

Seminole Area Residents Seeking Work Benefit from Mobile Job Training Program

SANFORD, FL – After a successful session in Palm Beach County, the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) state-of-the-art Mobile Outreach Skills Training (M.O.S.T.) unit is in Seminole County hosting a job training and placement program. Eight area residents taking part in the program will have the opportunity to interview for jobs with participating employers such as Envirobrite, an energy-efficient manufacturing lighting company. Participants in the training represent a diverse pool of Florida’s unemployed and underemployed including veterans and a single mother. The training is currently taking place on Envirobrite’s premises in Sanford.

“Envirobrite is pleased to be working with Florida MEP to take a forward-looking approach to our hiring. Through their M.O.S.T. program, we’re not simply looking for people to hire, we’re actually beginning the training process while we’re still in the hiring phase,” said Chuck Hansbrough, Sales and Marketing Manager for Envirobrite, the lighting division of Energy Planning Associates. “At Envirobrite, we take immense pride in our workmanship and the quality of our products. We have a great level of comfort that Florida MEP and the M.O.S.T. program will help us find the right team members – people who are committed to these same standards.”

The Florida MEP M.O.S.T. is a pioneering traveling unit equipped with state-of-the-art equipment. Participants attend a concentrated, two-week training program at which they can improve upon or obtain new manufacturing skills. The program consists of theory, practical skills, hands-on curriculum including computer-based 3-D simulations and self-paced training modules. Following the successful completion of the program, trainees receive opportunities to interview with participating employers ready to hire qualified applicants.

“Florida MEP offers options and resources for manufacturing companies seeking entry-level workers,” said Florida MEP Board Chair Gene Lussier. “We partner with participating companies from the beginning to understand their needs and find qualified candidates for our training sessions. We can even tailor our trainings specifically to the companies we’re working with. For the trainees, this program offers more than skill building. It’s a bridge to employment with a guarantee of a job interview and continued support through on-the-job training if they’re hired. Florida MEP’s M.O.S.T. program is a win-win for the employers and candidates who participate.”

The transportable M.O.S.T. unit provides services to targeted areas of Florida where jobs and prospective employees are located. It can be positioned at an employer’s facility or site convenient for trainees offering flexibility for both. The M.O.S.T. program can also be customized to suit the needs of participating employers thereby shortening the length of time before a trainee can become a productive employee.

“In speaking with many manufacturers over the years, I would often hear them say that it was difficult to find skilled employees to fulfill their needs. We even talked to the community

college at one point to see if they'd consider offering a basic manufacturing skills course. This program fills a long overdue need," said Tracy Turk, Senior Director of Business Development the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission.

Candidates for the Seminole Training were selected by Florida MEP in conjunction with Pathways to Home, a collaborative program consisting of 16 non-profit organizations, and Manpower Inc., a worldwide company with locations throughout Florida that screen, recruit and reach out to the unemployed. Participants are required to pass a basic education test and drug screening to qualify for the program. A representative from M.O.S.T. interviews each candidate prior to selection for involvement in the program.

"With so many unemployed Floridians, the work Pathways to Home is doing right now in Seminole County has never been more important," said Debra Groseclose, Executive Director of Pathways to Home. "We're proud to partner with Florida MEP and enhance our efforts to meet the needs of those who want to find work."

The program is funded in part by a U.S. Department of Labor grant of \$856,000. For more information on Florida MEP or the M.O.S.T. unit, visit www.floridamep.org or www.timewisemost.com/.