EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2011, the Kansas City region received $1.8 million from the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge grant program developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration, and the Small Business Administration.

The KC Accelerator project focused on increasing employment opportunities at the intersection of two industry clusters — advanced manufacturing and information technology. The goals of the grant were to strengthen Kansas City’s global competitiveness; reduce the need for foreign workers using H1B visas; become a hub for innovation; create opportunities for commercialization of new products and services developed through university and industry research; and provide business acceleration services to small and mid-sized businesses, helping them grow by improving supply chain connections, market intelligence and technical services.

The KC Accelerator project resulted in a number of important programs that will have lasting impact in the Kansas City region and formed partnerships that will enable organizations to continue to work together beyond the grant period. Below are some of the key outcomes:

- Made critical connections between education and industry to help promote the creation of career pipelines for advanced manufacturing and IT. These connections helped strengthen existing courses being offered and develop new curriculum to help ensure our region has a pipeline of quality workers entering the workforce and advancing along the existing pipeline.
- Created a system of supply chain and logistics training where all three of the region’s community colleges entered into an agreement to collaboratively promote and offer courses relative to industry needs. These agreements have resulted in a more efficient process for providing high demand training programs. In addition, career pathways have been identified and development in part by PREP-KC and KC SmartPort for high school students entering the workforce.
- Created an exporting resource map and system of providers to better connect manufacturers with export opportunities. Stronger programs now exist to connect research at local universities and research centers with commercialization opportunities through tools and resources developed through KC Accelerator.
- Hosted forums and numerous events focused on targeted industries led to greater awareness about industry needs, economic development and startup opportunities, and career opportunities. Stronger partnerships were also formed between organizations that are working in specific industry clusters.
- Strengthened the digital storytelling industry by conducting further research and identifying the region’s strong competitiveness within the sector. New curriculum was developed, educators are incorporating digital storytelling into more disciplines, and nonprofits and educational organizations are working together to increase student and youth awareness about career and entrepreneurial opportunities within the digital media field.

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) has served as the administrator of the KC Accelerator grant. Project partners include the University of Missouri–Kansas City’s Innovation Center and KCSourceLink; the Full Employment Council; the Workforce Partnership; KCnext; Metropolitan Community College; Johnson County Community College; Kansas City Kansas Community College and KC SmartPort.
Mid-America Regional Council convened the Regional Innovations Program team, which consisted of employers, community colleges, universities, workforce investment boards and other stakeholders that work with equity organizations in providing technical services to small and mid-sized companies. MARC worked with these partners to identify gaps in the workforce development system limiting job growth in advanced manufacturing and information technology sectors, and coordinated work to address the gaps and advance opportunities.

MARC prepared numerous labor market and industry reports to help educate partners about workforce and education needs in manufacturing and IT. A new website, kcworkforce.com, was developed to serve as a clearinghouse for workforce and economic data.

MARC also initiated several career exploration and awareness events to inform educators about the growing demand for IT occupations and skilled, technical positions in manufacturing.

MARC supported KC Digital Drive, which is charged with the implementation and stewardship of Playing to Win in America’s Digital Crossroads, the digital playbook produced by the Mayors’ Bistate Innovations Team to support Google Fiber in Kansas City.

KC Digital Drive worked with the KC Startup Village to support start-up companies and budding entrepreneurs moving to the region to take part in KC Startup Village and Homes for Hackers initiatives. KC Digital Drive assisted in talent recruitment initiatives and helped track movements of individuals to and from the community. Since September 2012, KCSV has become home to 24 new businesses and 60 new jobs.

UMKC Innovation Center/ KCSourceLink formed a steering committee on commercialization issues that includes industry, universities and entrepreneurs. KCSourceLink was a recipient of both EDA and SBA funds to support the expansion of specific industry investments and help small businesses develop export capacities and connect to larger corporations as suppliers of goods and services. KCSourceLink developed MOU’s with 12 colleges and universities that have helped identify 357 technologies in universities, research institutes and companies with the potential for commercialization.

In addition to these activities, they have developed a web platform, www.ceobullpen.com, to allow interactions between research and industry and increase the visibility of technologies for commercialization. As of the end of September, 5,040 visitors accessed the site and 129 people have reviewed technologies. The site has helped with the creation of eight business starts and 27 new jobs.

KCSourceLink also hosted two symposia to bring together researchers, large corporations, small businesses and aspiring business owners; the Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Forum and Digital Storytelling Forum had a total of 401 people attend and 198 firms represented. In addition, 78 7(j)-eligible participants attended and the event resulted in five research/industry projects.

To assist companies in the urban core, a new Urban Business Growth Initiative was developed and funded to support additional 7(jj) companies. KCSourceLink partnered with local equity organizations to provide business assistance to disadvantaged companies. There were 38 companies were serviced through these organizations that resulted in 22 new jobs being created.

KCSourceLink also conducted a complete census of small businesses in Advanced Manufacturing and IT clusters to include 7(jj)-eligible businesses. The census allowed partners to create opportunities and offer
technical assistance to help them in building relationships with other organizations in their industry cluster. Since this census, 54.5 jobs were created by 7(j)-eligible companies in these two clusters.

Business assessments were provided with the KCSourceLink Network Navigator resulting in 202 assessments completed; 52 are 7(j) eligible. FastTrac® courses were also made available to 20 7(j) participants and resulted in 13 company starts.

There were 73 companies tracked through KCSourceLink’s Biz-Trakker® client relationship management system that measured business startup and growth. During the KC Accelerator grant, 73 companies were tracked including 35 company starts and 304 jobs were created.

The region’s two workforce investment boards, Full Employment Council and Workforce Partnership, worked together to provide workforce services to individuals in the advanced manufacturing and information technology sectors supported by Department of Labor funds made available through the Job Accelerator program. Activities include recruitment, assessment of skills, on-the-job training, scholarships, tuition for special programs and job development.

At the end of September, 136 total clients had been served and 131 individuals were enrolled in on-the-job (OJT) and classroom training and 25 individuals have received credentials. Of those completing training, 55 have entered employment with an average hourly wage of $17.41.

Closer relationships have been developed with companies to partner in recruitment and training of applicants through OJT opportunities. Several hiring initiatives have been put in to place for employers to interview applicants at the career centers.

Johnson County Community College, Kansas City Kansas Community College and Metropolitan Community College were supported through the KC Accelerator grant to align workforce development training and certifications among area colleges and universities and provide customized training that would lead to new credentials in advanced manufacturing and information technology. They also worked to develop new stackable credentials in advanced manufacturing and information and in export logistics and management.


Metropolitan Community College (MCC) completed assessments for four manufacturing companies to help review documentation and current technology applications, examined work processes in warehousing and distribution, production, sales and support operations, and provided recommendations for technology applications. MCC also enrolled 57 students in the new Computer Integrated Machining & Manufacturing (CIMM) program. The CIMM certificate is the first credential in a stack that will articulate through an associate’s degree to a bachelor’s degree at the University of Central Missouri. To address the need for welders by area industry, MCC also trained 18 individuals for IPC certifications so two companies could add an IPC 610 standard to their operations. In addition, 335 were trained in J-Standard soldering.

Kansas City Kansas Community College delivered training and hosted workshops that involved more than 15 organizations and more than 250 participants in IT, manufacturing and digital storytelling.
JCCC hired an employer liaison to meet with businesses and discuss training needs in order to develop new and strengthen existing curriculum. JCCC had 504 individuals enrolled in new training programs ranging from supply chain certifications to courses in mobile app development.

**KC SmartPort** convenes supply-chain industry leaders throughout the region and provides product export assistance to advanced manufacturing and information technology firms that are exporting their goods and services outside the region to national and international businesses. KC SmartPort worked with several partners to increase exporting resources and educate the business community on resources for the supply chain industry.

KC SmartPort held several events related to exporting and supply chain logistics and worked with several automotive parts manufacturing companies interested in the KC region and the international assistance available. KC SmartPort worked with the Journal of Commerce to host an inland distribution conference in KC and hosted four seminars on trade finance, transportation, expansion strategies and small business export opportunities. They also continued work with the World Trade Center and other international organizations to provide technical training to KC area companies.

**KCnext** was formed in 2012 by the Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) and worked with the KC Accelerator partners to expand the awareness of Kansas City by showcasing emerging technology and opportunities within the technology sector. KCnext worked with industry leaders who share in-depth knowledge with the local Kansas City community to make them more aware of opportunities in the IT industry that will assist economic development to prepare strategies to grow existing businesses and recruit potential IT companies and workers.

KCnext facilitated over 70 collaboration opportunities among KC regional tech firms and participated in several recruitment projects. They hosted several IT networking events that resulted in hundreds of Kansas City IT professionals learning about KCnext initiatives and tech sector news.

KCnext also produced a video piece that identifies unique industry clusters in KC and represents the great workforce opportunities in KC. This video will be used to recruit qualified IT professionals to Kansas City.

Overall, the KC Accelerator grant helped facilitate the creation of 60 companies, created 364 new jobs, and helped strengthen training programs that lead to over 1,300 enrollments.

The grant strengthened the region’s workforce development system, and allowed several organizations to work together in new ways. The following final report details the final outcomes of the KC Accelerator project and includes success stories, lessons learned and overall progress made.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview of Program ........................................................................................................................................... 1
Collaboration .......................................................................................................................................................... 3
Growing Targeted Industries ................................................................................................................................. 4
Curriculum Development ...................................................................................................................................... 9
Training Programs ................................................................................................................................................ 11
Providing Small Business Assistance .................................................................................................................. 15
Lessons Learned .................................................................................................................................................. 20
Success Stories ..................................................................................................................................................... 21
Attachment 1: Final Integrated Report .................................................................................................................. 26
OVERVIEW OF THE KC ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

In September 2011, the Kansas City region received $1.8 million from the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge grant program developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration, and the Small Business Administration.

The KC Accelerator project focused on increasing employment opportunities at the intersection of two industry clusters — advanced manufacturing and information technology. The goals of the grant were to strengthen Kansas City’s global competitiveness, reduce the need for foreign workers using H1B visas, become a hub for innovation, create opportunities for commercialization of new products and services through university and industry research, and provide business acceleration services to small and mid-sized businesses, helping them grow by improving supply chain connections, market intelligence and technical services.

