



**Advanced Manufacturing -MINUTES**  
**February 18, 2025, at 12:00 PM**  
**Clark College Scarpelli Hall Room 214**

**Members Present:** Jay Schmidt (Committee Chair) Board Chair, SW WA High-Tech Council; Alyssa Joyner, SR. Project Manager; Workforce SW WA; Mark Stanley, Recruitment and Training (retired/part-time), Columbia Machine; Craig Lahti, Manufacturing Manager, Columbia Machine; Beto Dantas, President & CEO, Impact Electronic Solutions; Jeff Ripp, Leadman, USNR; Connor Lenhart, Welding Process Specialist, Airgas; Brad D'Emilio, General Operations Manager, Kyocera International Inc; Melanie Walker, CTE & Career Connected Learning (CCL) Coordinator, ESD 112; Margarita Marochkina, Business Navigator, WorkSource

**Guests:**

**Members Absent:** Toni Neary, Director of Community Engagement & Workforce, SME

**Labor Representative:** Labor recruitment attempted

**Clark College:** Will Zander, Faculty Lead & Instructor, Clark College; Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM; Justin Stokes, Associate Director of Development and Partner Engagement at Clark College Foundation; Ann Campbell, Director of Community, Continuing Education and Customized Training; Kathy Chennault, Director of Development, Corporate & Foundation Relations, Clark College Foundation; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College

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The meeting began at 12:00 PM

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The committee will meet next on Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Noon at Boschma Farms.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the previous meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, were approved.

**COMMITTEE OUTCOMES**

Jay welcomed committee feedback regarding the committee outcomes and how the committee measures success. Jay discussed creating a potential scorecard of goals for the committee.

Theo shared the valuable support of the committee as they help prepare students for the workforce.

Theo discussed that the current curriculum has been approved and welcomed committee feedback for outcomes or curriculum changes.

Ann would like to provide short-term training for industry employees.

Jay welcomed feedback on what has shifted in the industry.

Beto recommended that soft skills and intellectual root cause analysis are very important to employers.

- Summary
  - Improve curriculum and have students ready for placements.
  - Active internships/partnerships from industry in classrooms.
  - Placements and having students ready for a job, but having a job aligned with the program and set up before completion, or right after. Direct placements after program completion.
  - Enrollment numbers and tracking for each cohort.

## **PROGRAM UPDATES**

Theo announced that the equipment is getting set up at Boschma Farms. Members are welcome to contact Will for a tour of the building.

Kathy offered to share the equipment list with the industry members.

Kathy shared insight on the DACUM (Developing A Curriculum) curriculum process and how the program was formed based on local and regional needs.

Connor discussed some of the fabrication processes and asked about the program.

Theo discussed the program in comparison to the Welding program and some of the courses offered at Boschma Farms.

Theo announced that, in support of Dr. Brown and in response to industry needs and growing demand for machining, Dr. Brown intends to bring the Machining program back at the College, and we are fully committed to engaging in that process through internal and external processes.

## **Foundation Announcements**

Justin presented several potential proposals to secure the \$3.5 million required for purchasing program equipment. Justin encouraged industry members to contact Kathy or him if they are interested in getting involved.

Kathy highlighted Jay's pivotal role in hosting the PNW Defense Coalition, an organization representing manufacturing companies.

Theo announced a significant increase in mechatronics enrollments and a rise in welding program enrollment, driven by the addition of a weekend cohort.

Theo announced the program is in the last stages of the State approval process.

Theo announced that the Mechatronics program reallocated \$1 million in federal funding for clean energy, though the College is awaiting further updates or potential changes.

## **CURRICULUM**

Alyssa shared the program's current curriculum.

Jay shared insights from his discussions with leaders at GrovTec about integrating AI into manufacturing.

Ann will provide the committee with information on a job skills program grant.

## **CAREER CONNECTED LEARNING**

- About:
  - Career Connected Learning is a network of schools, colleges, workforce boards, employers, and community organizations working together to prepare students for future careers. We help connect education with real-world job opportunities, ensuring students graduate with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed while building a strong talent pipeline for local industries. Website:  
<https://www.esd112.org/stem-initiatives/ccsw/>

Melanie inquired about fall enrollment projections and the sources of incoming students.

Melanie inquired how the program can explore ways to align with the K-12 system, including the possibility of an introductory pathway that allows students to earn credits. She suggested developing a pilot project and highlighted how Career Launch could benefit the program while also providing advantages for employers participating in the initiative.

Theo explained that the College chose not to advertise the program until we receive final approval from the state and the accrediting agency. As a result, cohort projections remain uncertain, but they anticipate a full cohort of 16-18 students.

Theo shared that Dr. Brown has placed advanced manufacturing as a high priority and announced plans to hire a full-time, tenure-track faculty member next year.

Jeff asked about the availability of alternative course times, including evening classes.

Will emphasized the importance of keeping the shop open as much as possible and relying on industry guidance for support.

Jay discussed intern, extern, and flipped possibilities.

Jay is currently working with Career Connect SW on the flipped externship program, focusing on its integration at the high school level, where there is significant activity. He emphasized that expanding opportunities for flipped externships, internships, and traditional externships helps lay the foundation for future engagement and welcomed feedback from the committee.

Kathy supports expanding and strengthening that pathway across the K-12 system.

Melanie suggests offering tours and outreach in local high schools..

## **INDUSTRY FEEDBACK**

Brad inquired about how to initiate intern, extern, and flipped opportunities. He shared past experiences of hosting local middle and high school tours at Kyocera and asked what steps should be taken to get started.

Will discussed a potential opportunity for employers to showcase entry-level job openings for future cohorts.

Theo encouraged advisory committee members to contact him or Will on ways to get involved.

Jay requested a discussion about success stories and suggested following up with the committee next time.

Jay announced that Will Macia may potentially join our committee.

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Jeff mentioned that Woodland, WA, has shut down its metal, wood shop, and manufacturing vocational programs. He asked if any similar developments or initiatives are happening in Vancouver.

Melanie discussed that Cascadia Tech has launched a manufacturing program.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores