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U.S. Department of Commerce Invests \$2.5 Million to Support Manufacturing Workforce Training Opportunities in St. Cloud, Minnesota

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced that the Department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$2.5 million grant to St. Cloud Technical & Community College, St. Cloud, Minnesota, to build a new Advanced Manufacturing Training Lab. The lab will provide the necessary training to workers to meet the demand of regional manufacturers. The EDA grant, to be matched with more than \$2 million in local funds, is expected to create or retain 1,290 jobs and generate nearly \$38 million in private investment.

“Ensuring that communities have the trained workforce in place to support business growth is a major focus of the Trump administration,” said **Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross**. “The new Advanced Manufacturing Training Lab at St. Cloud Technical & Community College will provide an enhanced pipeline of talent to fit the needs of manufacturing firms in the St. Cloud area.”

“This project will include cutting-edge equipment to expand the capacity of the College’s Manufacturing Technology programs,” said **Dana Gartzke, Performing the Delegated Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development**. “The project will also double the capacity of the College’s Energy & Electronics program and increase opportunities for students to fill advanced technology positions in the manufacturing sector.”

“We need to make sure students have the opportunity to develop the skills they need for jobs that are available right now; many of the good-paying jobs are in areas like advanced manufacturing, which doesn’t require an expensive four-year degree,” said **Senator Tina Smith, a member of the Senate Education Committee**. “With this grant to create a new Advanced Manufacturing Training Lab at St. Cloud Technical & Community College, students in central Minnesota will get the kind of resources and support they deserve. I’ve long been focused on solutions that work for Minnesotans and all Americans, and this kind of investment is exactly what we need in the state.”

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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