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) has served as the administrator of the KC Accelerator grant. Project partners include the University of Missouri–Kansas City’s Innovation Center and KCSourceLink; the Full Employment Council; the Workforce Partnership; KCnext; Metropolitan Community College; Johnson County Community College; Kansas City Kansas Community College and KC SmartPort.

**Mid-America Regional Council** has convened the Regional Innovations Program team, which consists of employers, community colleges, universities, workforce investment boards and other stakeholders that work with equity organizations in providing technical services to small and mid-sized companies.

**UMKC Innovation Center/ KCSourceLink** formed a steering committee on commercialization issues that includes industry, universities and entrepreneurs. They supported the expansion of specific industry investments and helped small businesses develop export capacities and connect to larger corporations as suppliers of goods and services. KCSourceLink also hosted two symposia to bring together researchers, large corporations, small businesses and aspiring business owners. In addition to these activities, they have developed a web platform to allow interactions between research and industry and increase the visibility of technologies for commercialization. KCSourceLink was a recipient of both EDA and SBA funds.

**Full Employment Council** and **Workforce Partnership** worked together to provide workforce services to individuals in the advanced manufacturing and information technology sectors supported by Department of Labor funds made available through the Job Accelerator program. Activities included recruitment, assessment of skills, on-the-job training, scholarships, tuition for special programs and job development.

**Johnson County Community College, Kansas City Kansas Community College** and **Metropolitan Community College** were supported through the KC Accelerator grant to align workforce development training and certifications among area colleges and universities and provide customized training that would lead to new credentials in advanced manufacturing and information technology. They also worked to develop new stackable credentials in advanced manufacturing and information and in export logistics and management.
**KC SmartPort** convenes supply-chain industry leaders throughout the region and provides product export assistance to advanced manufacturing and information technology firms that are exporting their goods and services outside the region to national and international businesses. KC SmartPort worked with several partners to increase exporting resources and educate the business community on resources for the supply chain industry.

**KCnext** worked to expand the awareness of KCnext by showcasing emerging technology and opportunities within the technology sector. They worked with industry leaders who share in-depth knowledge with the local Kansas City community to make them more aware of opportunities in the IT industry that will assist economic development to prepare strategies to grow existing businesses and recruit potential IT companies and workers.
COLLABORATION

One of the key results of the KC Accelerator program was the creation of new connections and partnerships between the organizations involved. Because funding was received from several different agencies, the project brought together diverse partners who may not have worked together in the past, but are now working together for the future. Almost 20 organizations were involved in carrying out activities for the KC Accelerator grant.

Throughout the grant period, MARC convened the KC Accelerator team on a monthly basis to discuss how to collaborate between programs and better connect business support organizations to workforce development services. KCSourceLink conducted regular meetings with organizations that support small business development in the Kansas City region. There were seven Resource Partner meetings held over the two-year period with an average of 23 organizations attending each meeting.

KCSourceLink also took a lead role in networking and collaboration activities for small businesses through a variety of activities. They created, developed and promoted Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), Nov. 12–18, 2012. GEW is a global celebration of entrepreneurship inspiring people to engage in entrepreneurial activity while connecting them to potential collaborators, mentors, and even investors. More than 35 activities occurred in the Kansas City region during this week. Two activities of special note developed to support the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge grant during GEW include:

**“Break a World Record” Speed Networking**
More than 350 emerging and existing business owners and people from the organizations that support them came together to attempt to break the world record for the most people attending a business speed networking event in a single venue. In addition to breaking the record as certified by Guinness World Records, participants walked away with more than 20 new contacts each. The event was a diverse mix of consultants, attorneys, CPA’s, small business owners, business development specialists, entrepreneurs and small business owners, from a wide variety of backgrounds and geography.

**Startup Job Fair**
Designed to connect students and recent graduates with opportunities to work for Kansas City based startups, the job fair featured more than 20 startups that were trying to fill available intern, part-time and full-time positions. Attendees had the opportunity to meet the people behind the startups, see their products in action, and learn about working in an innovative, entrepreneurial culture.
GROWING KANSAS CITY’S TARGETED INDUSTRIES: IT, MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLY CHAIN

The KC Accelerator targeted two high-potential industry clusters — Advanced Manufacturing and Information Technology. The program was meant to accelerate innovation, business formation and expansion, job creation, exports, workforce training delivery, and reduction in H1B visas. Several activities took place during the grant period to facilitate growth within these two sectors.

Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) strengthened recruitment efforts to broaden visibility of existing advanced manufacturers and IT companies with concentration on small to mid-sized companies. And several other organizations worked specifically within each of these sectors to support business growth, recruitment and attraction activities, and exporting assistance and workforce programs.

MARC worked with the Regional Workforce Intelligence Network and KC Accelerator partners throughout the grant to provide resources regarding growing industries of manufacturing, IT, supply chain logistics and digital storytelling. The new website, kcworkforce.com, provides access to reports and targets educators and economic development agencies.

Several meetings and presentations were made throughout the KC Accelerator program to share real-time labor market information with organizations, such as community college and universities, so they can improve their curriculum offerings. Secondary education providers and PREP-KC used the career pathway reports developed by MARC to educate students about which programs they should consider entering to obtain gainful employment.

**Information Technology**

In 2011, Google Fiber announced it would be providing gigabit fiber to residents in the Kansas City region. MARC supported the Mayors’ Bistate Innovation Team (MBIT) to support Google high speed broadband infrastructure and established a Digital Leadership Team and worked with community stakeholders and broadband companies, including Google, to advance the use of high speed broadband services to support the growth of employment in advanced manufacturing and IT industries.

MARC supported KC Digital Drive, which is charged with the implementation and stewardship of *Playing to Win in America’s Digital Crossroads*, the digital playbook was produced by the Mayors’ Bistate Innovations Team. MARC carried out significant activities in 2012 and 2013.

- Worked with US Ignite and Mozilla to host gigabit hackathon geared toward developing next generation apps.
- Launched a 1 Billion Bits event series to help foster conversations between developers and the technical community about the increasingly expanding possibilities for gigabit networks.
- Convened maker spaces and maker groups in KC to explore collaborative opportunities and identify community needs.
- Partnered with Kansas City-area public libraries and Connecting for Good to build digital literacy including identifying funding to support WiFi services in public housing project and training in Kansas City, Kan.
- Worked with KC Startup Village (KCSV) to support startup companies and budding entrepreneurs moving to the region to take part in KCSV and Homes for Hackers initiatives. Also assisted in talent recruitment initiatives and tracked movements of individuals to and from the
community. Since September 2012, KCSV has become home to 24 new businesses and 60 new jobs.

The Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) established a new KCnext membership group to convene IT companies and professionals to promote the KC region for IT business. During the grant period, KCnext facilitated over 70 collaboration opportunities among KC regional tech firms and participated in several recruitment projects.

KCnext also hosted several IT networking events. President Ryan Weber guest-hosted the "Entrepreneur KC" radio show on the local AM business channel. He spoke with representatives from Cerner, BATS Global Markets, Paige Technologies and others about opportunities in Kansas City technology. Their website content reached more than 10,000 tech professionals, raising awareness about industry subsectors and workforce opportunities in IT.

KCnext partnered with MARC to host the KC Tech Industry Workforce Tour for approximately 40 educators and tech professionals. Three technology companies (t2 Studios, Fishnet Security and Cerner) presented tours of their facilities and discussed workforce opportunities and recruiting methods. The three companies represented both small and large companies and a diverse representation of the tech industry, including digital media, information security and health care technology. Many educators thought this was a cost-effective, simple way to begin teaching the problem-solving skills needed in technology careers.

KCnext also hosted "Keeping Up with Mobility," which included a panel of executives from Garmin, Cerner, Sprint and Accenture. Mobility is a pervasive emerging trend in the tech industry; the panel shared best practices and thoughts on what the future of mobility will be. One attendee, who owns a small company called Commenco, said that the event helped him to completely rethink his business strategy for the future. He plans to pivot his company in the coming years as a direct result of the conversation at this event.

KCnext produced a video for the technology industry in Kansas City. The result is a 90-second video that highlights some of the KC tech industry's subsectors which KCnext has identified as having the greatest potential for growth and workforce opportunities in the coming years. KCnext will share the video at speaking engagements and via social media throughout the next year. The video captured several industry subsectors that KCnext will focus on in the next year in its marketing and business recruitment efforts: financial technology, digital media, health care IT, information security and telecommunications. This approach will enable companies to recruit talent and build opportunities in a more targeted way.

**Digital Storytelling**

Another objective of the grant was to host "Edge of Innovation" events to bring together researchers, large corporations, small businesses and businesses owners. Sessions would include: latest in industry and university research, industry needs, resources for small business, and how small businesses can take advantage of federal programs. These events would enable small companies to gain access to market intelligence and result in formal business relationships among small companies and with larger corporations.

One of the fast-growing and emerging IT sectors in Kansas City is digital storytelling. A key result of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator program was the creation and growth of a Digital Storytelling cluster in Kansas City. On June 21, 2012, KCSourceLink produced a first ever for Kansas City – The Digital Storytelling Forum. The forum had 246 attendees and was driven by leaders from KCSourceLink,
Hallmark, the University of Missouri, the Mid-America Regional Council, the Full Employment Council, and KCnext. The event brought together young digital media businesses and established companies that have found national and international success in everything from short films to commercial production and feature films.

Keynote speaker Frank Rose, contributing editor for Wired magazine and the author of The Art of Immersion: How the Digital Generation Is Remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the Way We Tell Stories, provided insights on the evolution of storytelling, which he called “a defining element of the human experience.” Panelists who spoke throughout the day long conference discussed the components of digital storytelling from the tools available to the skill sets required to create an innovative product. Other topics included stories of how to break into digital media, personal case studies and projects as well as how the KC area should plan for the future growth of the digital media industry. A FastTrac® New Venture program for digital media startup companies followed the event. These programs and other outcomes from the EDA's Jobs Accelerator grant have led to very high interest among the region’s IT interests to support this industry sector initiative.

Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) also convened exploratory meetings with several storytelling components (internal and external) with the intention to develop a cohesive curriculum for digital media careers. KCKCC also held a Digital Storytelling Forum in September 2013 to increase awareness throughout the community of what this term means, to increase awareness among the community of what KCKCC has to offer in these disciplines, and to connect students with employment opportunities. There were 92 people in attendance and KCKCC has determined that the Digital Storytelling Forum will be an annual event. Digital storytelling was an unknown term at KCKCC and is now being used throughout classes and curriculum.

In addition to information technology and manufacturing, JCCC has also been taking a look at digital storytelling programs and held interdisciplinary faculty meetings with Journalism, English, Interactive Media, Web Technology and Animation to discuss the formation of a degree program that crosses the boundaries of these divisions.

JCCC faculty visited the Journalism school at the University of Missouri to help formulate Associate Degree programs that meet industry needs and maximize transfer to four-year institutions. They also have articulation agreements under discussion with Emporia State University, Northwest Missouri State University and the University of Missouri.

JCCC hosted a 3D Animation Competition for local high school students. An Emerging Technology & Communications degree (scheduled to go before JCCC’s Education Affairs Committee in November 2013) has grown out of the discussions for digital storytelling with cooperation from the following JCCC programs: Entrepreneurship, Interactive Media, Journalism, Marketing, and Web Technologies.

A DigiStory Center website was created and published on http://students.jccc.edu/jhopper/wordpress (this is a temporary site until the web host company is selected).

“Working on the DigiStory KC website has been a very valuable learning experience. Two of my strongest passions have always been computer programming, and Digital art. Web design puts these two passions together into a single career. The process working on this site has been a constant string of logic puzzles that needed to be solved, and it has been a blast solving these problems.”

— Andrew Tribble, JCCC Student/ JCCC Student Web Technician
Manufacturing, Supply Chain and Export Improvements

In addition to IT, Kansas City is working to grow and sustain strong manufacturing and supply chain industries in the region that require strong exporting programs and assistance. The KC Accelerator program supported work with KC SmartPort and others focused on product export to assist advanced manufacturing and information-technology firms export their goods and services outside the region to national and international businesses. The Jobs Accelerator program assisted advanced manufacturing and IT firms with exporting goods and services outside the KC region to national and international businesses.

KC SmartPort worked with several automotive parts manufacturing companies interested in the KC region and the international assistance available. They worked with several organizations to host several events on exporting, international shipping, foreign trade zones and customs policies. KC SmartPort and others worked with the Journal of Commerce to host an inland distribution conference in KC and continued work with the World Trade Center and other international organizations to provide technical training to KC area companies.

KCSourceLink and Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), Missouri Enterprise the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration and the U.S. Department of Commerce conducted the Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Connectivity Forum on May 3, 2012. The U.S. passenger railcar industry has virtually vanished over the last 30 years and must be re-established to meet future demand for an efficient network of passenger rail corridors that offer a safe, energy efficient and environmentally friendly way to connect communities across the country. The Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Connectivity Forum had 155 people attend and gave manufacturers a chance to learn more about entering the rail supply chain through panel discussions and an opportunity to meet one-on-one with prominent rail industry OEMs.

KCSourceLink worked with Kansas City Smartport and other organizations focused on product exporting and assisting advanced manufacturing and information technology firms export their goods and services outside the Kansas City region to national and international businesses.

In cooperation with the Kansas City branch of the U.S. Commercial Services, KCSourceLink developed a map of exporting resources, based on five key areas along a continuum of export assistance: Explore Exporting, Get Training, Research Markets, Identify Partners and Counseling/Support.
KCSourceLink worked with the following partners to design this resource map that has become a core communication tool in raising the visibility of exporting resources in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

- Metropolitan Community College
- U.S. Commercial Service – Kansas City
- World Trade Center Kansas City
- International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City
- Small Business and Technology Development Center at University of Missouri – Kansas City
- Small Business Development Center at Johnson County Community College

There were 18 organizations that worked together to update profiles in KCSourceLink’s resource database, The Resource Navigator. KCSourceLink educated entrepreneurial support organizations and economic development agencies about resources available to help small businesses in exporting and hosted a workshop based on framework described above on June 25, 2013, to educate more than 30 ESOs and economic development agencies on exporting resources.

In addition, work has been done to connect KCSourceLink.com to the Export Questionnaire from export.gov. Based on scores from taking the questionnaire, KCSourceLink.com refers individuals to the appropriate local resources that can help at any stage of exporting.
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

One of the KC Accelerator objectives was to work with the region’s three community colleges to align workforce development training with one another’s programs and customize training leading to credentials in advanced manufacturing and IT.

Johnson County Community College (JCCC) focused primarily on curriculum development by hiring an employer liaison staff person to conduct interviews with manufacturing and IT companies. Approximately 100 interviews were conducted with companies. Manufacturing has shown the greatest need for qualified employees in the region. On-the-job training is very common and sometimes preferred. A person who is mechanically inclined and willing to learn is all most manufacturers require.

When asked about which specific credentials or certifications are critical, most manufacturers stated that all they require is people who show up for work each day and have a good work ethic. Communication skills, teamwork and positive attitude are sought and those who can think critically and troubleshoot are valued.

Soft skills are the most noticeable gaps. The ability to communicate and work together as a team is a valued trait. Also, supervisory skills are lacking. To that end, JCCC put together a Manufacturing Supervisory Certificate. Webco Manufacturing in Olathe, Kan., is one example of a company taking advantage of such training. Plant supervisors have gained knowledge about how to work effectively with their crews. The six months of supervisory classes were so successful that Webco chose to put all of their managers through the same training. Universal themes expressed by the majority of the manufacturers are that the parents and high schools do not talk about the opportunities available in manufacturing. There is a definite disconnect between the jobs which exist in manufacturing and the knowledge that there are opportunities available for those with mechanical and technical abilities.

The Information Technology sector has seemed to fare somewhat better in finding qualified employees, and skills gaps are not as common as manufacturing. Basic computer knowledge and programming skills usually get an applicant in the door and on-the-job training is very common. Most community colleges offer the courses needed to enter the IT field.

The following IT and Advanced Manufacturing courses were developed at JCCC as a result of employers sharing workforce needs:

- Desktop Publishing Photoshop
- iOS Mobile Development
- Computer Concepts – Technology Incorporation
- Industrial Robotics: ControlLogix and Alternative PLC Programming
- PLC Networks and Connectivity

Although KCKCC has Mastercam courses, the college does not fill its stand-alone CAD program. KC Accelerator funds aided in the creation of a consortium of employers who met and voiced the need for further CAD training and curriculum development. KCKCC internal faculty and staff met twice before the consortium meeting to discuss CAD training and what strengths and weaknesses exist. On Sept. 18, 2013, JE Dunn Company and Johnson Controls participated in a consortium breakfast that lasted more than two hours and included 15 people. Participants discussed workforce needs and identified two training program needs: 1) a curriculum that addresses trade employees transitioning to office and administrative roles; and 2) curriculum for a workshop focused on sub-contractors. KCKCC hired a curriculum developer to create both of these training programs.
KCKCC also developed curriculum for the FLEET program, which includes training components in the three key areas of Financial Literacy, Essential Employability Skills, and Entrepreneurship. Manufacturing employers emphasize the need for improvements in employability skills and financial literacy. Manufacturing employers also look for ways to encourage innovation and efficiency in an entrepreneurial setting. KCKCC will offer FLEET training to approximately 1,000 Technical Education Center (TEC) students in the next three years as part of the Training for Employment (T4E) program. The FLEET program is being launched in increments throughout fall 2013. The Jobs Accelerator grant was critical financial support, filling an immediate need to develop curriculum for the first cohort of students.

Mobile app development is a growing field within the information technology sector and has many applications in advanced manufacturing. To expand the pool of individuals in the Kansas City region capable of developing mobile apps, MCC and JCCC partnered with a local company, RareWire, to develop entry and advanced level stackable courses in app development using RareWire’s software and development studio.

Based in Kansas City, Mo., RareWire is a software and services company that currently provides technology, design and support capabilities to create native Apps on iOS and Android devices through the use of the RareWire App Creation Studio. Partnering RareWire subject matter experts and college instructional designers, the stackable certificate courses were designed and then delivered in a train-the-trainer format to develop a pool of instructors at MCC and JCCC creating broader access to this training going forward. In the pool is an MCC employee who specializes in work with advanced manufacturing and can now apply mobile apps in the field.

JCCC had 1,623 students enrolled in the newly developed courses and programs at the community college over the period of the grant. JCCC also hosted a Workshop on “Voice of the Customer” in which 158 people attended, primarily from the business community. Robin Lawton was hired to facilitate the four-hour workshop to explore customer-sensitive innovation. Marketing was targeted to IT and Advanced Manufacturing companies.

In addition to curriculum development projects, Metropolitan Community College has collaborated with PREP-KC on developing career pathways in a variety of areas to include IT and advanced manufacturing. In support of the related outcome of this grant, MCC has prepared a summer manufacturing career exploration program as an option for high school graduates of the class of 2014.

MARC has also produced a number of reports on kcworkforce.com to highlight high growth occupations and industries, including special reports on manufacturing, digital storytelling and the overall economy of the Kansas City region.

MARC hosted two tours to inform educators on necessary workforce skills and education requirements for jobs in IT and manufacturing. A manufacturing workforce tour was held in June to highlight best practices and increase skills demand for manufacturing and engineering careers. Another tour focused on IT was held in September to highlight workforce demands and best practices in talent recruitment among three different IT employers in KC. There were about 40 attendees at each of the events. Feedback from secondary school educators was so positive that work is underway to continue these events to build and strengthen the career pipeline for manufacturing and IT jobs.
TRAINING PROGRAMS

In response to employer feedback regarding workforce demands, several training programs and job placement programs were implemented.

Business Assessments

In November 2012, MCC Institute for Workforce Innovation invited six companies to participate in the Jobs Accelerator grant in which each company would receive up to 40 hours of systems’ review with recommendations for improvement and training in various areas.

The review tools used were unique to each organization and represented the need of the client. Each company was assigned a consultant or a team of consultants to review the company’s processes to determine their internal/external needs to retain or increase employment in their respective organizations.

During the review of the processes at each company a series of observations were made and analysis performed. As a result of the analysis, a report of findings and recommendations has been made, which is the basis for the reports given to each participating company. In some cases a follow up meeting was held with the company to further define the analysis and provide input as to recommendations for improvement.

