County College of Morris – Randolph, NJ

Award Amount: $8,000,000
Project Name: CareerAdvance USA
Projected Apprentices to Be Served: 3,500
Industry Focus: Advanced Manufacturing
Private Sector Partners include the German American Chambers of Commerce and additional employer partners, such as Arconic, Kellogg, Eastern Millwork, Norwalt Design, and Puratos USA.

Type(s) of Apprenticeship Program Proposed: Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Other Apprenticeship, and Pre-Apprenticeship

CareerAdvance USA is building a comprehensive, advanced manufacturing (AM) apprenticeship support model, based on the AM Competency Model and incorporating evidence-based, earn-and-learn strategies, such as industry-driven curriculum and portable, industry-recognized credentials. The project is piloting three approaches to apprenticeship training, which it will assess for relative effectiveness and fit with different employment contexts: 1) Traditional RAP; 2) modified academic internship combining associate degree coursework with paid, supervised, on-the-job training; and 3) rigorous, boot camp, pre-apprenticeship training focused on entry-level skills. The boot camp approach is designed to bridge diverse populations to apprenticeship employment and permit articulation of non-credit to credit credentials upon progression. All three models incorporate paid apprentice training for incumbent workers. The project is scaling these pilot models simultaneously to allow for statistical analysis of effectiveness in diverse settings.

The project's national industry association partner, the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACC), is guiding development of these pilot models, providing critical training to employer mentors across all models and developing assessment tools, based on German apprenticeship testing criteria, which explore the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different models and apprenticeship program completers. GACC intends to use these measurement tools within a random sampling process to analyze the statistical relationship between apprenticeship model, employer context (e.g., size and skill needs), apprentice demographics, and training outcomes, with conclusions guiding individual model improvement and scale up. As such, GACC's third-party review of the training process will refine a heuristic for custom fitting the model to the setting, while supporting improvement of training strategies and apprentice outcomes across all models. In addition, GACC is guiding and monitoring program alignment with high-quality German apprenticeship standards for apprentice skills and program outcomes.

CareerAdvance USA is implementing its scaling strategy in two phases. During the pilot phase (Phase 1), the project is refining all three models through formative evaluation, and producing high quality curriculum and instructional strategies for dissemination with the aim of expanding apprenticeships statewide. During the national scale-up phase (Phase 2), the project will guide the use of improved models in diverse employer settings across the country. In addition, corporate partners will use human resource networks to share project information and organize CareerAdvance orientations and train-the-trainer workshops in other states in which they have a presence.

IHE consortium members include County College of Morris (lead), Bergen Community College, Hudson County College, Middlesex County College, Raritan Valley Community College, Camden County College, Mercer County Community College, and Rowan College at Gloucester.