



WISCONSIN PERFORMANCE & ASSESSMENT OF SKILL STANDARDS

NEWSLETTER



MCCASLIN ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF NATION-WIDE MANUFACTURING SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM



Photo: Herb Centeno (right) receiving award from Jim McCaslin for one of the first MSSC Certificates earned through WisPASS Phase I

McCaslin Announces the Availability of Nation-wide Manufacturing Skills Certification System

Jim McCaslin, President/COO of the Harley-Davidson Motor Company and MSSC Chairman, sees the launch of the MSSC Certification System as "a milestone in the development of a nation-wide, industry-led skill standards, assessment and certification system for manufacturers."

"Manufacturers today need greater numbers of entry-level and incumbent workers with higher skill levels because of the increased productivity resulting from advanced product and process technologies being introduced in many companies."

standard."

"Knowledge workers with broad-based, foundational skills will permit companies to transform the way products are made and to shift more rapidly to new process technologies such as smart systems, modeling and simulation, and nano-fabrication."

"The MSSC certification system focuses on *foundational skills* that production workers need to help their employers maintain their competitive position in an expanding global marketplace."

"The system serves as a base-line from which workers can embark in the pursuit of the higher-level skills increasingly

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WisPASS is funded by a U.S. Department of Labor grant and administered by Milwaukee Area Technical College.

"By using the MSSC Certification System, manufacturers can expect to: 1) decrease recruitment costs; 2) increase training ROI by targeting skill enhancement to the most critical job-related success factors; and 3) gain access to a diagnostic tool to benchmark job-related success factors against a high-performance national



Leo Reddy, Founder of NACFAM and MSSC, Jamie P. Estrada, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing U.S. Dept. of Commerce, and James A. McCaslin, President, and COO Harley-Davidson Motors

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required in advanced manufacturing."

"It will provide industry with a new set of tools to ensure that both entering and

incumbent workers are flexible, easily trainable, and highly motivated knowledge workers in the high-performance work organizations of the 21st century."

"Following this Launch event, companies, unions, education entities, WIBs, MEPS and trainers will have access to six important MSSC products and services:

1. Registration in the MSSC system which is a requirement for taking an MSSC Assessment
2. MSSC Assessments offered in four modules: manufacturing processes and production; quality control and continuous improvement; safety; and maintenance awareness.
3. MSSC Documentation provides diagnostic feedback for each test-taker
4. A Diagnostic Tool - a report to employers that have had 10 or more workers take the assessment within a 2-month timeframe.
5. Glencoe/McGraw-Hill textbook, "High-Performance Manufacturing," and two supplements, "Manufacturing Applications" and the "Instructor Resource CD."
6. MSSC Technical Assistance to organizations to help them use MSSC products and services."

"This system has the potential to certify millions of production workers against industry-recognized, federally-endorsed standards."

Mr. McCaslin announced that the MSSC Board had just elected Leo Reddy, Founder, National Council for Advanced Manufacturing (NACFAM), as the first CEO of the MSSC.

President's Manufacturing Council Members



See the MSSC Certification System As a "Win-Win" Opportunity

Fred Keller, Chairman/CEO of Cascade Engineering and Chair

of the Subcommittee on the U.S. Workforce, President's Manufacturing Council, stated that "use of the MSSC system will help create a win-win formula by providing skilled workers and a successful economy."

"The knowledge worker today is absolutely important to the growth and productivity of the manufacturing sector."

"People learn best when they're involved in the work they need to learn about. The MSSC system fits well with this."

James McGregor, President of the Morgal Machine Tool Company and a member of the President's Manufacturing Council, said that

"investment in the  is the only way we are going to win the battle of building a resilient manufacturing sector that can be competitive worldwide."

"The use of MSSC assessments is one way to support employees especially since they can be used as both pre and post-test measures. It is important to support employees on their jobs rather than judging them on the job."

"The MSSC system can be useful for employees in smaller companies where they often don't have the tools to move up the ladder."

Jamie Estrada, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing, noted that "the strength of the MSSC Certification system is that it is industry-led and therefore helps address industries' increasing



James McCaslin, President and COO, Harley-Davidson Motors and MSSC Chairman, is seen here announcing the MSSC System launch.

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MSSC CERTIFICATION SYSTEM LAUNCH – GRAND RAPIDS

The time has come, finally. After the successful Phase I of WisPASS, the MSSC entered into an excruciatingly long process *using our pilot results* to norm the test modules and put them back online as the official MSSC assessment. On December 16 the committee announced the launch of the MSSC certification system, explained it to members of test centers across the US and formulated strategies for implementation.

WisPASS Phase II represents the launch and demonstration of the assessments across Wisconsin. We have lined up seven test centers to assist MATC in this effort. They will be located at the following institutions: MATC; MSTC; MPTC; WCTC; FVTC; Gateway and UW-Stout.

The system launch was held formally in Grand Rapids and attended by over 100 participants. The Right Place, Inc. and the Grand Rapids Community College hosted the event at the Steelcase University Learning Center.

David Hollister, the Director of Labor and Economic growth for Michigan provided the keynote. In essence, he said that he keenly anticipated that the MSSC system would help his state and the nation assist manufacturers in addressing the growing need for better trained and higher skilled workers, capable of understanding and working with innovation and new technologies. He envisions assessment results that will improve and customize training activities, to lead to knowledge and skills manufacturers need to contribute to corporate productivity and profitability.

