

The Food Chicago Career Path

A Summary of Food Chicago's
Workforce Development Plan

Candy Institute/Food Chicago

a program of



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Overview

Metropolitan Chicago's food manufacturing industry is the largest in the U.S., providing over 60,000 jobs to area residents. A flexibly and highly skilled workforce can serve as a major business incentive for companies to locate to a region, enabling companies to optimize their use of technology and advanced manufacturing processes to increase their productivity and success.

Unfortunately, there are few formal training programs in the Chicago area, in spite of the fact that many companies in the region need assistance with upgrading the skills of their workers. English literacy and fluency training is especially in great demand for food production workers, approximately half of whom come from non-English speaking backgrounds. As companies seek to compete in the global market place, they need training programs that can upgrade their workers' hi-tech and advanced manufacturing skills in order to be most competitive. Industry-sanctioned training would also benefit the workers, particularly those on the low end of the wage scale, by enabling them to gain the skills needed to qualify for advanced positions and pay increases. In addition to needing training, school leavers, dislocated workers and other job seekers need assistance in gaining access to the 800-plus new and replacement jobs that open up in the region's industry annually.

What is needed in the Chicago area to benefit its food manufacturing companies and workers is an industry-wide career path comprised of a hierarchy of courses and training programs. Such a standards-based model would offer the most effective and efficient solution to the Chicago region's workforce needs. Employers, employees and job seekers can best be served by an articulated and integrated system rather than the array of insular, company-by-company or out-of-date training programs that exist today. An integrated, industry-wide workforce development system can also best link job seekers and training program graduates to jobs, a critical service that the current system, or "non-system", does not provide.

The Center for Labor and Community Research (CLCR), a non-profit research and consulting organization dedicated to promoting 'high road' economic and community development in Chicago, is developing a collaborative, competency-based, industry-wide workforce development system through its *Food Chicago* initiative. The development of this career path requires a transformational systems-building approach. Business cannot be done "as usual"; nor can an individual agency bring about the systems-change that is needed. Providing a strong workforce development infrastructure for the region's companies and communities requires a collaborative effort by all stakeholders to design and deliver competencies that can move companies and workers forward in competing successfully in the global marketplace.

CLCR proposes to:

1. Create an integrated and comprehensive *system* for training incumbent workers and job seekers for the food manufacturing industry.
2. Create this system to specifically meet the needs of food manufacturing employers, their workers and prospective workers.
3. Facilitate the collaboration of partners to develop this system by initiating a Food Chicago Career Path Consortium representing employers, unions, government, educational and training organizations, and communities.
4. Develop high-quality training programs that meet standards required by employers.
5. Certify these programs so that graduates have industry-recognized, portable credentials.
6. Market the Food Chicago Career Path at schools, workplaces and communities.
7. Coordinate a placement system to ensure that job seekers and training program graduates are linked to the numerous annual job openings in the industry.
8. Measure returns-on-investment of training programs for employers and employees.
9. Continuously evaluate training programs to ensure that they meet the standards of employers.

The Importance of Training for Chicago and Illinois Manufacturing

Manufacturing is vital to Illinois' economy and workers. Illinois manufacturing directly employs 961,000 workers, mostly in the Chicago metropolitan area, and is the fourth largest manufacturing state in the nation in terms of employment and fifth in the value of manufacturing shipments;¹ Cook County is the second largest manufacturing region in the U.S. Even more relevant to people in the Chicago area, manufacturing jobs offer significantly higher wages than jobs in other industry sectors. The average manufacturing worker received \$610 a week before taxes as of March 2003, while retail workers earned only \$322 a week on average, and hotel and restaurant workers averaged only \$211 a week.² Food processing is a major segment in the industry and trends indicate that it will, at minimum, remain stable. We later demonstrate why we have selected this segment for our industry retention and growth efforts.

Although Illinois' manufacturing industry remains one of the top in the nation, it is losing its share of U.S. manufacturing. This trend began a couple of decades ago. For instance, in 1980, there were 7,000 manufacturing companies in the City of Chicago and by the end of that decade, 3,000 had closed, meaning a loss of more than 200,000 skilled, good-paying jobs. In the following years even more companies have shut their doors, resulting in even greater job loss, a trend of which we are reminded almost daily. These plant closings have resulted in the economic devastation of many communities, especially those on the West and South sides of Chicago. Large-scale, long-term unemployment has been associated with family breakdowns, increased crime rates and drug problems, and a general decline in community morale and involvement.

Companies have closed their doors for a number of reasons. One reason is their lack of a qualified pool of workers with advanced technical and communication skills to fill the thousands of annual job openings. To compete nationally and globally, companies are becoming progressively more high-tech, and they more frequently use fully computerized batch mixers, packaging lines, inventory management and delivery systems. Companies' rising demands for efficiency require workers to quickly share information with other team members, read directions, and program equipment, all of which require good communication and technical skills. A major barrier that many manufacturers face is that a significant proportion of their workers have limited English skills and computer experience. Approximately 40% of Chicago-area food manufacturing production workers are Hispanic, 2% are Asian, and many of the Caucasian workers, who make up 46% of food manufacturing production workers, are Eastern European or come from other non-English speaking backgrounds.

