

Governor Carlson Announces Training Grant for SCSU, Woodcraft Industries

St. Paul -- Minnesota Governor Arne H. Carlson Friday announced that St. Cloud State University will receive an \$85,868 training grant from the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Board to assist Woodcraft Industries, Inc. in adding 100 new skilled employees and provide special training for all company employees in new manufacturing technology.

Woodcraft Industries, Inc., founded in 1945, is a manufacturer of dimension components for the cabinet industry. The company has been upgrading to more sophisticated equipment -- including computer-assisted manufacturing machines -- in all three of its Minnesota plants. Increased production capacity requires adding over 100 new employees via an additional work shift. The addition of a third shift will require special training of all Woodcraft employees in the tracking of orders and communications between shifts.

“This is an exciting project for both St. Cloud State University and the company because it will better connect the university with the local community and the workforce,” Governor Carlson said. “At the same time, the company’s employees will be presented with advancement opportunities in their own careers as they gain additional technical manufacturing skills.”

The goal of the project is to design, develop and deliver several computer based training modules to meet the needs created by the new equipment and plant expansions. These modules will be broken down into four areas of training: new employees, advanced machines, new product assembly and third shift implementation.

Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) Commissioner and Job Skills Partnership Board Chair Jay Novak added, “This training will benefit Woodcraft Industries, Inc. by providing the company with additional employees and an overall workforce that is better trained to meet the needs of this new manufacturing computer technology. The combination of a highly trained workforce and sophisticated equipment will enable Woodcraft Industries to be more competitive and profitable in the future.”

The Minnesota Job Skills Partnership program, with administrative support from the Business and Community Development Division of DTED, provides matching grants to educational institutions to develop and provide training for Minnesota businesses to meet the changing needs of Minnesota’s labor market.