

## Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition (MVMC), Ohio: Strategic Planning and Executive Staffing, 2011-Present

**Opportunity:** Manufacturers in the Mahoning Valley region of Ohio (including Youngstown) came



together in 2011 to address their mutual workforce and training issues. Like manufacturers across the country, members of the MVMC were unable to find the skilled talent to fuel their expansion. The Coalition also needed to confront the fact that manufacturing career pathways did not exist in the region and job candidates often lacked hands-on, real-world experience. The Coalition also needed to address the shortages in the talent pipeline due to misperceptions about manufacturing.

**Process:** TPMA organized discussions to identify issues, analyzed the root causes of these issues, developed solutions infused with best practices, and identified resources to better align the region's economic, education, and workforce institutions. These efforts helped increase awareness of manufacturing skill shortages and corrected misperceptions about the industry in order to attract individuals into the talent pipeline.

**Solution:** The purpose of the MVMC is to identify common challenges and opportunities, share ideas, and collectively champion solutions to address the priority needs of the industry, particularly as it relates to a skilled workforce. TPMA and the MVMC developed a new and collaborative approach in which the manufacturers convened, educated, charged, and mobilized the region's key stakeholders to initiate actions to support the manufacturing sector and create career pathways for individuals.

**Results:** The MVMC has grown from a core group of manufacturers to a full coalition of K-12 schools, workforce development partners, community colleges, universities, community-based organizations, and funders in the Mahoning Valley Region. Over the last five years, the MVMC has attracted and directed over \$20 million in grants, scholarships, and membership dues to its programs. This includes work with local and regional foundations. The organization serves as the lead agency for a \$2.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to establish the Greater Oh-Penn Manufacturing Apprenticeship Network. The Ohio Manufacturers' Association is replicating the MVMC model with manufacturing sector partnerships throughout the state.

"Nobody has put together a model like you have. You have built the model. We hope to spread the model around the state."

**Eric Burkland, President,  
Ohio Manufacturers'  
Association**

In 2019, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded the MVMC and the West Central Job Partnership a \$2.5 million grant that developed high school pre-apprenticeship programs to connect students and employers offering paid work experience and expand the WorkAdvance program, a competency-based approach to training for the manufacturing industry.