¹ Minnesota Implan Group, Model of Illinois 2000, based on input-output tables developed by the U.S. Forestry Service; Bureau of Census, *Annual Survey on Manufacturers, Geographic Area by Industry, 2000*; and Illinois Department of Employment Security, *Covered Employment and Wages*, March 2003.

² Illinois Department of Employment Security, *Covered Employment and Wages*, March 2003.

Workforce training is one proven way that companies can increase their productivity, efficiency and competitiveness. Manufacturing workers benefit from workforce training through increased wages, greater job security during economic hardships, career advancement opportunities, and for women, decreased job segregation. Examples of unionized and non-unionized Chicago-area manufacturers that have participated in Food Chicago's training programs show the advantage that training can offer companies and their workers:

- We introduced Vocational English-as-a-Second-Language (VESL) training to 71 workers at **American Licorice**, a confectionery manufacturer. Twelve-percent of the employees who participated in training saw an average annual pay increase of \$2,500. Managers reported that workers who participated said they felt better about work, about the company and about communicating with each other. One 20-year employee said it was the best thing the company ever did for him. Another employee said after class that it was the first time she could go to the dentist alone without needing her daughter to translate. Because they enjoyed and benefited from the classes, 16 employees took the initiative to take additional ESL classes at local community colleges. The positive results led American Licorice to undertake a company-wide Lean Manufacturing training program for their entire workforce of 300 employees. Because of this training, productivity has increased by 30%, saving the company over a million dollars during the past year, and – most significantly of all – reversing the company's decision to move to Mexico.
- In partnership with the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), we facilitated and conducted training for a predominantly Hispanic group of 20 team leaders at the **Able Electropolishing Company** (a food manufacturing equipment company) in team leadership and problem-solving. The result was a 5% increase in worker productivity, saving the company tens of thousands of dollars. Forty-five percent of the trainees were promoted with more pay, and no trainees were laid off during a 20% company-wide downsizing. After this, the company requested our help with training in ISO 9000 for all of its 150 workers. Managers reported that overall employee morale improved because of the training.
- At **Eli's Cheesecake Company**, approximately 180 employees and clerical staff participated in one or more types of training: VESL, Good Manufacturing Practices, Food Safety/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), Sanitation, Computing, and/or Microsoft Access. Production processes were tracked before, during and after the 18 months of training and demonstrated impressive results. The company saved approximately \$500,000 through reductions in waste and damaged cheesecakes.
- **Schulze and Burch Biscuit Company** training consisted of internal personnel teaching workers simple baking and manufacturing terms. Following this, basic computer operation and safety instruction courses were taught using a software program obtained from an outside vendor. As a result of the computerized safety training, the frequency and severity

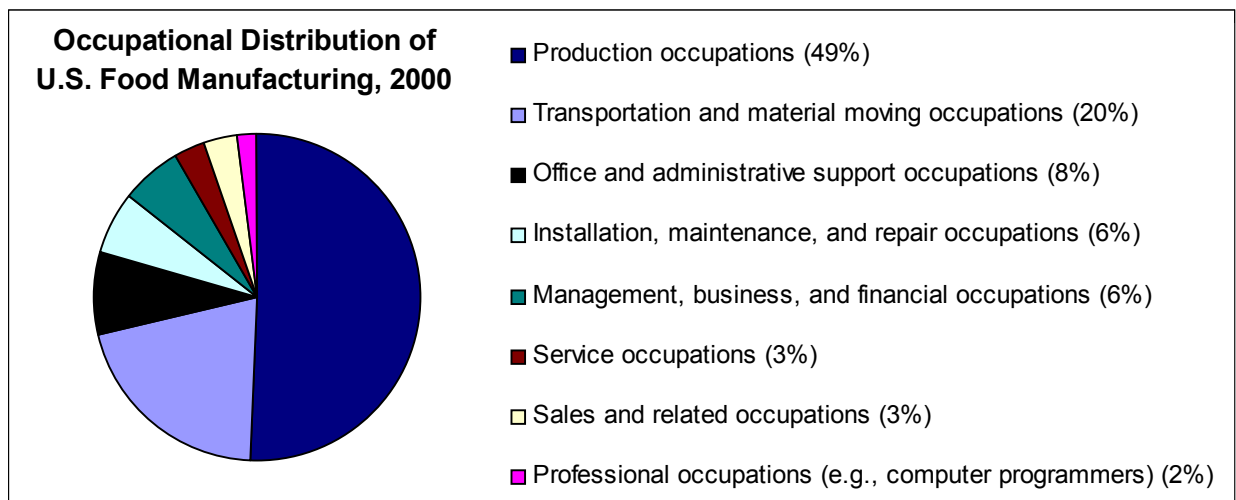
of accidents have dropped. The company reduced the average amount of work time employees lost because of accidents from 10.75 days per month in 2002 to 9 days per month in 2003 and job transfers due to injury from 14.86 days per month to 4.4 days per month average. These reductions have resulted in the savings of tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical and legal costs.

