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PROSPECTIVE MACHINISTS GET THE M.O.S.T. OUT OF RICH TRAINING
*Maine MEP Brings Mobile Skills Training Program to Scarborough Manufacturer,
Fills 10 Job Openings*

SCARBOROUGH, ME – Rich Technology International is a company that is expanding rapidly and is one of the leading precision metal manufacturers in the state of Maine. The company needed Computer-Numerically Controlled (CNC) machine operators to work with their machinist on cutting edge machining technology as well as a number of conventional machining processes. But, in today’s market, it can be difficult to find workers with the necessary aptitude, skills and knowledge to transition into their operation.

“We needed to hire for positions in all areas, but weren’t sure where to start in terms of recruitment for large numbers of employees,” said Sam Cushing, Human Resources Manager at Rich. “Some satisfied Maine manufacturers had recommended the M.O.S.T. (Machine Operators Skills Training) program, where a mobile training unit would come to us and help equip new workers with necessary job skills. So I contacted Mike Lambert from the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) and asked him to visit us so we could discuss the program in detail.”

Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, six New England divisions of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, including Maine MEP, administer the M.O.S.T. program. The program uses a mobile training unit to train individuals who may be underemployed, looking for a career change or displaced due to plant closure. The program is designed to help local manufacturers fill vacant CNC machine shop positions. Trainees participate in an intensive 80-hour basic operator skills training process, which is followed by a recommended eight week on-the-job training process.

“Rich Technology partnered with the Portland Career Center and the Maine Quality Center to assist with funding to pay for advertisements for the upcoming M.O.S.T.

training, and were able to bring in 56 candidates to be screened initially,” said Michael Lambert, project manager for the Maine MEP. “Then the candidates were given tests for mathematical and mechanical aptitude. An additional 80 hours of basic mechanical training such as blueprint reading, machining fundamentals, and shop math was provided by professional instructors from a local high school and community college.”

“The mobile unit was located in the Rich Technology parking lot to provide the trainees easy access to the shop floor. This allowed the trainees to make the correlation between the training simulations and the actual manufacturing process on the shop floor,” added Cushing. “All 12 progressed to on-the-job training with us and ten of them are now working on the shop floor. They are a real mixed group, ranging from two recent high school graduates to a few very seasoned workers looking to make career changes. We are very happy the Maine MEP was able to help us find and train these workers who are now integral to our production process.”

The Maine MEP is an affiliate of the NIST under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Maine MEP program call 1-800-637-4634.

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