

Good afternoon. My name is Jo Alice Blondin, and I have served as President of Clark State Community College in Springfield, Beavercreek, and Bellefontaine since July 2013. Today I have with me Darlene Carpenter, Director of Human Resources for Cascade Manufacturing, one of our key industry partners in Clark County.

Community colleges train the future workforce and upskill the current workforce in order to be responsive to industry needs. As a result of this mission, community colleges must be flexible and offer multiple pathways into the workforce to enable the growth of our economy and the future success of Ohio. For this reason, community colleges offer certificates of value, or short-term certificates, associate's degrees, and, with legislative approval and support, a limited number of job-focused baccalaureate degrees.

Students who pursue short-term certificates at Clark State have found real-market value in attaining these credentials. For this reason, Clark State plans to develop more short-term certificates in order to upskill the existing workforce and allow for an early career entry point for the unemployed and underemployed. For example, Clark State's basic manufacturing certificate comprises 15 weeks and, upon completion, results in an entry-level manufacturing job in our region. If the student chooses to continue an additional 15 weeks and pursues a certificate in one of four areas, such as welding, industrial maintenance certificate, Computer Numerical Controls' (CNC) operator, or additive manufacturing, he or she increases his or her pay to \$18-22 per hour. The value of these short-term certificates, particularly in STEM and career-focused fields, cannot be underestimated. I respectfully ask for your support to provide funding to our institutions to stand up these programs and clarify that our students should be able to access OCOG to pay for their tuition costs.

In this year's budget, Governor Kasich has requested the allowance of specific job-focused baccalaureate degrees offered by community colleges that fill critical workforce needs in our communities. Clark State Community College would like to pursue plans to offer one applied baccalaureate degree in Manufacturing Technology Management. This degree is supported by our industry partners, such as Honda North America, Cascade Manufacturing, and McGregor Metalworks, and leads to management and supervisory careers as well as higher-level hands-on skills at these and other top employers in our region.

Since receiving a \$2.5 million Department of Labor TAACCCT grant in 2014, Clark State has kept a laser focus on training in manufacturing, as this industry is key to our region's growth. We have gone from training fewer than 20 students annually in 2013 to training nearly 300 students since the inception of the grant in 2014. This degree would complement our existing five short-term certificates and associate degree, and is the next logical step in this career pathway for our students. Clark State students who are on the engineering, management or manufacturing tracks would be able to continue their education with us and obtain this four-year degree awarded by Clark State Community College.

Over the next decade, nearly 3.5 million manufacturing jobs will be needed, and 2 million are expected to go unfilled due to the skills gap. Moreover, according to a recent report, 80 percent of manufacturers report a moderate or serious shortage of qualified applicants for skilled and highly skilled production positions, specifically in supervisory roles. (National Association of Manufacturers). Additionally, for every \$1.00 spent in manufacturing, another

\$1.40 is added to the economy. Manufacturing is critical to Ohio's economic future, and Clark State is well-positioned to assist in its training and educational support at all levels of this vital industry.

Clark State continues to work closely with local industry partners. It will be these industry partners that will help guide us when we are ready to shape the curriculum for this four-year degree in Manufacturing Technology Management. Additional approval will then be needed by the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission. I am happy to answer any questions. Thank you.