- **Clyde's Donuts, National Baking, and Vie de France** workers were trained during their off hours at the local union hall of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union, Local #1. This was a pilot training program designed for employees who were union members. Forty-eight employees participated in a combination of VESL training and basic computer skills training. As a part of this training effort, we produced a training manual and conducted a train-the-trainer course for eight trainers. The Union and members were very pleased with this training, as were the companies. Unfortunately, the companies saw this as a cheap way to have their workers trained and have not come to the party to provide any company-sponsored training, even though a Bakery and Confectionery Labor-Management Committee has been established for this purpose. We believe that over time, the companies will be more co-operative.
- An additional 30 displaced workers were trained in the above program at a local community organization, Instituto Del Progreso Latino. Upon completion of their training, most of the trainees then went on to Westside Technical College for more advanced training. This is an example of partnership collaboration and progressive skills acquisition whereby dislocated workers honed their English literacy and computing skills in a Union-sponsored program and then improved their technical skills at Westside Tech. Without the foundation literacy and computing skills these trainees would not have been able to undertake the technical skills program, which then provided them with job-specific competencies geared for manufacturing.

The Need for an Industry-Wide Training System

In spite of the proven successes of workforce training in making some Chicago manufacturers and their workers more productive, efficient and profitable, formal training – that which goes beyond informal, one-on-one, on-the-job coaching – is not commonly subscribed to by manufacturers in the region. The U.S. Department of Labor asked the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) and CLCR to identify gaps in the present manufacturing workforce development system. Instead of gaps we found chasms -- chasms into which thousands of citizens and millions of dollars have fallen while placing at risk the 400,000 existing Cook County manufacturing jobs – jobs that form the bedrock of the regional economy. Our findings are presented in our landmark report entitled *Creating a Manufacturing Career Path System in Cook County*.³

Although manufacturing generally, and food manufacturing in particular, pays significantly higher wages than several other industries, many workers still find themselves in low paying occupational positions. These jobs pay between \$7-8 per hour in an industry where the average wage is \$13 per hour and where experienced and skilled workers can earn \$30 per hour. Because most companies in the region have fewer than 50 employees, many workers receive, at best, sporadic on-the-job training. The lack of a single specific training program for food manufacturing also condemns most new candidates to entry-level jobs rather than to better paying mid- or advanced-level occupations. Food manufacturing, as seen in the diagram below, offers considerable opportunities for differing skill levels. Occupations in production alone range from the basic skilled to very technologically advanced.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Industry Occupation Matrix*, 2000, available at <ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/ep/ind-occ.matrix>, May 21, 2003.

³ See the full report on our website: www.clcr.org. It will take several minutes to download.

Our research found that Cook County manufacturers will need about 10,000 new and replacement workers *each year*; that manufacturers overwhelmingly say they cannot find workers with the skills they need to fill these jobs, including entry-level workers; and that there are thousands of Cook County residents out of work, including 86,200 young persons 16 to 21 years old who are out of school and out of work. At the same time, there are over 1,300 government-funded programs (including those in schools) operating in the county that purport to prepare enrollees to work in manufacturing. Clearly the present efforts at manufacturing workforce development have failed to meet the needs of employers and workers. Is there a better way to meet the needs of employers, employees and those seeking employment? Our research project demonstrates that there is.

What is needed is a *system* that is based on standards, certification and credentialing. Skill standards that embody the actual requirements of real jobs can provide an organizing principle: either a training or education provider adopts a curriculum that results in graduates who can meet these performance standards or it does not. Programs (and instructors) that are able to produce graduates who meet the standards can be certified so both potential students and employers know what they are getting if they choose to obtain services from that provider. Similarly, graduates who meet the standards can be certified, making the employment process easier for all concerned.

Skill standards are not new. As described in our research report, *Creating a Manufacturing Career Path System in Cook County*,⁴ some industries have very successfully fashioned their training around skills standards for years. However, using standards as a foundation for a regional education and training system has had fewer converts. Although a large, time consuming task, it is relatively easy to find out what skills at what level apply to a position. Every individual occupation in every industry requires the ability to demonstrate competency at a specified level in a knowable set of skills. Some skills are common to more than one occupation and may be found in more than one industry. Therefore, much training and education can be provided that meets the common needs of a variety of manufacturing industry segments.

Most existing training programs would attest that they meet standards, but what we are referring to here are competency standards that are clearly measurable and explicitly meet employer needs. As employer needs change, so will the standards and the training, creating a system that is dynamic and ever contemporary in nature.

