



Bellingham Technical College  
Press Release  
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## ***For Immediate Release***

### **BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE HOSTS MANUFACTURING SUMMIT TO STRATEGIZE WITH INDUSTRY, EDUCATION AND POLICY LEADERS ON SKILLS GAP IN MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE**

Bellingham Washington, February 28, 2014 - Bellingham Technical College (BTC) is hosting a *Manufacturing Summit* on March 4, 2014 from 7:30 am to 12 pm, at Settlemyer Hall on BTC's campus. BTC invites manufacturing businesses to attend by registering for the event (see contact below) and is free.

The discussion will center on how industry, education, and policy leaders can strategize together and identify action steps to address the manufacturing workforce skills-gap and ways to increase the number of graduates for the manufacturing industry and will conclude with an interactive strategy session addressing the region, state and national skills gap.

"This *Summit* illustrates Bellingham Technical College's strong role and commitment to providing a skilled and educated workforce for our region's manufacturing businesses. I represent the college on the national Manufacturing Institute's Education Committee and have been involved in working on national strategies. BTC hopes these industry, education and policy leaders can help the college and region strategize how to build this critical segment of our economy. BTC is honored to have such key national and State leaders at this Summit to help guide this work," said Patricia McKeown, BTC president.

The keynote speaker for this Summit is Jennifer McNelly, President of The Manufacturing Institute which is the non-profit affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). Her presentation will cover:

- A national context for manufacturing and the skills gap
- Best practices of communities in action
- Engage participants in a dialogue for action



**Jennifer McNelly**, President of The Manufacturing Institute which is the non-profit affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). Her focus is on improving and expanding manufacturing in the United States through education, innovation, and research. Jennifer has extensive experience in workforce development, employer engagement, and business. She is a proven leader at the Institute as the chief architect of one of the organization's flagship initiatives, the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System. A set of nationally portable, industry-recognized manufacturing skills certifications, the

System is building the next generation of skilled manufacturing employees by influencing secondary and post-secondary education reform efforts in over 35 states which is building the next generation of skilled manufacturing talent.

Also on the agenda will be:



**Kris Johnson**, President & CEO, Association of Washington Business. As president of AWB, he leads the state's oldest and largest statewide business organization. He oversees the AWB Institute which focuses on manufacturing, workforce development and education. Prior to joining AWB, he was the president of the Saint Paul Area (MN) Chamber of Commerce where he led initiatives resulting in state and federal funding for the Central Corridor Partnership, which brought light rail transit from downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul.

**Amy Johnson** is a Strategic consultant for the Association of Washington Business Institute, the workforce, education, economic development and research arm of the Association of Washington Business, the state's Chamber of Commerce and Manufacturing Association. Prior to joining AWBI, Amy was the Vice President for Public Policy and Workforce Development for Greater Spokane Incorporated.



**Laura Hopkins**, Executive Director, Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC). Since the organization's initial start-up in 2008, Hopkins has served as the voice for AJAC, a statewide, state-funded, nonprofit organization that develops and implements aerospace and advanced manufacturing apprenticeship programs. AJAC's program now includes more than 250 apprentices and over 130 participating employers statewide. In August 2012, AJAC was recognized as a 21st Century Registered Apprenticeship Trailblazer and Innovator by the Department of Labor (DOL) and Secretary's Advisory

Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA).



**Anneliese Vance-Sherman**, Regional Labor Economist, Washington State Employment Security Department's Labor Market and Performance Analysis division. Her presentation will focus on the state of the local labor market with an emphasis on employment trends in manufacturing.

Event Contact:

Lin J. Nelson

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## **About Bellingham Technical College**

Bellingham Technical College is part of the Washington State Community and Technical College system and offers 37 associate degree and 51 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information and directions, go to [www.btc.ctc.edu](http://www.btc.ctc.edu)

## **Links to our participants websites:**

**The Manufacturing Institute:** <http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org/>

**Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee:** <http://www.ajactraining.org/>

**Association of Washington Business:** <http://www.awb.org/>

**Association of Washington Business Institute:** <http://www.awbinstitute.org/home/>