There were a total of six companies that initially were recruited and indicated interest in the grant opportunity and are listed below. Of these initial six, three received reports and only one requested and received a follow up visit to discuss the report in detail. The others decided to drop out of the process due to time constraints.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Participated</th>
<th>Received Report</th>
<th>Received recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mast Technologies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultrad</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InnovaPrep</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy Technologies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shatto Milk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare Wire</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participating companies received a complete report with an analysis of data and comparisons of this data to industry leaders and/or best practices leading to a number of recommendations.

The intent of the recommendations are to provide a set of resources each company could use to retain or increase their current level of employees, provide continual improvement in various areas of their organization and to be used as a holistic approach to corporate improvement as well. MCC also suggested interventions where appropriate, and how MCC or other organizations could help the businesses implement the action steps.

IPC Certification Training

MCC established an IPC Authorized Training and Certification Center at the Southland Training Center (STC). The STC houses an electronic circuit soldering training lab. KC Accelerator funds were used to support teacher certifications and instructional/student supplies.
An MCC instructor was sent to EPTAC, an IPC Certified Center, and successfully completed IPC J-Standard certification and IPC-A-610 recertification. As a result of MCC’s interaction with EPTAC, a partnership is being developed for MCC to operate under EPTAC’s IPC certification, certify instructors as master instructors, and substantially reduce the time for MCC to offer IPC instructor certification in support of area companies. Under this agreement MCC will be authorized to use IPC curriculum and course materials and receive technical updates.

Since 2000, MCC has provided electronic circuit initial and recertification to more than 1,000 Honeywell FM & T employees. Honeywell is relocating and has decided to contract with MCC to provide all their electronic circuit (soldering) training at the MCC Southland Training Center (STC) rather than moving their training lab to the new location. The STC is located in south Kansas City at the former Richards Gebaur Air Force Base, very near Honeywell’s new site. The center is equipped with Honeywell donated soldering equipment. The 4,000-square-foot building is all open space with open classrooms and labs in the four corners.

Computer Integrated Machining and Manufacturing:
Computer Integrated Machining and Manufacturing (CIMM) workers use manual lathes, manual mills and computer numerical control (CNC) equipment to manufacture precision metal parts. This program, designed by MCC’s Precision Machining Consortium industry partners, begins with an intensive, one-semester certificate (mill or lathe) that prepares students to begin a career in manufacturing and machining. After completing the certificate, students can increase their skills and versatility by taking additional classes, such as CNC and Mastercam, or by earning an Associate of Applied Science degree. Successful learners will master the basics of manual mill or lathe machining through 10 weeks of classroom and lab activities:

- Gain an orientation to Computer Numerical Control (CNC) programming and operation.
- Complete a paid internship as an entry-level machinist with a consortium manufacturing company during the last six weeks of the semester.
- Take a strong first step in a rewarding, in-demand career field.

The program’s consortium partners include ATK/Lake City Plant, Badder-Johnson, Vector Tool & Engineering, Kocher+Beck Computech, Gray Manufacturing, Best Tool & Manufacturing, Brunson Instrument, Clay & Bailey, Creative Blow Mold Tooling, Fike Corporation, Machine Laboratory, Mead Westvaco-Calmar, Pride Manufacturing, R&D/Leverage, SOR, Triumph Structures and Vista Manufacturing.

An Affiliate Agreement has been developed to create a seamless transition for Johnson County Community College students pursuing this program at MCC. Additionally, an articulation agreement has been developed between MCC and the University of Central Missouri for completers of the program to pursue a bachelor’s degree. With this addition, stackable credentials have been developed for advancement from short-term training through four-year degrees.

In spring of 2013, MCC enrolled 27 students in the initial offering of the CIMM Lathe program and 30 in fall 2013 in the CIMM Mill program, for a total of 57.

Best Harvest Bakeries Training (Manufacturing)
The Applied Baking Science training course was an in-depth, hands-on introduction to the principle behind baker ingredient laboratory tests provided by Kansas City Kansas Community College. The individual learned widely used dough and ingredient testing technology equipment. The training took
place between July 29 and Aug. 1, 2013. The Effective Bakery Production Manager training was used for Best Harvest Bakeries’ production or plant manager. The objective is to gain a better understanding of the manufacturing plant’s management systems, production schedules, production costs, and document interpretations. This training took place Aug. 5–9, 2013.
- Three people trained (two applied baking science and one effective bakery production)
- Trained individuals will train other employers on new technology and systems.
- “This funded training allowed training materials to be purchased that will be used widely throughout Harvest Bakeries” – Ed Honesty, Harvest Bakeries

**State Street IT Training**

State Street was in need of Basic Excel 2010 and Advanced Excel 2010 training for entry and seasoned level employees, respectively. KCKCC training improved each employee’s ability to work with specific software operations. Instruction included reading and writing macros, deciphering data electronically, large data management, and helped employees update to the 2010 Microsoft Software.

KCKCC trained 218 people during 14, two-hour training sessions spread across five full days. Two assessment meetings were held to customize curriculum specific to State Street’s daily work flow along with one day spent observing employees to capture daily workflow and simulate into training sessions. This training was critical to job retention for these 218 employees.

**Mastercam Version X7 CNC Software Training**

This four-week course served twelve students. The course was filled in less than four hours of marketing the course to employers. The students were employees of Pride Manufacturing and A&E Custom Manufacturing; each owner defined this training as a needed skill for their employees and committed individuals to the training. The training consisted of computer essentials, basic card drawing, geometry modifications, advanced CAD drawing, modeling, drill tool paths, contouring, base machining and more.

**Kansas City Start Up Village (IT)**

KCKCC worked in collaboration with the Kansas City Startup Village (KCSV) to host a skills competition which was named MECA KC Challenge 2013 and matched high school computer science and business students with college and graduate students specializing in computer science or business fields. The teams included a business development strategist, programmers, designers, and marketers, which were tasked with developing creative ways for the small business startups and the corporations to integrate in new IT technology components to further their products and brands. Businesses throughout Kansas City presented the teams with a current issue that is facing them that has a technology component to it. The teams then spent 16 hours developing a solution (with technology components) and presented their solution to a room full of business owners, IT specialists, and other students. During the process there was a focus on mentoring and skills development within each of the groups. This competition took place on three separate days. Most Entrepreneurial City in America (MECA) is a complimentary organization to KCSV and administered the event.

KC Accelerator funds were allocated toward a wide range of IT and Business training curriculum which was then matched to each individual that participated in the MECA KC Challenge and their interest. The exploration and determination of curriculum was done by Kansas City Startup Village companies. Fifty high school and college students and more than 15 startups participated in the event.
Local Ruckus IT Training
Customized IT training was provided by KCKCC for the startup company and technical employer to serve as the trainer for other employees. The training consisted of Ruby on Rails and SQL training. Training allowed better efficiency and assisted in the national launch of a new business entity.

ETA Activities
As part of the ETA portion of the KC Accelerator grant, Full Employment Council and Workforce Partnership worked on recruitment and development of closer relationships with area employers who are either expanding or are interested in recruitment of applicants, training and job development activities. At the end of the EDA grant period, there were 95 individuals enrolled in the program receiving training and 54 of those individuals are participating in on-the-job training. The ETA portion of the KC Accelerator grant had a four-year grant period, which exceeds that of EDA and SBA activities. FEC and Workforce Partnership will continue to work with KC Accelerator partners to deliver workforce services to the business network.

There are currently 55 individuals who have obtained employment in the Jobs Accelerator grant. In an effort to develop more relationships with employers in advanced manufacturing and IT companies, meetings were held with 12 new IT companies, eight new manufacturing companies and 45 National Tool and Machining Association (NTMA) employer members. These advanced manufacturing companies have started recruiting and providing on-the-job training opportunities for program applicants.

Employer Outreach
There were seven hiring initiatives hosted for employers such as Farmland Industries, Johnson Controls, Heartland Sheets and Bayer, where employers interviewed applicants on-site. To date, the following ETA goals have been met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants Started Training</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Training</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-Job Training</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incumbent Training</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed Completed Training</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incumbent Worker Completed Training</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsubsidized Employment</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Hourly Wage Placement</td>
<td>$14.00</td>
<td>$17.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROVIDING SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

The UMKC Innovation Center, through its key programs KCSourceLink and UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center, supported the KC Accelerator program by linking aspiring and existing small business owners with resources that could help them start businesses and grow jobs.

Establish web-based mechanisms for ongoing communications
KCSourceLink.com is widely used by the community to find information on starting and growing businesses in the Kansas City region. KCSourceLink distributes e-newsletters to more than 6,000 people each month with information on starting and growing businesses. With more than 850 friends on Facebook, 3,370 followers on Twitter and a LinkedIn group with more than 4,700 subscribers, KCSourceLink maintains a strong social media presence. More than 127,500 people visited the website in 2012–2013.

KCSourceLink developed a web-based system to connect workers to training and job opportunities, research possibilities for commercialization and small business startup is easily accessible and easily maintained.

KCSourceLink created www.CEOBullpen.com with support from this grant. The site showcases commercialization opportunities from local universities and research institutes and includes a mentor matching module, a search tool for business development resources and a jobs board. The site also includes a test market where young companies can showcase early stage products. Through Sept. 30, 2013, the site had 5,040 visitors. To date, 357 technologies have been evaluated and 38 have been listed on www.CEOBullpen.com for further visibility. Eight new companies have been formed and 29 new jobs created.

This work resulted in the creation of 35 new companies and the expansion of 38 others, resulting in 304 new jobs for the Kansas City region.

Strengthening Regional Commercialization Resources
KCSourceLink conducted a series of meetings with existing commercialization programs to discuss and develop a commercialization infrastructure that knits together current assets and integrates regional commercialization resources to leverage existing capacities, networks and programs. The project included representation from entrepreneurial support organizations, the Whiteboard to Boardroom project, universities and industry.

A series of meetings were held with industry (Sprint, Cerner, VML, UMB, Hallmark), economic development agencies (Kansas City Economic Development Corporation, Mayors Bistate Innovation Team), entrepreneurs (Rarewire, Overlap), entrepreneurial support organizations (KCnext, KC Area Life Sciences Institute, Enterprise Center of Johnson County), academic (University of Kansas, University of Missouri, UMKC) and philanthropic organizations (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation) during the early summer of 2012. These discussions led to the development of a proposal for creation of a proof of concept center. The new Digital Sandbox KC won the i6 Challenge from the EDA and succeeded in filling the identified need for proof-of-concept funds for early stage technologies in the region and in bringing several large corporate partners together with entrepreneurs to create businesses.

