



c/o Kentucky Community and
Technical College System
300 North Main Street
Versailles, KY 40383
T: 859-256-3100
F: 859-256-3121
amtec@kctcs.edu
autoworkforce.org

The History of AMTEC

During a conference in Washington D.C. in 2004, community and technical college leaders from Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, and Kentucky were discussing their various automotive manufacturing training programs and services. The seed of the idea to develop a cooperative effort across college boundaries, state lines, and competing company interests was germinated by this conversation. It became clear that there would be a beneficial synergy in sharing best practices and resources.

After several attempts to obtain approval for a funding proposal to the National Science Foundation Advanced Technical Education program, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) as the fiscal agent and lead partner was awarded an NSF Planning Grant for an automotive manufacturing project. The purpose of the planning grant was to establish if colleges and companies across state lines would in fact come together to benefit the development of the future workforce.

In April of 2005, KCTCS hosted a meeting of community and technical colleges, and a wide spectrum of automotive manufacturing companies, both OEM's and suppliers. The companies sent 28 representatives, and colleges from Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and Kentucky sent 27 representatives. The overwhelming consensus was that there is a strategic national economic imperative to cooperate to better prepare the skilled workers required in this critical economic sector.

The companies and colleges who participated in the April 2005 conference formed the initial founding partnership. In August of 2005, the initial Policy Board met and developed a consensus around the collaborative name, the Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC). The group also developed the mission and vision, and the primary goals and outcomes.

Over the next few months several additional colleges and companies were informed of the growing collaborative, with some expressing interest but deciding they wanted to be affiliated but could not commit to being a core partner. In the end, twelve leading community and technical colleges and 18 automotive manufacturing companies in eight leading automotive manufacturing states made up the core partner membership.

AMTEC is supported by a
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Application for a National Center of Excellence in Automotive Manufacturing

This group of partners, led by KCTCS, made application to the NSF ATE program for funding to be a National Center of Excellence for Automotive Manufacturing. The application sought to develop a three step implementation plan:

1. Verify with automotive manufacturers the actual worker skill and knowledge competencies required for success in the industry, building on existing skills competency work to the degree possible;
2. Identify the tools that measure success in achieving these competencies, administer the measurement in the partner colleges, and document the highest performing programs in achieving the competencies
3. Identify the unique programs, methods, and processes in use by these highest performing programs, and then disseminate these through PD academies, conferences, and publications.

The application received overall high marks and AMTEC received a two-year project grant to begin the building blocks to create a National Center. In October 2008 AMTEC reapplied for National Center funding and received approval to begin operating as a national center September 15, 2009. The strength of AMTEC lies in its partnerships which today include 21 community colleges and 12 automotive and suppliers.

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