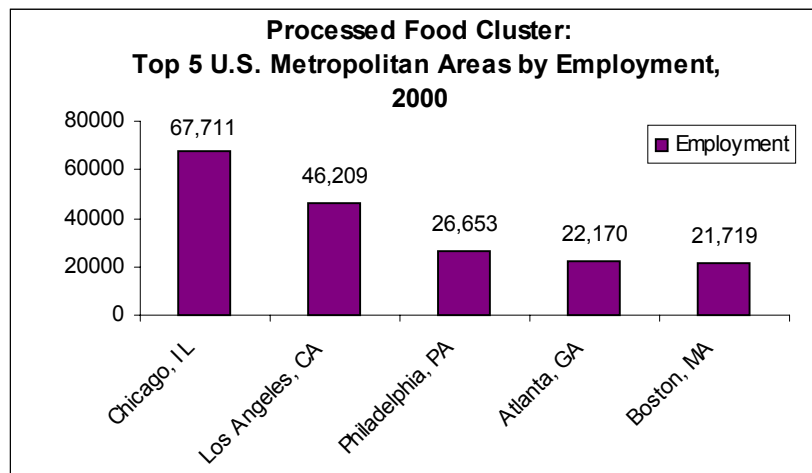
Developing such a system requires the active participation of multiple partners. A system cannot be developed by a single organization; it requires multiple partners to form an integrated and cohesive whole, including public schools, community colleges, private training providers in addition to employers, government and unions. It also requires more than that – it necessitates that these partners operate differently from how they have in the past. This is the major challenge in systems building and systems change.

⁴ Ibid.

Why the Focus on Food Manufacturing?

We are creating a career path for Chicago's food manufacturing sector because of its significant size, stability, and potential growth. Metropolitan Chicago's food manufacturing industry is the largest in the nation, in terms of the number of people employed; in 2000, there were 67,711 employees in the nine-county metropolitan area (see figure below). These workers are 19% more productive than the national average in terms of shipments per worker hour. In the metropolitan area's six counties in Illinois, there are approximately 850 food companies, 75% of which have fewer than 50 employees. These food manufacturers produce \$16.6 billion in sales, generate \$2.6 billion in taxes, and offer 850 annual job openings, 50% of which are in production occupations (see figure above). Because of the economic activity it spurs in other industries from its purchases within the state, Chicago food manufacturing has a 2.58 employment multiplier, which means that for every food manufacturing job, another 1.58 jobs are created in other industries.

Because of its size, metropolitan Chicago's food manufacturing is ranked as the number-one food manufacturing cluster in the nation by the Harvard Business School.⁵ A cluster is a core location where industry-specific resources are gathered together to offer companies located there a competitive advantage. The competitiveness of a company is strongly influenced not only by the decisions it makes and the assets inside the company, but also by the surrounding business environment in which it operates. The business environment shapes the skills, knowledge, and technology available as well as the productivity with which a company can operate. Being in a location where an industry is clustered allows a company to be more competitive because it is easier to source skilled people, access suppliers efficiently, and operate productively.



Source: Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School, *Regional Competitiveness Profiles: Cluster Mapping Data*. Available from <http://www.isc.hbs.edu>.

⁵ Cluster Mapping Project, Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School.

According to Michael Porter, director of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at the Harvard Business School, companies located in industry clusters have a unique opportunity to further enhance the industry.

Since the existence and depth of clusters affects productivity and competitiveness, a company needs to understand where the clusters are in its business. It must understand the competitive position of its cluster versus other locations. This is important not only to inform location decisions, but also to inform how a company should direct its energy towards enhancing its cluster, both individually and collectively⁶

Chicago's food manufacturers can significantly benefit from the skills development offered through the Food Chicago Career Path.

⁶ Ibid.

The Food Chicago Career Path Diagram

It is possible to arrange the occupations in food manufacturing into a career path system, which can be visualized on a chart. Each step is associated with an occupation or cluster of occupations. There is a hierarchy of occupations, with the most specialized occupations generally requiring the most preparation and the most technical skill. Projections of the number of new and replacement workers can be made for each step in the path. Skill standards are also associated with each step. For the individual student or worker, this system identifies career path opportunities. For the firm, the career path system provides a staff development plan. (Some firms have such plans already.) For workforce development providers, the career path system shows exactly where the demand for workers will be and the specific skill levels that are required. This will allow providers to offer training and education that lead to real jobs.

Below is a graphic illustration of the Food Chicago Career Path. The “Population” column on the left lists the categories of people who will enter and advance in the career path. These include people who already have jobs in the industry (incumbent workers), unemployed or dislocated workers, and people who have recently completed schooling and do not have work experience or beyond-high school education (school leavers).

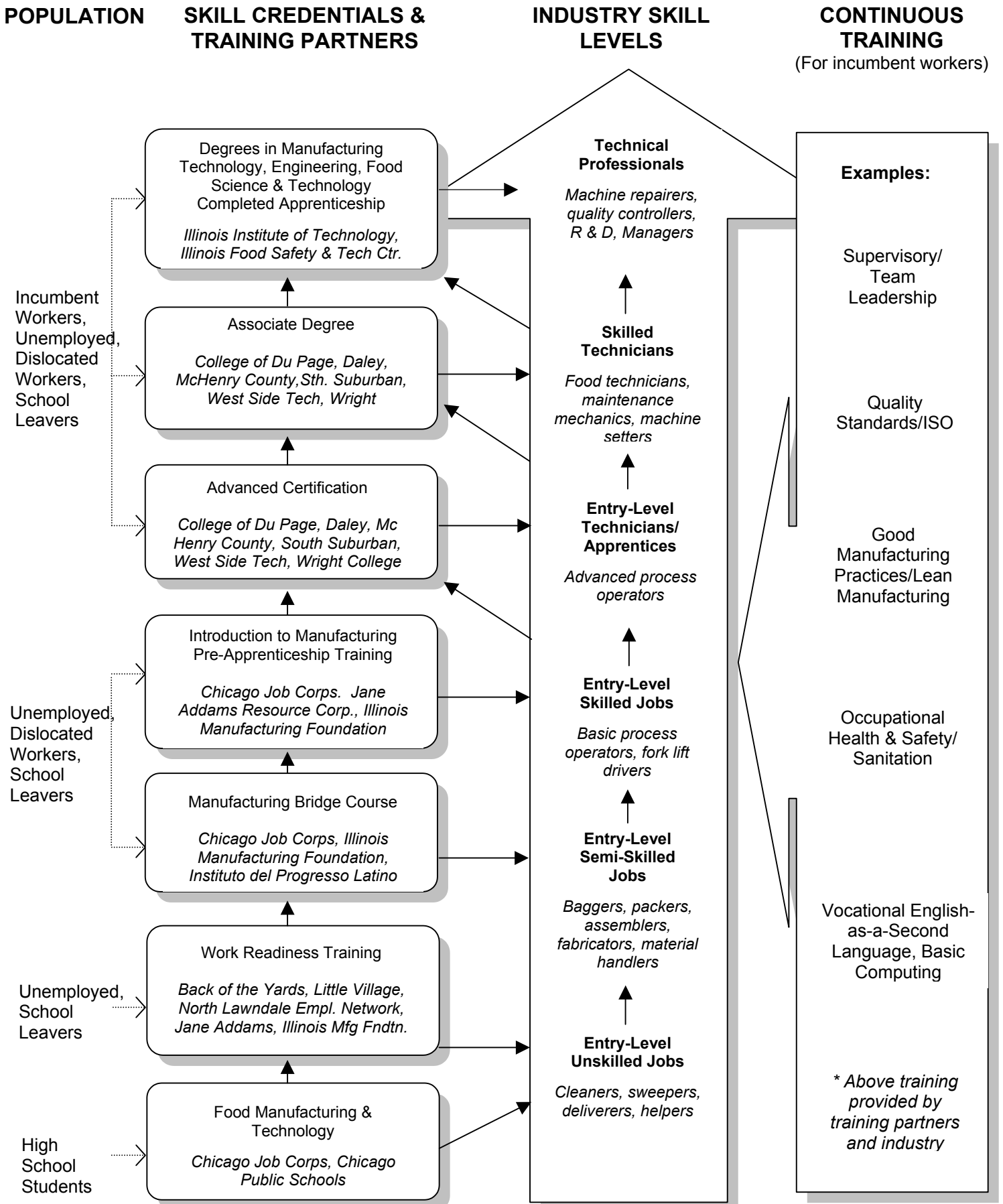
The next column to the right called “Skill Credentials and Training Partners” shows the various levels of manufacturing training and the institutions that provide this training. The training becomes progressively more advanced from the bottom of the diagram to the top, where participants can earn a bachelor’s degree in manufacturing technology, engineering, or related degrees from colleges such as the Illinois Institute of Technology.

The next column, “Industry Skill Levels,” shows the industry occupational levels, which require increasingly advanced skills. Examples of occupations associated with these skill levels are listed in order in the column farthest on the right. Typically, most incumbent workers advance to each successive level through on-the-job training.

The last column, “Continuous Training” for incumbent workers, offers courses to companies on an ongoing basis. For example, for legal reasons, all companies must comply with safety regulations and so they may need to offer refresher courses on safety and sanitation measures. Many companies continually seek ways to increase their performance and productivity, and courses such as Lean Manufacturing, Good Manufacturing Practices, Supervision and Leadership provide the requisite knowledge base. In addition to this training, employees can also (individually or in a workplace group) access training to be offered in the community colleges or universities.

The system components fit together in the following way: people begin taking training courses at different levels depending on their existing skills and work experiences. Completion of each skill level will allow the graduate to seek the next level of training or enter the industry at that

Food Chicago Career Path



* Based on Davis Jenkins & Tom DuBois, *Presentation to CWB Service Delivery Integration Committee*, Feb. 7, 2002.

skill level. If the graduate secures a job, regardless of the level, the employee has some opportunity to advance in the company through on-the-job training. However, in our system, employees will also be able to access external training programs to advance his/her skills and not be dependent only on informal on-the-job training. Offering on-the-job-training as the only way to advance in the company has led to significant gender segregation where women typically progress no further than the lower-paid packing-line jobs.

Through the formalized Career Path, *employees can map out their advancement*. Employees will be able to progress on the educational/training path in three ways: 1) they can follow the training-only path and enter the industry at the highest level possible, or 2) they can enter the industry and progress up the ladder through internal on-the-job training, or 3) they can zigzag between the two having entered the industry at a particular level and advancing through higher levels of training provided by external educators. This formalized program will provide prospective and incumbent workers access to ongoing training, and training opportunities that are not only at the behest of the employer. Workers and prospective workers will be clear on what training opportunities exist and will be able to decide how and when to obtain their qualifications.