A drawing that demonstrates how various organizations in the technology sector support entrepreneurship is now on the www.KCSourceLink.com website. During Global Entrepreneurship Week
in November 2013, a special program will be presented that brings together the organizations and demonstrates their positioning to the public.

Strong relationships have been created between universities in the region to promote research and economic development and focus the technology commercialization effort by better understanding where research and develop synergies exist between industry and universities in the Kansas City region in IT and advanced manufacturing.

Partnerships have been developed with University of Missouri, University of Kansas Center for Technology Commercialization, St. Luke’s Innovation Center, Children’s Mercy Hospital, Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences and nine other organizations, and 357 technologies have been identified.

Memorandums of Understanding have been signed by:
- University of Missouri – Kansas City
- Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences
- Kansas State University
- Wichita State University
- University of Kansas
- William Jewell College
- Mercy R and D
- Northwest Missouri State University
- MRIGlobal
- University of Missouri
- Missouri State University
- Blue Valley CAPS Program

**A new Urban Business Growth Initiative**

KCSOURCELINK also focused on support for 7(j) eligible companies, supporting them through assessment, training and counseling. More than 52 7(j) eligible participants received business assessments, helping them to reach the resources that they need to grow businesses. 20 participants attended FASTTRAC® New Venture training and 13 started new companies. 7(j) eligible companies created 54.5 new jobs during the project.

An outgrowth of the JIAC grant was the development of the Urban Business Growth Initiative which brings together key resources within the Kansas City community to create a suite of tools to support urban business growth. The partnership combines the strengths of KCSOURCELINK, the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center, the Women’s Business Center and Justine PETERSEN into a cohesive and comprehensive program providing counseling, training, credit building and microlending programs to the urban core.

The partnership believes that successful business outcomes can be achieved in the urban core by ensuring that an active pipeline of clients with business aspirations are identified, assessed and supported through training opportunities. The partnership offers access to funding and mentoring through the establishment and growth stages of their businesses.

By combining resources, the partnership knits together pieces of the entrepreneurial ecosystem to provide a seamless process for developing businesses in the urban core. Aspiring and existing business
owners can enter the process at the point that makes the most sense for them and through any of the partner programs.

The program includes the following major components. Owners can access any of the components they need to start or grow their business:

- Outreach and awareness.
- Credit-building tools including secured credit cards and credit building loans.
- Training and technical assistance.
- $1 million loan fund.
- Ongoing counseling and technical assistance.

The following organizations were selected through an RFP process to assist with disadvantaged and minority business development support and to grow businesses through targeted technical assistance and build the capacity of equity organizations to support small business development. These organizations provided support to 38 small businesses and generated 22 new jobs.

- Hispanic Economic Development Council
- IBSA
- GKC Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Employment Network/Women's Business Center
- Kansas Black Chamber of Commerce
- Mid-America Minority Business Development Council
**Developing Exporting Resources for Business**

A key component of the KC Jobs and Innovation Accelerator grant was the development of export-related credentials for small and medium-sized business to gain expertise to enter the export marketplace. In the process of exploring this outcome, partners became aware that a credential existed and preparation for the credential examination was being supported by the Missouri Small Business and Technology Development Center.

The credential is the Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP), awarded by NASBITE (National Association of Small Business International Trade Educators). The NASBITE CGBP certification confirms knowledge in international trade and assures that employees are able to practice global business at the professional level required in today’s competitive environment ([http://www.nasbite.org/?page=CGBPindividual](http://www.nasbite.org/?page=CGBPindividual)).

Given the existence of an export-related credential, KCSourceLink and MCC began a collaboration to identify area resources that could support businesses entering the export market. The final outcome is a website ([http://kcsourceLink.com/growth/exporting-to-expand-sales](http://kcsourceLink.com/growth/exporting-to-expand-sales)) hosted by KCSourceLink that maps the process for businesses to enter exporting from initial assessment to ongoing support when a company begins exporting.

To assist in identifying area resources available, KCSourceLink and MCC participated in a meeting of the Greater Kansas City Area Partners, Export Outreach Team. The meeting was convened by the Small Business Administration and Commercial Services of the Department of Commerce on June 25, 2013. The workshop participants represented many of the area resources available to support business exporting. The resulting resource map provides businesses with a quick resource guide to assist them in entering the export market.
SBA Activities
KCSourceLink was the lead agency on the SBA funded portion of the KC Accelerator grant. They carried out two primary objectives of the grant that linked to small business development activities that was a key driver for several other KC Accelerator activities.

1. Identify 7(j)-eligible businesses and identify needs among disadvantaged and minority businesses for technical assistance.

- KCSourceLink conducted a census for small businesses in Advanced Manufacturing and IT clusters to include 7(j)-eligible businesses, create opportunities, offer technical assistance and help them build relationships with other organizations in their industry cluster. There were 227 companies were identified at the manufacturing symposium event who could provide services to the new rail supply chain and invited to the Rail Forum.

The Digital Storytelling Forum marked the beginning of a digital storytelling cluster for Kansas City, helping to inform workforce and economic development decisions. There were 151 companies identified for the digital storytelling cluster. Since this census, additional work has been completed to better define the cluster and determine needs for further growth.

- KCSourceLink worked with partners to identify previously unknown cluster companies and include 7(j) businesses in cluster activities. These activities resulted in effective collaboration between KCSourceLink partners that serve minority businesses and increased capacity of existing 7(j)-eligible business development programs, identification of gaps in services and implementation of new programs.

KCSourceLink and partners provided assistance to 45 7(j)-eligible companies and created 54.5 jobs, exceeding the goal of creating 50 new jobs by 7(j)-eligible companies.

2. Provide technical assistance and conduct feasibility studies for local small businesses, entrepreneurs and 7(j) eligible companies and track success.

- KCSourceLink prepared business assessments using KCSourceLink Network Navigator for 202 aspiring and exiting businesses owners as of June 30, 2013. 52 have been identified as being 7(j) eligible. This exceeded the goal of preparing business assessments for at least 50 businesses, at least 25 minority-owned.

- FastTrac courses were provided for individuals that participated in the manufacturing and digital storytelling forums and resulted in 20 7(j)-eligible businesses participated in FastTrac® program with 13 confirmed company starts, exceeding the goal of 10 company starts.

- KCSourceLink tracked business startup and growth through KCSourceLink's Biz-Trakker® client relationship management system. The goal was for a minimum of 25 businesses to be established and tracked over the two-year grant period and a minimum of 50 businesses to report growth. At the end of the grant, 35 new companies started and both startup and existing businesses reported 304 new jobs.
LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

To encourage further partnership and collaboration on additional JIAC grants or others that involve several agencies, the following lessons learned have been contributed as a result of the KC Accelerator project.

Lessons Learned

At the funding agency level:

1. Make sure that grant timeframes are consistent across all funding entities. This would allow better collaboration and alignment of project goals and milestones.
2. Consider joint visits from funding agencies rather than separate visits to encourage full collaboration.
3. Each funding stream came with specific rules and requirements that inhibited a creative approach to get disadvantaged people into jobs that would replace H1B Visa holders. It was difficult to accomplish the goals of the grant to fill H1B occupations, when ETA required work to be done with disadvantaged individuals who do not have the skills to fill high-skilled occupations or be trained in those areas.

At the regional level:

1. A better referral system is needed between partner organizations to decrease duplication in business outreach, and the program identified the need to improve marketing resources.
2. Technologies need to be updated within agencies to share information and keep companies informed about public resources.
3. When trying to conduct business assessments, MCC struggled with organizations being able to make employees available for the customized training component. The size of the organizations to be served under this type of activity needs to be considered for future related activities. The companies served in this activity simply did not have the capacity to release four to six employees for half-day training sessions.

Best Practices

1. The grant has been very beneficial for business relationships at the community colleges. The business liaisons were able to contact numerous businesses and the colleges received numerous business contracts as a result of visits. JCCC plans to develop three to four new courses and possibly hire a full-time instructor to teach classes for Industrial Maintenance.
2. KCKCC will host additional training opportunities for companies involved with the customized training programs. They will partner on career initiatives that will aid in their current hiring of community college students.
3. To ensure placement occurs for job seekers following training, FEC invites employers to the table to validate the training that is provided by local training providers. Training cohorts are based on employer demand for new employees and participants are more successful when they know an employer has committed to hire graduates.
4. Jobs were targeted for job seekers based on the relative distance from the job site to the participant’s home to insure that transportation and timely arrival to and from work is possible based on the location of the employer.
5. The ETA funding and EDA funds used for training made it very beneficial to providing customized training for small companies and startups.
6. Critical connections were made between education and industry to help promote the creation of career pipelines for advanced manufacturing and IT. These connections helped strengthen
existing courses being offered and develop new curriculum to help ensure our region has a pipeline of quality workers entering the workforce and advancing along the existing pipeline.

7. The grant supported the development of supply chain and logistics training where all three of the region’s community colleges entered into an agreement to collaboratively promote and offer courses relative to industry needs. These agreements have resulted in a more efficient process for providing high demand training programs. In addition, career pathways have been identified and development in part by PREP-KC and KC SmartPort for high school students entering the workforce.

8. An exporting resource map and system of providers was created to better connect manufacturers with export opportunities. Stronger programs now exist to connect research at local universities and research centers with commercialization opportunities through tools and resources developed through KC Accelerator.

9. The numerous forums and events supported by the grant allowed partners to increase awareness about industry needs, economic development and startup opportunities, and career opportunities. Stronger partnerships were also formed between organizations that are working in specific industry clusters.

10. The digital storytelling industry by was strengthened by conducting research and identifying the region’s strong competitiveness within the sector. New curriculum was developed, educators are incorporating digital storytelling into more disciplines, and nonprofits and educational organizations are working together to increase student and youth awareness about career and entrepreneurial opportunities within the digital media field.
SUCCESS STORIES

1. Brandon Schatz and Sportsphotos (digital storytelling)

Brandon Schatz is 7(j) eligible and started his business through a FastTrac® New Venture course. He was referred to Digital Sandbox KC through a KCSourceLink assessment and has grown his company. Recently one of his photos of The Color Run in Brooklyn was featured on the cover of New York City’s Metro newspaper.

