



Letters to the Editor:

Manufacturing careers program should expand reach beyond Springfield

By [Letters to the Editor](#) on July 18, 2014 at 1:09 PM

The article, “**Springfield Technical and Holyoke community colleges launch accelerated manufacturing careers program**”, (page D3, July 7, Business Monday), outlines a new program funded by private companies to train workers for advanced manufacturing jobs. **The Republican later published an editorial in support of the program.** As the President and CEO of Operon Resource Management, a provider of staffing services and specialized job-training solutions for manufacturers of health care and medical device products, I’ve seen an exponential growth in the need for qualified workers in advanced manufacturing. This program is exactly what our manufacturing sector needs to keep growing.

In recent years, community colleges and vocation schools have struggled to produce qualified workers for the advanced manufacturing field. With the support from the private sector, this issue is being addressed in the Springfield area through a rigorous training program for unskilled workers. The recently released unemployment statistics in Massachusetts show a slight decrease in the number of manufacturing jobs in the Commonwealth. This dip could be attributed to the lack of enough trained and skilled workers to fill open positions at manufacturing facilities. There are clearly numerous open job opportunities throughout the state.

I commend the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., Suffolk Construction, and Smith & Wesson for pooling their resources and creating this new accelerated manufacturing careers program. I hope we can use this program as a model to expand its reach beyond Springfield and to the entire state.

Steve Sawin, Lowell