Training providers would collectively market their training programs to high schools, one-stops, and community groups. Recruiting and placement services, which are now offered from each training provider separately, would be streamlined by setting up a centralized agency to coordinate recruitment of candidates for all of the providers' training courses. The centralized agency would also provide placement services for the graduates, making it easier to match graduates with appropriate jobs in the field.

Let's take an example of how a worker may advance her career by engaging in this career path. Jocette has an entry-level job at a local manufacturer as a packager. Her employer sends her to Westside Tech twice a week during business hours to receive training for advanced certification and VESL. When the training is complete, she is promoted to be a food processor. She excels at this new job, and her employer sends her to receive additional training, this time at South Suburban College to gain an Associate Degree in food manufacturing. Upon completion of this training, Jocette is promoted to be a machine setter. She has invested 15 years in the company, and because of the continuous training, she has been promoted three times, increasing her wages from \$8 per hour to \$20 per hour. The company has improved its profits through increased productivity because of efficient, skilled workers such as Jocette.

As another example, Joe has recently completed a jail sentence. A community group, Pilsen, subsidized training for him in a work readiness program where he improves his English skills and learns the importance of punctuality and other good work habits. After this, he receives additional funding from the City to attend a manufacturing bridge course from the Instituto del Progreso Latino. Upon completion of this course, he obtains an entry-level job as an assembler at a local food company.

Project Components

In the next sections, we explain in more detail the important components and processes of implementing the Food Chicago Career Path. These include the Career Path consortium, courses and sequencing, credentialing, placement services, and evaluation methods.

Classes and Sequencing

Our Food Manufacturing Career Path will begin in the elementary and middle schools, with courses that introduce students to the food industry and food manufacturing. The goal of these courses is to make students enthusiastic about the advanced technology and career prospects available in manufacturing plants. They need to know that the days of the iron foundries, steel mills and sweatshops are mostly gone. Graduating students can then proceed to further training or enter the industry at the base level, with at least some acclimation to the world of food manufacturing.

The next level of classes, aimed primarily at the unemployed, will include Work Readiness and VESL classes to prepare people for basic entry-level jobs. Alternately, this level can lead them into further training. Groups working closely with their communities will be the providers of these courses.

The next level of classes will include Basic Manufacturing Skills training and certificate programs, where training organizations such as community colleges and Job Corps are experts. Food-specific modules such as Food Safety and Sanitation will be incorporated into these courses. Graduates from these courses will be able to access skilled entry-level jobs as well as higher-level training programs.

The next level is meant to serve entry-level technicians or apprentices who can obtain their training through the community colleges and work their way up from certificates to full associate degrees in such areas as food technology, artisan baking, maintenance mechanic, and machine setting.

Technical courses for credentialing food technicians, maintenance mechanics, and machine setters comprise the next level of the curriculum. At present very few workers avail themselves or are encouraged to undertake further formal training outside of the work environment.

The highest levels in this model will feature bachelors and advanced degrees that would be fed by community college referrals and company referrals to colleges, universities, and technical training institutes. These highest level jobs could include quality control specialists, manufacturing managers, food researchers and developers, machine designers and developers.

Along this entire path will be supplementary training available to help incumbent workers progress in the career path. All the mid and lower skill levels will have complementary VESL, computing and math training available, should they be necessary. The demographics of the workforce and Chicago-area communities indicate that this will be an ongoing need. Complementary advanced training programs such as Good Manufacturing Processes, Supervision, and Just-in-Time Manufacturing would also be offered to incumbent workers. What is key in this design is that it allows the workers to move in and out of training while they are working, and it provides a flexible, broad ladder so that the options increase as the individual moves up in the system.

The material to be taught in the training will be based upon surveys and input from a representative group of food manufacturing companies. To further assure that each level of training continuously meets employers' needs, company representatives will be included as advisors in the training process.

The Career Path Consortium

One of the most important features of the Career Path is that it represents an integrated process of assessing, training, and placing candidates into internships and jobs. All of these services are currently offered separately by different agencies, but the Food Chicago Consortium will bring training agencies, placement agencies, credentialing agencies, food companies, and funders together to create and implement an efficient system where efforts will not be duplicated and where resources can be shared. Training providers in the Consortium will form articulation agreements so that credits from different providers can go toward common certifications. They will offer multi-level, integrated courses that meet common skill standards to guarantee that students' credentials from each participating training provider are valid throughout the industry. The training providers will collectively market their training programs through this Consortium to high schools, One-Stop Career Centers, and community groups. Recruiting and placement services will be streamlined by the Consortium to coordinate the recruitment of candidates for all providers' training courses and the placement services for graduates, making it easier to match graduates with appropriate jobs. Food companies will hire the candidates as interns, entry-level employees, or higher-level employees through information provided by the Consortium. We believe that the companies with whom we have already worked will be active participants in this consortium.