Sportsphotos.com provides a platform and marketplace for sports photographers to store and sell their sports photos. The company has also been selected for Techstars Patriot Bootcamp.

2. Corbin Soliday and Madd Kidd Films (digital storytelling)

Corbin Soliday attended the first ever Kansas City Digital Storytelling Forum, and then applied to take a special FastTrac® class. As a result of FastTrac®, he changed the name of his 7(j)-eligible company to Madd Kidd Films, formed an LLC and generated positive cash flow.

Madd Kidd Films specializes in post-production editing for films, commercials, web videos or any sort of digital video. On the cutting edge of video technology, Madd Kidd believes every creative idea has a little “madness” to it.


Nathan Kincaid has come a long way since the Digital Storytelling Forum in June of 2012. He wrote and directed the movie entitled “Martini Lunch” which aired during the KC Fringe Fest. This fall he launched a successful Kickstarter campaign; with the addition of private capital, he has taken his fundraising mark to $11,000.

IDMC is a film production company and idea generator. In addition to developing its own work, IDMC helps other with their filmmaking goals by offering writing, direction, production management and video editing services.

4. Scott Caplan and KC Media Mob (digital storytelling)

KC Media Mob takes a different approach to the traditional digital storytelling production company in the Greater KC Metro region. The Mob works with an extensive group of freelance talent, telecommuters and artists. The company is virtual and the office exists on the cloud connected to the world. Video pros, motion graphics, photography, writers, models and actors are just a click away.
Scott started the firm after attending the Digital Storytelling Forum and participating in a special FastTrac® class. At that time, he was a freelance videographer, working with local video production companies and nonprofit organizations. Today he leads a collaborative, cloud-based production company.

5. Elizabeth Blanchard Hills, Informed Health Solutions (Tech Venture)

Summer 2013 was a good season for Elizabeth Blanchard Hills, president and founder of Informed Health Solutions. She became part of the newly-inaugurated Digital Sandbox KC and was quickly selected for a scholarship to FastTrac® Tech Venture.

The company has developed a sophisticated blend of both high-touch and high-tech tools, all designed to safely transition newly discharged heart failure patients from hospital to home. Use of the tools typically reduces heart failure readmissions by 60-30 percent, at a per-patient cost far lower than other approaches.

Informed Health Solutions has been awarded an SBIR grant for lowering the cost of congestive heart failure; won a grant from the National Institutes of Health and was a semifinalist for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s “Care About Your Care” video contest.

6. Adam Jones, TapTeach (Tech Venture)

TapTeach sponsored the first Back to School Appfest in August 2013, drawing educators, designers and developers together to address educational applications and evolve the classroom itself. Founder Adam Jones formed his nonprofit to address the challenges teachers face in bringing creative and innovative approaches into the classroom.

Adam participated in FastTrac® Tech Venture with the help of a scholarship from Digital Sandbox KC. Through this business strategy class, he was provided an overview of all the facets involved in building his business, along with the resources that would assist him.

7. Cardioptimus (Whiteboard to Boardroom)

With the help of Whiteboard to Boardroom, Cardioptimus is taking its first steps toward commercialization and shaping the future of cardiac surgery. A medical device company based in Columbia, Mo., Cardioptimus recently announced a new joint venture with Kansas City company Epic Medical Concepts and Innovations (EMCI) to commercialize its Embolisher, a supplemental safety device for use in transcatheter aortic value replacement (TAVR). A minimally invasive device, the Embolisher enhances the safety of TAVR, helping to eliminate the high stroke rate that remains a major clinical hurdle associated with the procedure.

The Whiteboard to Boardroom team helped Cardioptimus develop their business plan, connect with their first strategic partner and secure funding from the Missouri Technology Corporation. Currently in testing, Cardioptimus is pursuing other strategic partnerships to help move their device from operating room to whiteboard to boardroom to operating room.
8. Exporting

Exporting is important to many small businesses. Given that 95 percent of the world’s consumers are outside the United States, exporting can provide additional opportunities and lead to economic growth. In the Kansas City area, exporting was not on the radar for many businesses, and most were not connected to the resources that could help them.

Working in cooperation with several resource providers, KCSourceLink launched a concerted effort to champion exporting and highlight resources. Starting in July 2013 KCSourceLink featured a series of blog posts focused on exporting, highlighted resources in the newsletter and rebuilt the exporting section of the website. The result: in the summer of 2012, top exporting resources came up only 60 times in The Resource Navigator® searches. In the summer of 2013 that number rose dramatically to 660.

- **Junk Architects** is a well-established architecture firm based in downtown Kansas City. The firm has a wide range of experiences in design on projects varying from large churches to commercial structures to large multi-family housing projects. They also are solid in their practice specializing in medical installations, and more specifically in the design and new and renovated radiology imaging centers.

  A year ago, Rob Junk and his team made the determination that they could grow their MRI specialty design practice and they looked to exporting their expertise in design to an international audience. To better explore the opportunities, the team felt they needed more education in international trade, particularly in exporting. They enrolled in the SBA Export Training class offered in partnership between the SBA, the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center, KCSourceLink, and the World Trade Center/Kansas City. In addition, the UMKC-SBTDC continues to serve as a business counselor for the ongoing development of the Junk organization.

  As a result of the trainings, Junk Architects was better equipped to do business overseas. Now, specifically, Junk has received contracts of over half a million dollars and has an inside track on several million dollars more contracts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, they have been asked to provide proposals in three other Middle Eastern countries. Junk revenue has increased by over 50 percent in the past year, due largely to exporting of architectural design services.

- **Surmount Studios** is in its infancy as a company. Formed by two young entrepreneurs several years ago, Surmount provides high-end web development services, graphic and brand design services, and contract website development and optimization services. Through the SBA Export Training program and a FastTrac® educational course, Surmount has gained a foothold not only in the United States, but internationally.

  Today, Surmount Studios has regular clients in four Latin and South American countries. The company has recognized its niche to serve small and medium sized construction and construction-related businesses and conducts active campaigns in Spanish, Portuguese and
English. Surmount has assisted their clients in finding business opportunities in over 60 Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries on two continents.

The Surmount ownership team continues to grow their knowledge today by attending other classes offered by the SBTDC. Revenues have increased by over 300 percent and employment has gone from three to eight in the United States, due in large part to their work internationally.

9. Workforce Development Successes

- Robert was utilizing the services offered at Full Employment Council due to a layoff with employer in February 2012. Although he had a solid work history and a bachelor’s degree in Biomedical and Medical Engineering, he had been unsuccessful with his job search. After attending a Career Exploration session for Advanced Manufacturing and IT Careers, Robert committed to attend training. He successfully completed training and employment as an Engineering Technician where he made $23.00 per hour. He has now transferred to Florida where he continues to be employed as an Engineering Technician. The company even paid his relocation expenses. He is gainfully employed and is extremely pleased with his job and his future.

- Johnson Controls LLC is a global diversified technology and industrial leader with 168,000 employees that help create quality products, services and solutions to optimize energy and operational efficiencies of buildings; lead-acid automotive batteries and advanced batteries for hybrid and electric vehicles; and interior systems for automobiles. Johnson Controls has a location in Riverside, Mo., where they make seats for the Ford F-150, made at Ford Motor Company’s Kansas City Assembly Plant in Claycomo, and the Chevrolet Malibu, produced at the General Motors Fairfax Assembly Plant in Kansas City, Kan.

The company requested assistance to add 110 jobs with an average wage of $17.20 per hour in early 2013 in partnership with the Full Employment Council/Missouri Career Centers. There were 245 applicants identified and interviewed through customized services and then many were selected for employment as production team members for various shifts on the Ford and GM product lines. Johnson Controls LLC has used Jobs Accelerator grant and On-the-Job training program to train 24 of their 105 employees hired. The Human Resources Team actively participated with the Full Employment Council/ Missouri Career Center to receive referral of new employees’ selection through the process. This collaboration has allowed the company to add new workers, utilizing the staff support provided by the career center. In addition the company has utilized the training and development programs within the career center, such as the career readiness workshops and on the job training programs to provide skill training for their new hires and prepare them for careers in advanced manufacturing. Having the network of www.jobs.mo.gov to post their positions has provided the company savings on advertising for their open positions. There were a series of eight tests and mathematical assessments utilized for the purpose of finding the depth of the applicant’s mathematical ability. Interview sessions were conducted, four of which took place at the Career Center and four at the worksite. Johnson Controls, LLC recruiters have allowed FEC to provide quality customer service to the job seekers as well as provide feedback on the status of any applications made. Johnson Controls
recognizes the Full Employment Council/Missouri Career Center as a partner in their recruiting efforts and consider this partnership as an integral part of their staffing and training solution.

- **Heartland Sheets LLC** has a manufacturing facility at the Northland Industrial Park in Kansas City. The plant processes corrugated container board for box manufacturers. Heartland Sheets is a newly formed division of Indianapolis-based Schwarz Partners LP, a holding company that has divisions in various industrial manufacturing and distribution sectors.

Earlier this year the company had plans to add 43 jobs with an average wage of $49,000 and generate an annual payroll of $2.1 million. Heartland Sheets LLC worked in partnership with the Full Employment Council/Missouri Career Centers in the last year to identify applicants through customized services provided by the career center, such as testing and assessments; use the On-the-Job training program to train seven of their employees for careers; and hire two people.

Heartland Sheets LLC’s human resources staff actively participated with the Full Employment Council/Missouri Career Center to receive referrals for new employees. To date the employer has provided the following training through the Jobs Accelerator grant:

- Operation of the BHS Corrugating Machine.
- Tracking monitors for controls.
- Control monitoring for thickness of corrugated sheets.
- Control monitoring for lengths of corrugated sheets.

