

March 5, 2008

The Editor
The Plain Dealer
[insert address here]

Dear Editor:

In reaction to the article, “**Wanted: Workers with the skills for modern manufacturing**” by Frank Bentayou, which appeared in the Plain Dealer on Monday, March 3rd 2008, I wanted to supply you with additional information on critical resources available to the manufacturing companies, incumbent workers, job seekers and youth in our community that was missing from the article.

The Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board (WIB) has been successful in winning funds, training workers and creating collaborations for manufacturing success in Northeast Ohio. The efforts of the WIB are aimed at meeting the needs of high growth and demand occupations within the regional manufacturing industry.

The Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board (WIB) has been working to address the shortage of skilled manufacturing labor by offering advanced manufacturing training to both current and new workers.

Since 2004, manufacturing has been identified and formally recognized as a demand industry by the Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board. In fact, over the last 2 years, the WIB, through the public workforce system, Employment Connection, has invested approximately 2 million dollars in manufacturing training. During this time, approximately 500 individuals have received manufacturing-related training, including but not limited to: truck driving, CNC operation, precision machining and welding.

The WIB, recognizing the strategic importance of bringing new resources to the community, has successfully obtained the forth-largest grant in the nation, in the amount of \$2,289,449 from the U.S. Department of Labor; the purpose of this grant, entitled Manufacturing Access to Growth and Innovation in Cuyahoga County & Northeast

Ohio (MAGICC-NEO), is to provide training for 150 new workers and 300 incumbent workers as well as expose 75 high school students to careers in the area of advanced manufacturing.

Finally, the WIB has been diligently working with its community partners on these important manufacturing initiatives. These partners include Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Tooling University, Westside Industrial Retention and Expansion Network (WIRE-Net), Manufacturing Advocacy & Growth Network (MAGNET), Cobalt Group, Workforce and Economic Development Departments across Northeast Ohio as well as employers.

Workforce solutions cannot be developed in silos, but rather, need to be collaboratively addressed within our community. When over 1,000 people apply for 200 positions at WalMart and yet our manufacturing employers struggle to find CNC Machine Operators every day, the challenge before us is clear. We must continue to create partnerships across political and geographical and topical barriers.

The Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board and Employment Connection strive to address our community's workforce and economic development needs, in manufacturing and all industry sectors, everyday, through strategic partnerships, outreach and education to both employers and job seekers alike. We will continue to drive our mission, **"to address the region's Human Capital needs by assessing, training and connecting workers and businesses,"** and invite anyone who is concerned about our current and future economy to join us in creating solutions.

We look forward to affecting positive change in Cuyahoga County for its residents and businesses and welcome every opportunity to secure additional resources and forge partnerships to achieve success for Cleveland/Cuyahoga and a brighter future for Northeast Ohio.

If you would like further information on the Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board, Employment Connection or any of the initiatives mentioned in this letter please contact Dennis L. Roberts, Esq., Director, Cuyahoga County Department of Workforce Development at 216-443-3224 or Allison Motz, Director, Division of Workforce Development – City of Cleveland at 216-664-2035. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Quentin McCorvey, Jr.
Chair, Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board
[insert title, company]