Food Chicago Career Path Consortium

Training Agencies	Placement Agencies	Credentialing Agencies	Food Companies	Funders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Corps • Chicago Community Colleges • Suburban Community Colleges • Nat'l Assoc. of Specialty Foods Trades • Confectionery Trades Assoc. • Meat Assoc. • Community Organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago Federation of Labor • Food Union Network • Community College Career Counseling & Placement • One-Stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Illinois Dept. of Education • Illinois Community College Board • Industry Associations, (e.g., National Confectioners Assoc., American Institute of Baking) • Manufacturing Skills Standards Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large food companies (e.g., Kraft, Wrigley, etc.) • Medium-sized food companies (e.g., Jay's Foods, Heinemann's, etc.) • Small food companies (e.g., Margies Candies, Vosges-Haut Chocolat, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sate of Illinois Tech. Grants • Workforce Investment Boards • TIFWorks/MOWD • Philanthropic Foundations • U.S. Dept. of Labor • U.S. Dept. of Commerce • Industry Leaders

Credentialing

A key to the design of this career path will be requiring participating training providers to adopt industry-approved skills standards and credentials. Each of these training organizations will be obligated to deliver a competency-based curriculum by certified teachers. We envision an industry association in conjunction with an educational authority working together to evaluate training programs for accreditation as part of the Career Path Consortium. This credentialing process will ensure that all programs meet quality standards and provide formal acknowledgement to trainees of their industry-based credentials. Credentials will also enhance the portability of skills for the worker. At present, most training programs do not subscribe to industry standards. This has resulted in inconsistent quality among courses. Consistent formal skill standards such as those subscribed by the metal working industry with their NIMS standards (National Institute for Metalworking Skills) will assure employers and employees that their needs are being met. The National Coalition for Advanced Manufacturing (NACFAM) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO) jointly developed the Manufacturing Skills Standards for the entire manufacturing industry, but these standards are understandably general and do not itemize specific competencies. They best serve as a framework for the industry, leaving each

industry segment the responsibility of augmenting the general standards with specific skill requirements.

Placement Services

The Food Chicago Career Path will include a collaborative placement agency to link people to jobs, either directly or via training programs. At present, each training organization and community group conducts its own placement efforts – often a hit-and-miss affair based on relationships with few employers, no industry focus and few informed placement personnel. One-Stops are a prime example of this, reaching only 5% of employers and placing only 5% of their job seekers. One-Stops in the Chicago region do not have an industry focus and very few employers actively seek them out to recruit personnel. Also, One-Stops do not fully channel job seekers into further training that would enable workers to acquire higher-level, industry-specific skills.

In a coordinated, industry-based system it is envisioned that individuals seeking jobs in food manufacturing will come from multiple sources including schools, the community, community-based organizations or via public/private placement agencies. The centralized placement agency will then route these job seekers either directly into jobs or into further training, depending on their skill levels, desire and capacity. Determining job seekers' abilities, desires and options is a critical function if the long-term well being of individuals is at stake.

The benefits of having an industry-focused placement agency are that:

- Employers will have a single site from which to recruit employees.
- Employers will be able to draw from a candidate pool that has a range of skill levels.
- The reach to employers will be far greater because only one industry will be targeted.
- Employees will have a focal point where they can seek industry information, links to jobs, and links to training.
- Placement agency personnel can be specifically trained for jobs available in the industry.
- Through participation in the Food Chicago Career Consortium, employers and training providers will have ownership of this system.

The active involvement of employers in the Consortium, where they will help establish skill standards and credentialing processes, will also enable them to be the first recipients of training programs and newly recruited skilled employees. Establishing a coordinated recruitment and placement service for the industry is the only rational way to proceed. Again this will require transformative efforts on the part of all the partners, challenging them to work cooperatively, in the best interests of companies, workers and job seekers and to much higher standards.

Evaluation Methods

To evaluate the success of the training system, we will measure company and employee return-on-investment and the effectiveness of the training courses and recruitment and placement services. We will measure companies' return on investment for three months following the completion of training. Measures include:

- Reductions in waste (e.g. scrap, downtime, re-work, safety incidents)
- Changes in time efficiencies and process efficiencies
- Changes in throughput and productivity

To measure the return on investment for workers, we will track the following over a 12-month period after the completion of training:

- Job promotions, wage increases or increased benefits
- Job retention
- Promotions from temporary to permanent employment positions
- Workers' increased access to technical/vocational training
- Workers' increased job security during layoffs
- Vocational training initiated by workers on their own time

To measure the effectiveness of the training courses throughout the training and at its completion, we will examine the following things:

- Number of trainees enrolled for each course
- Number of graduates
- Competencies attained
- How trainees were recruited. What agencies/community groups were involved
- Effectiveness of curricula at producing the intended competencies
- Teaching methodology employed to address the needs of adult learners
- Feedback from companies about the effectiveness of the courses

We will assess the effectiveness of the recruitment and placement system by examining the following:

- Number and percent of graduates successfully placed in companies
- Retention rate, including compared to retention rate for employees coming to firms from other sources.
- Level of jobs in which graduates are placed
- Tracking and follow-up measures that ensure the placement is successful

The broad evaluation of this program will make the critical assessment of whether or not we have been successful in transforming a disjointed, insufficient set of practices by partners who have not been held to any strict accountability of their performance into an effective, collaborative system that delivers high quality training programs to Chicago area businesses and communities. We will know that we have been successful when companies want to remain or move into the area because of the high level of skills and productivity of the workforce.