These steps are very critical for mass production and especially in the measurement control as production size and thickness would change with every customer order. In addition to training on the BHS Corrugating Machine, the company also interviewed for a maintenance mechanic, a position that requires a very high skill level of knowing repair of gauges, monitors and general machine maintenance. Heartland Sheets LLC management and recruiters, through their weekly communication with the Full Employment Council/Missouri Career Center, has hired seven participants through the Jobs Accelerator program.
# Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Final Progress Report

**Project Name:** KC Regional Jobs Accelerator Grant

**Progress Report Ending:** 9/30/2013  
**Submission Date:** 11/8/2013

**EDA Grantee Name:** Mid-America Regional Council  
**ETA Grantee Name & Number:** Full Employment Council  
**SBA Grantee Name:** UMKC/ KCSourceLink

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Objective</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Resource and Inputs</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity Output</th>
<th>Program Outcome</th>
<th>Quarterly Progress Report (based on outcomes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Provide leadership to the Regional Innovations Program team by convening team meetings, working with employers, community colleges, universities, workforce investment boards, and other stakeholders to establish stronger sector-based partnerships in advanced manufacturing and information technology. | EDA | SBA grant funds (Funding Agency)  
Wal-Mart Foundation grant  
Partner’s in-kind services | Convene Regional Innovations Program Team meetings and establish stronger sector-based partnerships in both advanced manufacturing and IT. | Monthly meetings to discuss program integration.  
Develop quarterly newsletter to provide information and updates on the accelerator program to the public | Stronger workforce development system in support of advanced manufacturing and IT.  
Participation from program partners and organizations | Held meetings throughout the grant to collaborate across programs and share information among partners. Over the grant period, about 20 KC Accelerator team meetings were held.  
Convened the Regional Workforce Intelligence Network to review labor market trends and discuss workforce priorities.  
Conducted focus groups with IT and manufacturing employers and convened sector partnership meeting to identify top workforce issues to be addressed.  
Hosted Regional Workforce Summit in June 2012.  
Launched new kcworkforce.com website with targeted industry reports and career pathway data. Created new site, careermekc.org, with information about manufacturing careers. Distributed monthly workforce indicators e-newsletter with real-time labor market information.  
Hosted manufacturing workforce tour in June to highlight best practices and increase skills demand for manufacturing and engineering careers. Hosted IT workforce tour on Sept. 19, 2013, |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Effort Description</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop web-based mechanism for ongoing communications and to connect program partners, employers, and stakeholders to business development and employment opportunities.</td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>EDA grant funds (Funding Agency)</td>
<td>Establish website for program partners and community stakeholders to connect to business development and employment opportunities Showcase technologies and ideas available to CEOs and businesses leaders, connecting talent to ideas. Develop website that will showcase technologies and ideas available to CEOs and businesses leaders, highlight research at universities and integrate a talent and workforce component.</td>
<td>February 2012 website launch. Minimum of 5,000 users for the website. 100 commercialization technologies identified JCCC will develop website and online resource to educate community on digital storytelling industry and opportunities in the region. <a href="http://www.ceobullpen.com">www.ceobullpen.com</a> website launched in 2012. 5,040 visitors accessed the site by September 30, 2013. 129 people have reviewed technologies Eight business starts; 27 new jobs JCCC created the DigiStory Center website and published on <a href="http://students.jccc.edu/jhopper/wordpress">http://students.jccc.edu/jhopper/wordpress</a> (this is a temporary site until the web host company is selected.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop marketing campaign that aligns with KCADC recruitment efforts to broaden visibility of existing advanced manufacturers and IT companies with concentration on small to mid-sized companies.</td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>EDA Grant Funds KCADC In-Kind Support</td>
<td>Design marketing effort to reach businesses to support supply chain opportunities in advanced manufacturing and IT Increase awareness of manufacturing and IT in Kansas City Host local events to convene IT industry leaders Minimum of 100 company leads inquiring about locating in Kansas city Launch marketing campaign in 2012 for Google fiber activities Host tech leaders in the region and identify emerging IT trends and top clusters within the industry. Develop strategies to recruit IT talent and promote IT entrepreneurship and innovation in Kansas City. Product a video to profile the tech industry to be shared online and promoted through social media.</td>
<td>KCADC established new KCnext membership group to convene IT companies and professionals to promote KC region for IT business. KCnext facilitated over 70 collaboration opportunities among KC regional tech firms and participated in several recruitment projects. KCnext hosted several IT networking events including: - Technology Entrepreneur Speaker Series Program. - Four radio segments on the AM business channel in Kansas City for “Entrepreneur KC.” - A panel event with Accenture centered around mobility and what is in store for the future of Kansas City as well as globally. - KC IT symposium with more than 300 IT professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate regional commercialization resources to leverage existing capacities and create strong relationship between universities in region to promote research and economic development.</td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>EDA Grant Funds</td>
<td>Conduct a series of meetings with existing commercialization programs to discuss and develop a commercialization infrastructure that knits together current assets. Include representation from entrepreneurial support organizations, Whiteboard to Boardroom project, universities and industry. Create a method that identifies technologies and moves them further down the path to commercialization, including application processes open to universities, industry and others that catalogs technologies for assessment; create technology and market assessment teams; and match management teams to technologies.</td>
<td>Host meetings and document commercialization process in KC region Identify technologies that exist in universities, research institutes and companies and make available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Support Mayors Bistate Innovation Team (MBIT) to support Google high speed broadband infrastructure. MARC will establish a Digital Leadership Team and work with community stakeholders and broadband companies including Google to advance the use of high speed broadband services to support the growth of employment | EDA | EDA Grant Funds MARC CSC In-kind | Prepare strategic plan for how the region will capitalize in Google high speed fiber investment | Monthly MBIT meetings to discuss entrepreneurship, education and other activities. Formation of and regular meetings of the Digital Leadership Team; convening of target groups to advance recommendations from the Mayors’ Bistate Innovation Team High Speed Broadband Playbook (supporting Google investments in the community). | Startup or expansion of at least 20 new companies. Stronger workforce development system in support of advanced manufacturing and information technology. Metrics include number of meetings and participants; narrative results of partner engagements and collaborations. Assessment of regional | MARC supported KC Digital Drive, which is charged with the implementation and stewardship of *Playing to Win in America's Digital Crossroads*, the digital playbook was produced by the Mayor’s Bistate Innovations Team. MARC carried out significant amount of activities:  - Worked with US Ignite and Mozilla to host gigabit hackathon geared toward developing next generation apps.  - Launched 1 Billion Bits event |
in advanced manufacturing and IT industries.

- Assist advanced manufacturing and IT firms with exporting goods and services outside KC region to national and international businesses.
  - EDA: EDA Grant Funds
  - KC SmartPort In-Kind
  - Wal-Mart Foundation Grant
  - Identify existing resources to assist businesses interested in exporting their products, and determine steps are to strengthen regional technical services.
  - Implement steps from the initial assessment to support technical services to companies interested in developing export capabilities.

