

Press Release

Contact: Katryn Conlin, Communications Director

kconlin@southeastmn.edu

Office: 651-385-6343

For immediate release

Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical announces four major new grants from Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Workforce Development Division

Winona, MN (November 19, 2013) — Four new grants, totaling more than \$800,000, have been awarded to **Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical** to provide state-of-the-art employee training for **Cytec Industries, Northern Engraving Corporation, ProAct, Inc. and Winona Occupational Rehabilitation Center (WORC)**.

The grants have been awarded by **Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership (MJSP)**, a program that works with businesses and educational institutions to train workers, expand work opportunities, and keep high-quality jobs in the state. Training grants are used to offset the necessary training-related expenses that are incurred by business, industry and educational institutions to meet future workforce needs.

“Southeast Technical and the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grant program have a long history in leveraging state, local and private resources to address the critical training needs of our regional businesses,” says Jim Johnson, President of Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical. “These unique opportunities help businesses stay competitive and expose Southeast Technical to the current and future trends that affect college curriculum and programs.”

Calli Ekblad, Southeast Technical’s Director of Business Relations, has worked tirelessly during the past year to secure the four Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership grants. She says, “At Southeast Technical, we are committed to helping local employers develop a well-trained, skilled workforce. Our training grants offer businesses the opportunity to sharpen the skills of their workforce during a time when training budgets may be minimal or non-existent. We are here to help our local businesses succeed.”

Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical has the staff and expertise to design customized training programs for manufacturing concerns and other businesses that teach employees critical skills both on and off the factory floor. Whether an employee needs to learn how to operate a CNC hydraulic punch press or how to move administrative records from paper documents to electronic systems, Southeast Technical can deliver the educational services each company needs.

-more-

Page 2: Southeast Technical announces four new MJSP grants

As Calli Ekblad explains, “As a technical college, we have the ability to tap into nation-wide resources and industry leading experts. We leverage these networks to help our local businesses develop fully customized training solutions that help them gain a competitive edge, develop new products, and improve profitability. Southeast Technical is committed to strengthening our local economies.”

The four new MJSP grants will support partnerships with these companies:

- **Cytec Industries**, Winona (\$323,975)
- **Northern Engraving Corporation**, Spring Grove (\$235,000)
- **ProAct, Inc.**, Red Wing and Eagan (\$200,000)
- **Winona Occupational Rehabilitation Center (WORC)**, Winona (\$49,803)

Detailed information about each grant follows below.

Companies in the southeastern Minnesota region that are in need of customized workforce training are encouraged to work with Southeast Technical on obtaining a Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnerships grant. For more information, contact Calli Ekblad, Director of Business Relations, cekblad@southeastmn.edu or 651-385-6320.

Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership Grants

Cytec Industries, Winona (\$323,975)

Cytec Industries (NYSE: CYT) is a global specialty material and chemicals company focused on developing innovative products that change the way our customers do business. Our pioneering products perform specific and important functions for our customers, enabling them to offer solutions to the industries they serve. Our products serve a diverse range of end markets including aerospace and industrial materials, mining and plastics. Recently, the company decided to relocate some production from California, increasing its Minnesota workforce by approximately 65 full-time positions and creating the need for updated training of its current 126 employees. Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical will assist Cytec by developing a complete orientation program for new employees and delivering specialized training in chemistry and lab protocols; mechanical and electrical/electronic maintenance; statistics; information management systems; auditor standards; safety; transportation logistics and machine operation.

Northern Engraving Corporation, Spring Grove (\$235,000)

Not long ago, Northern Engraving Corporation, a manufacturing company specializing in metal and plastic decorative products, was on the brink of closing its Spring Grove, MN plant. Instead, because of customer demand and improving economic conditions, the company is investing in new equipment and

more-

Page 3: Southeast Technical announces four new MJSP grants

increasing its workforce from 147 to approximately 225 employees. The company will work with Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical to assist in the development of critical technical skills on the new equipment, including CNC machines, hydraulic punch presses, molding machines, bonding machines, parts washers, ultra violet ovens, and lithographic presses. Some of the equipment represents the latest technology and will require highly specialized training. Moreover, to stay competitive, companies must utilize the most modern lean systems, continuous improvement, and high productivity practices. Southeast Technical will train all of Northern Engraving Corporation’s Spring Grove employees in these areas.

ProAct, Inc., Red Wing and Eagan (\$200,000)

ProAct, Inc. serves people with disabilities and other barriers to employment and community inclusion while offering clients a wide range of services. The company employs approximately 240 employees in Red Wing facility and 470 in Eagan. Through a partnership with Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical, training will be developed for ProAct in implementing electronic documentation systems; job coaching and team building; lean systems for a special needs workforce; AutoCAD; and medication administration. Finally, an Adapted Lean pilot training program will be delivered to a select group of 10 special needs workers. This will be a groundbreaking, creative effort to beta test the concept that lean training can be successfully implemented in a special needs workforce.

Winona Occupational Rehabilitation Center (WORC), Winona (\$49,803)

Founded as a non-profit in the 1970s, Winona ORC now employs 48 full time and 8 part time professionals and support staff who assist and direct approximately 375 special needs client workers. Faced with reductions in government support, the company has more recently adopted a for-profit approach to its business. Key to its success is the ability to provide competent worker oversight, adjust workforce skills and demonstrate skill competency. To this end, Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical will deliver a formal, certified training program to enhance seven core competency areas: customer interactions, government employment standards, adaptive technologies, teamwork, crisis intervention, work safety and understanding disabilities. In addition, WORC has opened a new laundry facility that employs 32 people, and Southeast Technical will deliver a training program in commercial laundry techniques and operation as WORC launches this new service.

###

About Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical

With a clear mission of “Education for Employment,” Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical provides students a strong foundation for acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they will need for a lifetime of learning. Its Winona and Red Wing campuses merged in 1992, becoming Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical in 1999. For more information, visit www.southeastmn.edu.