Next Steps

To establish this system we will need to:

1. Establish a Food Chicago Career Path Consortium comprised of employers, unions, community representatives and educational and training providers to co-ordinate and implement the career path.
2. Co-ordinate the efforts of all the training providers to work towards a shared vision.
3. Sequence all the training programs to comprise a career path that offers basic, intermediate, and advanced courses.
4. Ensure that all training programs meet employer-demanded skill standards.
5. Set up an accreditation panel composed of industry and educational agency representatives to accredit training programs and continuously update credentialing requirements to meet changing industry needs.
6. Accredit the training program teachers to ensure the delivery of competency-based training services.
7. Collaboratively market the Food Chicago Career Path to food companies, schools and communities.
8. Establish a trainee recruitment system for all levels of the career path.
9. Establish an industry placement system to link graduates to jobs.
10. Measure returns-on-investment for trainees, incumbent employees and employers.
11. Secure public and private funding to establish and implement the system.

CLCR's Extensive Workforce Development Experience

The Director of the Candy Institute/Food Chicago program is Friederika Kaider. She has considerable experience in education, and is currently an adjunct faculty member at Northwestern University. Previously she taught at Loyola Universities, Illinois Institute of Technology, and Harold Washington College, specializing in Training and Development, Human Resources Management, Organizational Behavior, Entrepreneurship, Education, and American Labor History. Friederika also worked as a trainer for both management and unions in the Chicago area. She has an MSIR from Loyola and is ABD in her Ph.D. studies. She is a member of the Chicago Workforce Board, the Illinois Job Corps Board, the Wilbur Wright Community College Advisory Committee and the AFL-CIO Adult Literacy Advisory Committee. Prior to relocating to the United States from Australia, Friederika worked in labor-management relations, community development, education and as a speechwriter for a Federal Senator. She spent a number of years participating in the establishment of skills standards, credentialing and training programs for the hospitality and beverage processing industries in the state of Victoria, Australia

The Workforce Development Coordinator, Dr. Bill Graham, has over 25 years of training experience in designing, conducting and assessing training programs, and many years of experience in working in the food industry. Bill has been with the Candy Institute/Food Chicago for three years. Bill obtained a Ph.D. in organizational psychology from Case Western Reserve University and has worked in the field of workforce development and training for the past 30 years. He has been a training manager in several large manufacturing companies, including General Electric and Republic Steel, and has designed several assessment selection tests as a psychologist with the Department of Defense. Bill has also owned several small businesses, including a deli and meat retail store, a publishing company and a consulting firm. Prior to his joining the Candy Institute, he was an Assistant Professor at National-Louis University, as a coordinator and faculty member with the Applied Behavioral Sciences department for six years. Before joining National-Louis University, Bill worked with numerous community colleges and several graduate universities as a faculty member and advisor to help adults obtain the training needed for them complete degrees and achieve career goals. He is a member of the boards of the Regional Manufacturing and Training Collaborative and the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council. He has written several books, including a self-management text and a children's reading book.

Food Chicago's work is also supported by CLCR's Research Director, Xiaochang "Mike" Jin and the Executive Director, Dan Swinney, who are currently conducting research of high road business practices with the Illinois Manufacturers' Association and writing a separate policy paper on "High Road" Business Practices in the Food Industry for the Rockefeller Foundation.

As a result of the work of the Director and the Workforce Development Coordinator, hundreds of workers have attended and completed courses that have afforded them greater job security, promotions, increased pay and improved skills by which to perform their work. During the past

three years, the Workforce Development Coordinator has introduced new training programs in seven companies and facilitated the training of over 400 workers through partnerships with both public and private trainers involving three different community colleges and no less than ten different trainers. The assessment of the results was reported to both private philanthropies such as the Lloyd A. Fry and Joyce Foundations and public funding agencies including the Department of Labor, the Chicago Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, and the Chicago Workforce Board who found our work exemplary. We now wish to advance the Career Path for food manufacturing with a broader group of companies including larger bakeries, confectionery, and supplier companies. In addition, we plan to increase the number and types of positions for which training will be conducted, including the higher technology positions in maintenance and batch making.

During the past three years we have surveyed and interacted with at least 40 confectionery and baking companies to assess their workforce needs, proposed partnerships with industry trade groups such as the Retail Confectioners Association, started a demonstration project with a group of six high schools with the participation of the administration of the Chicago Public Schools, formed partnerships with several community colleges including Daley College and its Westside Tech Center, South Suburban Community College and Wilbur Wright College and worked to introduce a standardized training program in food manufacturing into the government based training program at the Chicago Job Corps. The Candy Institute/Food Chicago was a sponsor of the recent Manufacturing Workforce Summit that was conducted by eight of the local Workforce Investment Boards and is now working with these boards to implement the Food Chicago Career Path in coordination with other emerging career paths.

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