



August 12, 2019

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

On behalf of Aspen Surgical Products, I would like to express our appreciation for the workforce development services provided by West Michigan Works! Aspen Surgical was established in 1999 in West Michigan as a small business and has grown to a 100-million-dollar company. We are a worldwide leader and manufacturer of medical products. Aspen carries an extensive line of high quality, cost effective products including Patient and Staff Safety Products, Operating Room Disposables, Instrument Care Products, and Wound Care Products.

We connected with West Michigan Works! because we needed assistance with maintaining our operations at a healthy and competitive state. The medical device industry has and continues to become more competitive as many products are becoming commoditized, global competition develops, and cost pressures increase in the health care industry. Our team pin pointed technical work force development as a key area to improve our operations. We met with Michigan Works! and found great opportunities that aligned with our objectives of training for our incumbent workforce. The savings are pale in comparison to the impact on our culture as we empower individuals with the skills to solve business problems and succeed as a team.

The best way I can communicate how we benefited is to let you know what some of the employees who went to the trainings and benefited from the IWT grant, have to say:

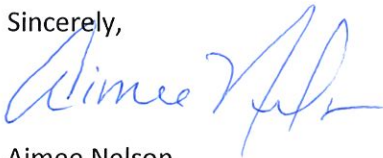
“I had a knowledge / Technology gap. Attended a Solidworks 3D drafting software training and acquired the skills that have allowed me to design, evaluate, and implement ideas towards manufacturing equipment allowing us to save time, and money. Most recent implementation was designing and drafting four variations of custom sensor mounting hardware for photoelectric sensors on conveyors for our automation integration pick and place project. Another application has been to do layout work using accurate dimensioning tools, opposed to pencil and paper. Third example would be to create custom fixturing and being able to hand our machine shop dimensioned drawings, opposed to pencil and paper.”— Justin Burdick, Senior Calibration Technician

"I attended Fanuc Robotics training in Rochester Hills. This training was vital to my job and professional development from an engineering and project manager position. I was implementing a project with three Fanuc robots with no experience. This training have me the understanding and knowledge on how to program and operate the equipment. I know plan on implementing many more projects with Fanuc robots to better the manufacturing processes in my company." - Jacob Miller, Manufacturing Engineer

"I had a knowledge / technology gap. I attended a week long Solidworks 3D training course to better understand what Solidworks can be used for in updating and maintaining our facilities. After the training, I created a custom 3D tabletop for an upcoming renovation of our tool shop Resource Room. The course helped me better understand a related 2D drawing software (Draftsite) to update facilities building layouts. Now I can also access Solidworks drawings for review."- Jesse Hecksel, Facilities Supervisor

The culmination of the training and loads of hard work by the team have resulted in improving our processes and creating a safer environment for our employees. The robotics and automation that we have implemented have removed some of the repetitive movements that employees faced. Now they can perform the job with much more efficiency. The support in this effort from Michigan Works! has certainly helped us to move faster, and we plan to continue and build this partnership in the future.

Sincerely,



Aimee Nelson
Training Manager
616-536-7472



Jacob Miller and new Fanuc Robot