



German American
Chambers of Commerce
Deutsch-Amerikanische
Handelskammern



German American Chamber of Commerce
of the Midwest, Inc.

321 North Clark Street, Suite 1425

Chicago, Illinois 60654-4714

Phone: (312) 644-2662 | Fax: (312) 644-

0738

www.gaccmidwest.org

Press Release

For immediate release

May 10, 2017

Press Contact:

Jasmin Welter

Senior Manager, Marketing & Communications

Tel.: (312) 494-2162 0738

E-Mail: welter@gaccmidwest.org

Five ICATT Companies Earn National Fund for Workforce Solutions' 2017 Young Adult Employer Champions Awards

*Apprenticeship consortium for manufacturing SMEs in Illinois leads workforce
development efforts nationwide*

Chicago, IL – May 10, 2017 – Five of nine companies honored by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions with the **Young Adult Employer Champions – Pathways to Apprenticeship** Award are members of GACC Midwest's ICATT (Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training) program in Illinois. The following German and American manufacturing SMEs were honored for their leadership in developing sustainable apprenticeships systems, creating career pathways for young workers in manufacturing:

- FELSOMAT USA, Inc., Schaumburg, IL
- North American Lighting, Paris, IL
- Principal Manufacturing Corporation, Broadview, IL
- Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation, Vernon Hills, IL
- WITTENSTEIN North America, Bartlett, IL

Now in its third year, the **National Fund Young Adult Employer Champions Program** honors employers who provide high-quality jobs and successfully hire and retain 18-25-year-old young adults who are unemployed or underemployed and not enrolled in school. The Employer Champions program is a central component of the **Young Adult Sectoral Initiative**, which aims to develop a deeper understanding of effective practices for connecting young adults to careers in rapidly growing industries.

These companies are training apprentices in the job profiles of Industrial Maintenance Technician and CNC Technicians through the ICATT Consortium. The structure of the program is aligned to the standards of the successful and proven German apprenticeship system. During the three-year program, apprentices receive on the job training as well as an associate's degree.

"Apprenticeships built on industry standards work – not just in Germany but also in the U.S.," said **Mark Tomkins, President & CEO of GACC Midwest**. "The awards for five ICATT companies clearly show that our structured partnership with companies, educational institutions and industry associations is the right thing for workforce development in the U.S."



German American
Chambers of Commerce
Deutsch-Amerikanische
Handelskammern



German American Chamber of Commerce
of the Midwest, Inc.

321 North Clark Street, Suite 1425

Chicago, Illinois 60654-4714

Phone: (312) 644-2662 | Fax: (312) 644-0738

www.gaccmidwest.org

“This unique employer driven program connects students with local employers through an apprenticeship to ensure classroom theory learning and practical workforce applications provide the best possible outcomes for success,” said **Greg Baise, President and CEO, Illinois Manufacturers’ Association**. “This program is a great example of a private-public partnership that will ultimately grow a qualified pipeline for workers within the manufacturing industry. We hope to continue broadening participants and working with our partner institutions to increase success across the board for students pursuing opportunities in the manufacturing sector.”

ICATT is an industry-led approach to skilled workforce development, designed specifically for small and medium sized companies. The program receives strong support from the manufacturing industry and the IMA’s Education Foundation, a subsidiary of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association (IMA). In addition to investments by the participating companies, it is funded by the Department of Labor (DOL) as well as the Joyce Foundation to develop scalable training throughout Illinois and beyond. ICATT is currently expanding to Indiana and Wisconsin. The GACC Midwest-managed program is registered with the DOL and is currently growing to include further occupational programs, educational partners, and industry clusters.

About GACC Midwest

The German American Chamber of Commerce® of the Midwest (GACC Midwest), headquartered in Chicago with a branch office in Detroit, was founded in 1963. GACC Midwest is an integral part of the German Chamber Network (AHKs) with 130 offices in 90 countries around the globe. Our continuing mission is to further, promote, and assist in the expansion of bilateral trade and investment between Germany and the United States, especially the Midwest. Our organization combines elements of a trade commission, a membership association, and a professional consultancy - quite a unique concept in international trade promotion. Learn more at www.gaccmidwest.org and www.thinkicatt.com.

About the IMA Education Foundation

The mission of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association Education Foundation is to be the premier influencer of education programs to attract and develop Illinois’ future manufacturing workforce. We do this by providing both financial support to school districts, community colleges, vocational schools and Illinois’ four-year institutions and by encouraging member companies of the IMA to provide internships at their manufacturing facilities for students and opportunities for educators to observe and discuss the needs of manufacturers in their area. For more information, visit <http://www.ima-net.org/ima-education-foundation>

About National Fund for Workforce Solutions

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is a national network promoting economic opportunity and prosperous communities through investment and innovation. Based in Washington D.C., the National Fund partners with philanthropy, employers, workers, public and private community organizations, and more than 30 regional collaboratives to invest in skills, improve systems, and generate good jobs. The National Fund supports civic and business leaders in promoting evidence-based practices and policies that build shared prosperity. Learn more about the National Fund and its local partners at www.NationalFund.org.