recruiting event on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at the Beaufort County Schools Ed Tech Media Center from 1 pm to 3 pm. The Ed Tech Center is located at 820 Bridge Street in Washington. Those that cannot attend the event are welcome to visit the Beaufort County Career Center for additional information.

Programs such as Max Carolina enables employers to join with local organizations, such as the local workforce board, to find potential employees and train them in the skills employers need.

For more information about the program, employers may contact Wayne Rollins, Business Services Manager, Region Q Workforce Development Board, at 252-974-1821. Job seekers interested in the program can visit the Beaufort County NCWorks Career Center at 1502 N. Market St., Washington.