**MCUL Career and Technical Training Guide to Skilled Trade Jobs in Michigan**

**Talking and PR points**

**What is this?**

Information and materials geared towards teens and young adults to familiarize them with details about Skilled Trade jobs in high demand in Michigan and connect them with appropriate training sites in Michigan. These materials consist of a comprehensive guide book detailing 24 high-demand Skilled Trade jobs in Michigan and a series of ready-to-use lesson plans to help students explore Skilled Trade occupations. All of this can be accessed through our website. <http://www.mcul.org/Career__Technical_Training_3424.html>

**Why did we do this?**

After nearly a decade of job declines in Michigan, many Skilled Trade occupations are in high demand and the trend is expected to continue. However, there is a concern that this demand will be slowed by a shortage of trained and qualified workers. See below for more on the “skill gap”.

**Why credit unions?**

Michigan credit unions strive to help their members and their communities thrive financially through helpful products and services and community financial education outreach. Choosing a career that pays a solid wage and offers stability is an important financial decision. Keeping jobs in Michigan filled by Michigan residents helps both businesses and individuals thrive financially.

**Who will it help?**

Young adults in Michigan – We’ve done the searching and compiled the information all in one place to make it easy to explore a career in the Skilled Trades area and find training sites in Michigan.

Michigan Businesses and Employers - Help them fill those jobs with qualified workers from Michigan

The overall Michigan Economy – we hope this will contribute to future job growth up and reduced unemployment. We hope that by increasing the knowledge about these career needs and training opportunities we can encourage more of Michigan young people to decide to stay in the state of Michigan to live and work.

Teachers, School Counselors, Job Counselors and credit union financial educators - We’ve done the research and compiled the information together in the guide book and we’ve worked with a Michigan teacher to help create a series of ready-to-use lessons to help students and potential workers explore Skilled Trade occupations.

**Who did we work with to put this information together**?

The Michigan Credit Union League has collaborated with Congressman Benishek and the State of Michigan Workforce Development Agency to develop materials to educate students on career and technical training that is available for high-demand Skilled Trade occupations in Michigan.

**The “skill gap”**

**Gov. Snyder: Skills gap most critical issue facing Michigan’s economic future**

<http://michiganradio.org/post/gov-snyder-skills-gap-most-critical-issue-facing-michigan-s-economic-future>

Closing the skills gap is the most critical issue facing Michigan’s future. That’s according to Gov. Rick Snyder, who made the remarks during his second annual economic summit in Grand Rapids Tuesday.

“We have a lot of wonderful openings but they require more skills than people traditionally thought about,” Snyder said.

Snyder says the notion that people only need a college degree to get ahead is “messed up.” He says the state, the private sector and education institutes must do a better job preparing the state’s labor force to get into middle-class jobs that are available.

He stressed "Three C’s": collaboration, creating talent, and connecting supply and demand. “That collaboration is about demand for talent. The education sector is about the supply of talent – let’s put supply and demand together, basic economics,” he said.

Snyder will address the topic again at an education summit planned for next month.

**Other news/quotes about the Skills Gap Nationwide:**

In the January 2014 State of the Union address, President Obama focused on the need for change in job training programs, since the large skills gap is only growing bigger.

The “skills gap,” as it is known, has been a repeated refrain in Mr. Obama’s speeches on economic policy. Many economists believe it’s a contributing factor to the stubbornly high unemployment rate as well as the falling percentage of people in the workforce.

In an effort to provide more job opportunities for the middle class and those lacking the proper skills, Obama announced that Vice President Biden is tasked with reforming training programs with one goal in mind: “train Americans with the skills employers need, and match them to good jobs that need to be filled right now.

Many economists point to the nation’s relatively high 2.8% job-vacancy rate as evidence that workers don’t have the skills to fill the available jobs, a classic definition of the skills gap. But some disagree, saying employers would be increasing wages faster if they were having that much difficulty finding the right workers. Stagnant wages indicate they’re not in fact so intent to fill those positions

Not enough Americans are training for the jobs industry needs to fill. Nationwide, about 4 million job openings are going unfilled, but 10 million people are unemployed, according to Labor Department statistics.

Emory University economist Raymond Hill says America's go-to-college message, boosted by college financial aid policies, worked in the U.S. for a while as manufacturing went offshore. But higher wages in China and a U.S. energy boom have changed the manufacturing landscape as well as the kind of jobs available. Now, companies can't find workers with the right training, Hill says.

"If you tell everybody, 'Get a college education; that gets you into the middle class. Doesn't matter what you major in, you just need that college degree.' Well, is it any surprise?" he says. "Now we see this manufacturing coming back to us, and that's what we have to get ourselves prepared for."