



Southwest Regional Manufacturers Association Awarded Workforce Florida Grant
State Quick Response Training Grant Provides funding to Eight SW Florida Manufacturers

The SRMA has received a \$383,000 grant to be distributed to eight SW Florida manufacturers. The grant awarded by Workforce Florida, Inc. is for the Quick Response Training Program (QRT) which provides grant funding for customized training for new or expanding businesses. This project not only benefits Florida manufacturing companies seeking to bolster their workforce, but it also positions Floridians to take advantage of in-demand, high-wage jobs. The QRT Grant will be for the creation of 168 new, full-time permanent jobs and the skills upgrade training for 261 existing employees.

The eight companies which completed an extensive application and review process to qualify for the grant are; Storm Smart, Air Technology, Forestry Resources, Loos & Company, JRL Ventures/Marine Concepts, Pall Corporation, Pelican Wire, and Structured Medical. Training will begin immediately and continue under the terms of the grant for two years. Edison State College will act as the fiscal agent overseeing the requirements of the grant and the distribution of funds. Through this employer-driven program, Florida is able to effectively retain and attract businesses creating new high-quality jobs. Workforce Florida, Inc. administers the program. Created in 1993 by Florida Statute 288.047 (3), Quick Response has provided customized training for over 100,608 employees for more than 303 businesses and industries throughout the state. Companies that have used these grants say, "Training gave new employees the skills and experience to function as efficient and effective members of the production staff" and "Without the grant it would have been impossible to build and train a team of unskilled workers into a team of skilled productive associates." Over 50 customized training courses have been planned by these 8 participating companies. Dollars received for this training are welcome resources in today's struggling economy.

By Chet Sadler