- Workforce systems to support IT industry.
- Series to help foster conversations between developers and the technical community about the increasingly expanding possibilities for gigabit networks.
- Convened maker spaces and maker groups in KC to explore collaborative opportunities and identify community needs.
- Partnered with KC libraries and Connecting for Good to build digital literacy including identifying funding to support WiFi services in public housing project and training in Kansas City, KS.
- Worked with KC Startup Village to support start-up companies and budding entrepreneurs moving to the region to take part in KC Startup Village and Homes for Hackers initiatives. Assisted in talent recruitment initiatives and track movements of individuals to and from the community.
- Since September 2012, KCSV has become home to 24 new businesses and 60 new jobs.
- Assist advanced manufacturing and IT firms with exporting goods and services outside KC region to national and international businesses.
- EDA: EDA Grant Funds
- KC SmartPort In-Kind
- Wal-Mart Foundation Grant
- Identify existing resources to assist businesses interested in exporting their products, and determine steps are to strengthen regional technical services.
- Implement steps from the initial assessment to support technical services to companies interested in developing export capabilities.
- Conduct 4 exporting workshops for businesses over two-years
- Train a minimum of 20 businesses on export operations
- At least 10 businesses begin export operations
- KC SmartPort held several events related to exporting and supply chain logistics. Worked with several automotive parts manufacturing companies interested in the KC region and the international assistance available. KC SmartPort worked with the Journal of Commerce to host an inland distribution conference in KC. Topics included international shipping, foreign trade zones and customs policies. Hosted four seminars on trade finance, transportation, expansion strategies and small
| Identify 7(j)-eligible businesses and identify needs among disadvantaged and minority businesses for technical assistance. | EDA | EDA Grant Funds | Identify needs among disadvantaged and minority businesses for technical assistance and secure assistance through an RFP process from community organizations. | Provide training and support to these organizations to not only ensure their success in helping small businesses become established and grow, but also build their capacity to serve the community beyond the grant timeframe. | 7 Projects with local equity organizations at $10,000 each
Provide technical services to a minimum of 32 small businesses and document the creation of 20 new jobs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EDA | EDA Grant Funds | In-Kind support from Equity Organizations | Identify needs among disadvantaged and minority businesses for technical assistance and secure assistance through an RFP process from community organizations. | Provide training and support to these organizations to not only ensure their success in helping small businesses become established and grow, but also build their capacity to serve the community beyond the grant timeframe. | 7 Projects with local equity organizations at $10,000 each
Provide technical services to a minimum of 32 small businesses and document the creation of 20 new jobs. |
| SBA | SBA Grant Funds | Complete census of small businesses in Advanced Manufacturing and IT clusters to include 7(j)-eligible businesses to create opportunities to offer technical assistance and to help them in building relationships with other organizations in their industry cluster
Work with KCSourceLink partners, especially those that serve 7(j)-eligible companies to identify aspiring business owners in the identified cluster | Identification of previously unknown cluster companies and inclusion of 7(j) businesses in cluster activities. Development of the census; number of 7(j)-eligible companies identified; document use of the census to inform workforce and economic development decisions
Effective collaboration between KCSourceLink partners that serve minority businesses and increased capacity of existing 7(j)-eligible business development programs, identification of gaps in services; implementation of new programs | Complete census of 7(j)-eligible businesses
50 new jobs in the cluster by 7(j)-eligible companies | Conducted census for inclusion in manufacturing and digital storytelling conferences
The Digital Storytelling Forum marked the beginning of a digital storytelling cluster for Kansas City, helping to inform workforce and economic development decisions. Since this census additional work has been completed to better define the cluster and determine needs for further growth.
54.5 jobs were created by 7(j)-eligible companies in these two clusters.
To assist these and other companies in the urban core a new Urban Business Growth Initiative was developed and funded to support additional 7(j)-eligible companies. |
<p>| Provide technical assistance and conduct feasibility studies for local small businesses, entrepreneurs and 7j eligible companies and track success. | SBA | SBA Grant Funds UMKC In-Kind | Provide business assessments with KCSourceLink Network Navigator Provide First Step FastTrac® and FastTrac® course for interested applicants. Track business startup and growth through KCSourceLink’s Biz-Trakker® client relationship management system. | Document business growth by a number of startups, job creation, sales increases, debt/equity/grant infusion | Prepare business assessments for at least 50 businesses, at least 25 minority owned. Business startup and growth for 25 minority owned businesses in the cluster 20 7(j)-eligible businesses participating in FastTrac®, 10 company starts. A minimum of 25 businesses will be established and tracked over the two-year grant period and a minimum of 50 businesses will report growth. | 202 assessments completed; 52 are 7(j)-eligible. 20 7(j) participants in FastTrac®, 13 company starts 73 companies were tracked including 35 company starts. 304 jobs were created. |
| Work with Metropolitan Community College to identify and provide technical assistance to small advanced manufacturing companies. The technical assistance will be focused on improving operational efficiencies, which would allow for expansion and the hiring of additional employees. | EDA | EDA Grant Funds MCC In-Kind Support | MCC will conduct 40-hour assessments that will include interviews with key personnel, review of process documentation and current technology applications, examination of work processes in warehousing and distribution, production, sales and support operations, and provide recommendations for technology applications. MCC will provide each company with a two-part training for up to six employees. | The first part of the training will be customized online training directly related to refine and implement audit strategies. The second part is a half-day training at a MCC site to refine and implement audit findings. Local businesses which choose to implement recommendations that would improve performance and competitiveness and result in the need to add technology jobs in order to continue to grow. | Six local businesses will become aware of opportunities to improve performance and competitiveness that will lead to creation of more technology jobs. MCC will conduct a follow up survey to determine the adoption of recommendations and the hiring of additional employees. MCC estimates that a minimum of 50 new hires will result from the technical assistance and training. | Completed Assessments and presented final reports to four companies; two companies withdrew from the process. |
| Johnson County Community College will offer a workshop on the Voice of the Customer for local companies. | EDA | EDA funds through MARC CSC to JCCC and JCCC in-kind support | Offer one four-hour workshop on the Voice of the Customer for local manufacturing and IT companies interested in. The enrollments will be tracked by the type of business representatives (IT, manufacturing, other). A follow-up survey of | A minimum of 150 business representatives will be trained in customer understanding to improve company operations. | JCCC hosted a four-hour workshop on the Voice of the Customer facilitated by Robin Lawton in January 2013. Marketing was targeted to IT and |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing and IT companies interested in process improvement. The target audience will be advanced manufacturing and IT companies. The workshop will be free to all participants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Mfg. companies with 158 attendees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host two “Edge of Innovation” symposiums to bring together researchers, large corporations, small businesses and businesses owners.</td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>Produce two symposiums where IT and Advanced Manufacturing clusters intersect.</td>
<td>Minimum of 100 participants each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDA Grant Funds</td>
<td>Sessions will include: latest in industry and university research, industry needs, resources for small business, how small businesses can take advantage of federal programs. These symposia would enable small companies to gain access to market intelligence and result in formal business relationships among small companies and with larger corporations.</td>
<td>May 3 2012 Next Generation Rail Supply Chain Forum – 155 people attended, 87 firms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>June 21 2012 – Digital Storytelling Forum – 246 people attended, 111 firms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with MCC, KCKCC and JCCC to align workforce development training with one another’s programs and universities to customize training leading to credentials in advanced manufacturing and IT.</td>
<td>SBA</td>
<td>Working from the census and through KCSourceLink partners, recruit aspiring and existing business owners to the Frontiers in Innovation session</td>
<td>78 7()-eligible participants in conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SBA Grant Funds to UMKC</td>
<td>Include researchers, companies, and entrepreneurs in cluster activities and collaboration.</td>
<td>Five research/industry projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>Develop stackable credentials in advanced manufacturing and information technology to spur business creation and growth in use of robotics and mobile applications in advanced manufacturing processes. This curriculum development and new credential will create new career pathways for disadvantaged and dislocated workers.</td>
<td>57 students were enrolled in MCC’s Computer Integrated Machining &amp; Manufacturing (CIMM) program. MCC and JCCC met to develop an affiliate agreement to align the programs. The CIMM certificate is the first credential in a stack that will articulate through an associate degree to a bachelor’s degree at UCM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDA Grant Funds</td>
<td>MCC will create a stackable credential in export logistics and management to enable small and medium-sized businesses to gain expertise to enter the export marketplace.</td>
<td>KCKCC delivered training. Workshops and related activities to more than 15 organizations with more than 250 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wal-Mart Foundation Grant</td>
<td>Sector Partnership Taskforce will Connect career pathways for advanced manufacturing and IT with area high school programs through PREP-KC and partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCC &amp; JCCC In-Kind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KCKCC will provide customized training programs for local</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCC will establish a credentialed training program for advanced soldering in a new training facility established to support a large new Honeywell manufacturing plant. The EDA funds will support the curriculum development and provide certification for the teachers to provide the training.</td>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>EDA funds through MARC CSC to MCC and MCC in-kind support</td>
<td>Develop credentialed program for soldering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide career assistance for individuals in advanced manufacturing and IT career opportunities through recruitment, assessments and training program.</td>
<td>ETA</td>
<td>ETA Grant Funds to FEC and Workforce Partnership</td>
<td>Work with community colleges, universities, employers, economic development agencies, small business assistance centers, state job placement centers and other community organizations to develop program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with businesses on job training programs and provide salary costs through OJT for advanced manufacturing and IT businesses that employ grant participants. (Up to 90% for small</td>
<td>ETA</td>
<td>ETA Grant Funds to FEC and Workforce Partnership</td>
<td>Work directly with advanced manufacturing and information technology employers to determine needed skills for current or future hires and work with faculty at community colleges to develop customized training where there are gaps.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Provide tuition costs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers | | | | | |
| Offer entrepreneur training program, FastTrac® | | | | | |
| Will serve 105 incumbent workers. | | | | | |
| Provide support to 50 disadvantaged workers to access tuition for special programs. | | | | | |
| 50 clients receive special tuition services | | | | | |
| 250 disadvantaged workers to access classroom training | | | | | |
| 200 participants enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 160 complete training. | | | | | |
| 125 unemployed workers enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 100 complete training. | | | | | |
| 75 incumbent workers enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 60 complete training. | | | | | |
| 200 participants enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 160 complete training. | | | | | |
| 125 unemployed workers enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 100 complete training. | | | | | |
| 75 incumbent workers enrolled in training; | | | | | |
| 60 complete training. | | | | | |

July Summary: Recruited and Assessed: 176 Enrolled in training: 8 August Summary: Recruited and Assessed: 87 customers Enrolled in training: 8 customers September Summary: Recruited and Assessed: 54 Enrolled in training: 5 customers Total participants recruited: 2773 Total participants assessed: 2773 Total participants served: 136 Total participants enrolled in training: 131 Total participants enrolled in OJT training: 54 Total participants enrolled in COT training: 77 Total participants completed training: 73 Total participants completed COT training: 37 Total participants completed OJT training: 36 Total credentials: 25 Total participants entered unsubsidized employment: 55 Average Hourly Wage: $17.41
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDA Point of Contact: Marlene Nagel/Victoria Ogier</th>
<th>ETA Point of Contact: Clyde McQueen</th>
<th>SBA Point of Contact: Maria Meyers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Develop ongoing relationship with advanced manufacturing and IT businesses and continue to offer OJT services to eligible clients.

Offered to connect job seekers with employers.

Enter employment. 150 participants retained in employment, 90 unemployed workers placed, 60 retain employment in cluster. 150 participants will earn an average or above average wage in the region. 100 disadvantaged workers to access on the job training from advanced manufacturing or IT businesses. 75 incumbent workers enrolled in OJT training. 80 participants receive certificate or credential.

(3) Clay and Bailey Manufacturing
(7) Heartland Sheets
(1) Lafarge
(1) Service printing and Graphics
(1) Ad Hoc Biometrics
(2) Think Big Partners
(1) DTI
(3) A&E Custom Manufacturing
(24) Johnson Controls
(7) Bayer
(1) Automated Motion, Inc
(1) Lou’s Custom Hook-up
(2) McGrath Systems

There were (7) Hiring Initiatives hosted for employers such as YanFeng USA, Harley Davidson, Johnson Controls. Farmland, McGrath Systems, where employers interviewed applicants onsite at the career center.

The current employer partnerships include:
- YanFeng USA
- ICF Industries
- Lindsay Machine Works
- Martin Foundry Co
- C&R Manufacturing
- Pro Con
- Marlen International
- Ford Motor Company
- Continental Tool & Manufacturing—
- Ad Hoc Biometric
Other Updates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Agency/Project</th>
<th>Barriers to Success</th>
<th>Project Achievements/Best Practices</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETA</td>
<td>See final report, Page 25.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Integrated Work Plan Definitions**

- **Integrated Work Plan:** Demonstrates how the proposed project concept will produce substantial benefits and meet objectives.
- **Project Objective:** The proposed solution to an identified need in order to support and/or grow the cluster.
- **Funding Agency:** Name the agency funding the above objective.
- **Resources/Inputs:** Other funds, partners, equipment, etc., that will be invested in the project to meet the objective.
- **Activity:** The specific proposed activities or programs the inputs will be used.
- **Activity Output:** The immediate results of the investment in this activity, and what will be reported to show successful use of resources/funds.
- **Program Outcome:** The medium and long-term changes that lead to achievement of the objective as a result of the activities.
- **Barriers to Success:** Describe any barriers or challenges the project team incurs during the reporting period that impacts the overall success of the project. This would also be a great space to identify technical assistance needs that would help overcome the barriers or challenges described from Federal Support Teams.
- **Best and Promising Practices:** Describe any best or promising practices the project identifies during the reporting period that could potentially be shared with other projects as a peer sharing product.
- **Additional Information:** This space can be utilized at the projects discretion to describe any other narrative style details that would support how the program is achieving or progressing towards each activity.