To these points, and to gather input from all the partici-

pants, the event forced a focus, in separate breakout sessions, on the following topics:

- *Enhancing industry's competitive edge with an MSSC certified high-performance workforce,*
- *Labor and employer perspectives on why to use the MSSC standards and assessments,*
- *Linking the MSSC system to education and training strategies and programs,*
- *Find out how to use the MSSC system to improve workforce performance and training ROI,*
- *How to use the McGraw-Hill textbook and materials – "High-Performance Manufacturing" How a successful test center will operate and the basic requirements for test centers; and*
- *How/why integrate MSSC skill standards and assessments into union-sponsored training.*

A complete summary of these topics will be available through NACFAM and soon found at the WisPASS website – www.matc.edu/wispass.

The event proved to be energizing for the state representatives present. Wisconsin, having been key to the MSSC assessment content and cutoff scores, has a head start in implementation, but other states see the competitive advantage of these unassailable credentials coming to use in support of their manufacturing firms. In all there were 16 states in attendance: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

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"Peter Drucker foresaw the change to knowledge workers...and understood that the challenge over time is to ensure a highly skilled workforce."

"The President's Manufacturing Council, which is the first-ever manufacturing council, is working closely with an Interagency Working Group headed by Assistant Secretary of Labor Emily DeRocco to develop a comprehensive plan for assuring that the manufacturing sector's re-training needs are being addressed by the Department of Labor."

Leo Reddy, MSSC CEO and NACFAM Founder, stated that "we need more focus at the federal level on career-oriented education if we are serious about working with the knowledge worker concept."

"Special attention must now be given to the development of curricula that can be used in community colleges and high schools to prepare students to take MSSC assessments."

"Glencoe/McGraw-Hill has just published a text book that can serve as a solid foundation for workers and students who wish to prepare for MSSC assessments."

Union Leaders See the Value of Working Toward High Performance Organizations

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Robert Baugh, Executive Director of the AFL-CIO Industrial Council, observed that “the MSSC system provides an opportunity for workers to be recognized for what they know; it helps workers communicate what they know; and it permits companies to know what workers bring to the job.”

“Manufacturing matters to our future, to our economy, and to our national security.”

“The MSSC system demonstrates that companies, unions, schools and community leaders can work together to develop an effective education and training tool that meets the needs of employers, employees, and the communities where they live.”

“It isn’t often that we have the academic and education



communities, labor and industry all reading from the same page.”

Nancy Mills, Executive Director of the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute, noted that “we need a national trade policy that works for America ... and that is built on the foundations of worker-directed, high performance, busier (higher utilization of capacity) manufacturing workplaces.”

“MSSC certifies that workers have the skills they need to work in that kind of high performance manufacturing.”

“We are extremely proud of the fact that 1) the standards are forward looking; 2) they are relevant to the work that workers are required to do; 3) they form a basis for, and build on the strengths of, union apprenticeship programs; 4) we have done all we can do to ensure that the scores are secure and the results private; 5) and yet we have a tool that employers can use to assess the readiness and skill level of some or all of their workforce; and 6) the MSSC certification is a national, portable credential and can easily be translated into even more portable, academic credentials as well.”

Education and Training Is A Key Link in Imple-

menting the MSSC System

Bryan Albrecht, Chief Operating and Academic Officer, Gateway Technical College, stated that “it is important that schools realize how they can use and embrace skill standards, especially as they must focus increasingly on technical education.”

“States will take a closer look at the MSSC Certification System as they pay more attention to the concept of the portability of skills.”

“Vertical learning, online learning and open source learning will redefine how MSSC skill training is delivered.”

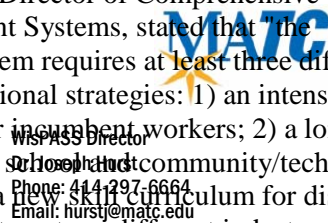
“Distance learning is the key to achieving individual training.”

Stephanie Powers, CEO of the National Association of Workforce Boards, noted that “one-stop centers can serve as a clearinghouse for information on the MSSC system for all of the key players at the community level.”

“One stops can use federal job funds to pay for training WIA candidates as well as paying their assessment costs.”

“WIBs and one stops will increasingly collaborate with community/technical colleges serving as assessment centers so they can better help local employers find the more technically-skilled workers they need.”

Pat Rickard, Executive Director of Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, stated that “the MSSC Certification System requires at least three different curricula and instructional strategies: 1) an intensive, short term curriculum for incumbent workers; 2) a longer term curriculum for high school and community/technical college students; and 3) a new skill curriculum for dislocated workers preparing to enter a different industry sector.”



All submissions should be in Microsoft Word or RTF format and emailed to:

“MSSC skill standards will be up for review next year to make sure they are still cutting-edge for students and workers aiming at meeting the increasingly technical job requirements in the manufacturing sector.”

“High schools and community colleges are spending too much time remediating at a time when they should embrace stronger skill standards training and give greater focus to measuring the effectiveness of their training.”

WisPASS on the web:
www.matc.edu/wispass

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