

## Kafar Hassan: Friday's Advanced Manufacturing Graduation

### A Time for Dreams to Come True

Capital Workforce Partners working with partners from education and business, are pleased to announce the successful graduation of a number of previously under- and unemployed individuals who will receive certificates in Precision Manufacturing CPM/CAM 4 from the Manchester Community College Program on Friday, March 24th at 10 a.m. at Great Path Academy, Community Commons. Capital Workforce Partners Advanced Manufacturing program support, made possible from federal-state grant investments, has led to eleven individuals graduating on Friday, and all have been placed in manufacturing jobs.

This program is meeting one of the greatest challenges facing advanced manufacturing, including a shortage of labor needed to sustain growth. In addition, there is a generation of incumbent workers nearing retirement, leading to critical levels of need for the next generation of advanced manufacturing workers. At the same time, this provides a great opportunity to support low-income individuals to pursue job-training opportunities as a ladder out of poverty that can have huge impacts on their lives, family and community.

In response to the need to support interested job seekers and advanced manufacturing employers, Capital Workforce Partners, working with its education and training partners and 45 manufacturing companies, in this year alone, have supported over 220 adults to gain manufacturing credentials, with many of them placed in employment.

One of the graduates is Kafar Hassan. A resident of Hartford, "Kafar proved to be one of our more dedicated and committed students right from the start." "He always showed up to class on time and his approach to the classroom and machining labs was always with a winning and positive attitude. Strong class participation, aptitude, preparation and excellent program results were rewarded with a successful interview and excellent first step in a manufacturing career at EDAC Technologies in Newington," said Dave Russell, Manufacturing Program Director at MCC.

Kafar Hassan was a refugee from Ethiopia who came to Hartford a few years ago from South Africa with the goal of establishing himself here before bringing his wife and son here to live. Soon after he moved here, his wife got cancer and died a few months later, leaving his son with relief workers in South Africa.

Fast forward a couple years of working at less than \$10.50 per hour, Capital Workforce Partners connected Kafar with this Advanced Manufacturing Training program at MCC that teaches entry



level CNC Machining and provides a certificate and placement assistance at the end of the program. Kafar is part of the class who will be graduating on Friday, and has already started his job at EDAC Technologies at \$18.00 per hour with room for growth.

Kafar's motivation to succeed is based in part on his desire to raise enough money to move his son Robel from South Africa to live with him here in the Hartford area. He came to Hartford, after leaving Ethiopia, where he was born and educated and migrating eventually to South Africa where he met Benicia his wife and the mother of his son. It was continued unrest that caused him to come here, and it was while he was here that Benicia contracted and succumbed to cancer. Despite further education in Durban and a strong resume in refugee services, he was unable to find a similar career here in Hartford. But through a program for new arrivals conducted by the Hartford Public Library he was introduced and welcomed by members of the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association (AHNA), and was mentored by Dean Amadon, from the Asylum Hill Congregational Church. With Dean's assistance, Kafar was referred to Capital Workforce Partners, where the training opportunity at Manchester Community College became an option. In addition to the training, several individuals supported Kafar's tuition and living costs, and now his full time employment will enable him to realize his dream of having his family together again here in the United States.