

## ***MSSC Credentials Changing Lives & Saving Tax Payers Millions of Dollars***

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***By, Neil Reddy, Executive Director, MSSC***

The Manufacturing Skill Standards Council's (MSSC) "Pre-Release" programs are offering its Certified Production Technician, "CPT" credentialing programs in both the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and state correctional programs. Now totaling 12 CPT programs (4 BOP and 8 State DOC), and growing every month, data from re-entering "certificants" are showing enormous results.

Of particular success, MSSC recently received outcome data from a partner program with: Kansas Department of Commerce; Kansas Workforce Center; Topeka Correctional Facility (TCF); and the Washburn University/Washburn Institute of Technology. This project was supported by a Second Chance Act grant through the United States Department of Justice and TRAC-7, a Round One TAACCCT grant through the United States Department of Labor.

Beginning in October of 2015, 184 Students were selected from the maximum, medium and minimum security prison populations at TCF. Students in the program had the opportunity to earn several industry recognized credentials including OSHA-10, Forklift and **four levels of MSSC certifications: Safety; Quality; Process & Production; and, Maintenance Awareness.**

The results from the 184 student program participation have been outstanding with 986 earning industry recognized credentials (including **508 full CPT credentials**). Credentials earned targets have been exceeded in the number of industry certifications achieved at 94% with a target rate of 80%. The story gets better....

**Employment:** Since March 31, 2016, effectively 70 students have been released from the facility and **42 (60%)** have found gainful employment. Several participants (13) have had their sentence discharged or moved out of state and so it is difficult to track them post-release. Most importantly, is that only 8 are known to have been rearrested and returned to incarceration. This documents a recidivism rate of only 12% when the national average is 76.6%. With the potential of putting all of these re-entry citizens into gainful employment and on sustainable career pathways, MSSC is changing their lives.

By contrast, had this same population (without CPT & other industry credential training), maintained the same national average rate of recidivism (76.6%) 53 of the 70 would have committed another crime and returned to a life of incarceration. If you look at the average period of incarceration of 5 years multiplied by the average boarding fees (not including trial costs) of \$31,286 p/yr. the total costs to the taxpayer would be \$8.3 million (5yrs. x \$31.3K x 53). With the costs for setting up a "pre-release" program with MSSC at \$45K the costs are more than justified. (*Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics & Vera Institute of Justice*).

**Impact:** A quote from a graduate of the program describes the impact the program has had in her life: *"Since graduating the Washburn Tech, **CPT program here at TCF**, I have a renewed sense of hope for my future. When I first arrived, I thought very little of myself and had a very poor outlook on life in general. When asked to join the program I was thrilled. An opportunity to better myself and decrease my chances of reoffending. This program has been that and so much more. My self-esteem has improved so much over the last year. Graduating the program gave me a feeling of accomplishment that I haven't had in a very long time. I can leave here knowing that I am more than qualified of getting a career so I can support my family and lead a life worth living. I now have the courage to succeed. Failure is no longer an option for me. And I owe it to this program. Both, me and my family are extremely proud of my accomplishments and the doors that have been opened for me. Instead of being afraid of reentering the community, I am excited to get out and apply my new skills and show the world my vast turnaround. This program is truly amazing and I am tremendously blessed to have been able to participate in it."*

Going forward, MSSC will be working with its "pre-release and re-entry" programs to gather larger data samples to further document the great impact its CPT and Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) programs are having on this population and our communities.