

**Building a work force of CNC Machinists**  
***Using new methods to achieve needs***  
**A case study of work force development**

A skilled work force is vital to the success of any business, and to the strength of a region's economy. In manufacturing this is especially true; a manufacturing company thrives only when there is excellent teamwork between the company and others, and the most valuable resource on the company's team is its workers. Like any team, when the right mix of people with the right skills are not available, the team's success is in jeopardy.

In early 2006, Bartell Machinery Systems faced just this situation. The company was having difficulty finding skilled CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machinists to hire, at the same time the company was expanding its facilities and work force. BOCES programs that taught machining and had been a source of employees no longer existed.

Bartell had openings it could not fill, while Mohawk Valley Community College had a state-of-the-art machining lab lacking students. EDGE, Working Solutions, the Department of Labor, Bartell and MVCC all came together to discuss how to use MVCC's resources to fill Bartell's needs.

After several months of discussions, planning and developing – including Bartell providing to MVCC the specific skill set requirements it needs of employees, and Working Solutions recruiting participants – an unprecedented training program began in January 2007. Eight participants would work a half a day for Bartell, and attend MVCC's CNC Machinist Technology Certificate program the other half of the day, while being paid by Bartell \$10 per hour for the entire day.

Upon completing the program, participants had the opportunity to secure a full-time job at Bartell, and double their hourly pay rate.

The innovative partnership created an enrollment model which combined the financial aid of New York State's Tuition Assistance Program and the federal Pell grants, financial support of the Department of Labor and Workforce Investment Board, direct employer support in the form of wages to the participants, and underwriting by Mohawk Valley Community College.

This was the first time a model such as this was used in New York State, with education, government, employers, and economic development agencies partnering to create jobs and develop skilled workers for those jobs. It is hoped other employers with similar employee training needs will adopt this model.