



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Carrie Korth
Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Office: 920-720-5600 ext. 300
ckorth@fvwdb.com
April 17, 2018

Fox Valley Workforce Development Board Honors First Press Brake Grads; Training Made Possible by Fast Forward Grant and Employer Partnership

On April 4, the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) celebrated the graduation of the first of four cohorts certified in press brake operation. The graduation was held at Fox Valley Technical College's Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center with six graduates from three partnering employers, Jay Manufacturing, Muza Metal Products and SMC Metal Fabricators, all of Oshkosh.

Trainees received 54 hours of customized instruction from Fox Valley Technical College. In addition, trainees worked closely with company mentors to compliment/reinforce what they learned in class with an additional 54 hours of mentoring during classroom training and also an additional 80 hours of mentoring after classroom training had completed. Training provided instruction on basic and advanced press brake training with a strong focus on safety. Outcomes for the companies include increased manufacturing capacity due to having more trained operators. For trainees, this provided career advancement.

This training was made possible due to a Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. The Board received \$110,194 award to train 24 employees in the operation of a press brake. By using a press brake to form a part from a single piece of steel sheeting, rather than welding parts together, these manufacturers keep production costs competitive. Currently, the lack of trained press brake operators is making our region less likely to hit its economic potential.

A Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant is one in which the DWD matches financial commitments from partner employers. The program has tough metrics, requiring all employees to not only complete the program and demonstrate proficiency, but the company must also provide each employee with a salary increase within a set period of time.

“A Fast Forward Grant is a not a giveaway, but a highly competitive and closely monitored investment in Wisconsin workers,” said Anthony Snyder, FVWDB CEO. “We see Fast Forward Grants as the catalyst to bring together coalitions of local employers to tackle their most urgent training needs.”

Since 2013, the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board has worked with local employers in its six county area of Calumet, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago, to bring in more than \$1 million in Fast Forward Grant dollars.

“Fast Forward Grants provide us with critical resources to drive significant economic development in our area,” said Snyder. “We’re always eager to bring those dollars home to ensure our employers remain vital.”

DWD’s Fast Forward grants are now awarded quarterly in a variety of business sectors. The next round of applications are due June 30. If you are interested in learning more, contact Bobbi Miller, FVWDB Business Services Manager, at bmiller@fvwdb.com.

###

Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) is a not-for-profit working to build a world-class workforce in northeast Wisconsin. Serving six counties — Calumet, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago — FVWDB collaborates with a number of state and local agencies to help job seekers gain the skills needed to find employment, and to help businesses find the highly skilled workers they need.

FVWDB is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider.

A proud partner of the  **AmericanJobCenter** network