



**GRAND RAPIDS  
CHAIR COMPANY**

August 22, 2018

To whom it may concern:

Grand Rapids Chair Company is a family-owned business established in 1997 located in Byron Center, Michigan. We received a \$39,191 STTF grant in October 2017 which enabled us to further invest in the technical skills of twenty-eight of our employees.

Our Brand Promise is to remain a West Michigan furniture manufacturer dedicated to creating high-quality chairs and tables for commercial foodservices spaces. Today our value is rooted in product differentiation. Our future value must be rooted in quality, even shorter lead times, and continued product differentiation to stay ahead of global low-cost competitors. Like all local manufacturers, we must continuously reduce costs, improve quality, reduce delivery times, as well as develop new products and bring them to market faster and faster.

The training we received under the grant helped us remain competitive in this market by ensuring our employees have the technical skills to make sustained process improvements, as well as operate the robotic welding and CNC equipment and software efficiently and effectively. These technical skill sets are critical to our continued success as a West Michigan manufacturer to stay ahead of the overseas competition.

The Basic Metrology & Measurement training has developed the skills of several employees in our Table and Chair Value Streams to ensure we're able to drive efficiency and improving product quality.

The Lean Bootcamp Sessions trained twenty-four hourly production and technical employees as well as office and salaried employees in understanding and the application of lean tools and processes.

Many of our employees have expressed their appreciation for the hands-on practice and new skills they've learned in the training we received under the grant. We've seen improved performance and morale as a direct result of this investment in our people.

We greatly appreciate this program and the support it provides to smaller employers like Grand Rapids Chair.

Sincerely,

Diane Timmer

Human Resources Vice President