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U.S. Department of Commerce Invests \$2.4 Million in CARES Act Recovery Assistance to Expand Manufacturing Skills Programs at Alpena Community College in Michigan

WASHINGTON – Today, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$2.4 million CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant to Alpena Community College, Alpena, Michigan, to renovate space on campus to create an advanced manufacturing lab and an updated welding shop. This EDA grant, to be matched with \$600,000 in local investment, is expected to retain about 275 jobs, and generate \$15 million in private investment.

“EDA is committed to helping communities across the nation implement strategies to mitigate economic hardships brought on by the coronavirus pandemic,” **said Dennis Alvord, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development.** “This investment in the Alpena Community College Manufacturing Skills Center Initiative will create new training opportunities for Northeast Michigan’s workforce and ensure there is a steady pool of skilled workers for local businesses.”

“This investment in Alpena Community College will create opportunities for northeastern Michiganders of all backgrounds to receive important skills trainings and attain good-paying jobs,” **said Governor Gretchen Whitmer.** “Throughout the pandemic, we have seen more and more Michiganders express interest in pursuing additional skills or a degree, and this CARES Act Recovery Assistance Grant will provide some of our hardest-hit communities a much-needed chance at a long-lasting, sustainable economic recovery. I am grateful to the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration for recognizing Michigan’s potential and giving workers in the Alpena area a chance to get back on their feet through continued education and skills trainings.”

“The demand for workers in manufacturing and the skilled trades is strong,” **said Senator Debbie Stabenow.** “I want to thank Alpena Community College for their leadership. This investment is right in line with my New Skills for New Jobs Agenda and will help meet the urgent needs of employers and support good paying jobs in Alpena and across the region.”

“It’s critical that communities across our state continue to have the support and resources needed to get through this pandemic,” **said Senator Gary Peters, a member of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.** “That’s why the CARES Act I helped pass includes assistance to ensure we can strengthen skills training opportunities for Michigan workers. By continuing to invest in research and training programs like the Alpena Community College Manufacturing Skills Center, we have the opportunity to create good-paying jobs and further strengthen Michigan’s leadership in advanced manufacturing and innovation.”

“The work of Alpena Community College is essential for the constituents and communities in Northern Michigan,” **said Congressman Jack Bergman (MI-01)**. “Expanding its advanced manufacturing program through this federal financing will help ensure success through the remainder of the pandemic and well into the future. I was proud to support the creation of the CARES Act Recovery Assistance program last Congress, and I’m happy to see institutions in rural areas like Alpena receive their fair share of support from the federal government.”

The project will renovate two spaces, totaling more than 14,000-square-feet, to allow for the college to expand its advanced manufacturing program and provide 16 new welding booths.

This project is funded under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act ([Public Law 116-136](#)), which provided EDA with \$1.5 billion for economic assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance, which is being administered under the authority of the bureau’s flexible [Economic Adjustment Assistance](#) (EAA) program, provides a wide-range of financial assistance to eligible communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration (www.eda.gov)

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.

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