

Poster Session Proposal

NFPA Education/Industry Summit

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Submitted by: Industrial Careers Pathway Initiative

Contact: Phyllis Russell, Executive Director

PTDA Foundation and Industrial Careers Pathway®

230 West Monroe, Suite 1410

Chicago, IL 60606

(312)516-2100

prussell@ptda.org

Tomorrow's Workforce – Where Are They? How Do We Connect?

The challenges facing manufacturers and distributors today may be taking our attention from tomorrow's great challenge of finding the quality employees who will replace the Baby Boomers whose experience, product knowledge and relationships sustain our businesses. Given that tomorrow's workers have already been born, the hard reality is that demographic projections show there will not be enough American workers to fill all American jobs, and competition for employees will be fierce. If we do not take steps to reach out, connect with and engage those younger adults who currently are not considering manufacturing and distribution as possible careers, we could find ourselves with critical positions we cannot fill.

There is a strong case to be made to tomorrow's potential employees about good jobs, good working conditions, great challenges and career paths in manufacturing and industrial distribution. And there are efforts underway to attract and prepare young adults who are, in important ways, unlike the manufacturing and distribution employees in important roles today.

Industrial Careers Pathway® is a collaborative initiative of associations, industrial distributors and manufacturers with the mission of building and filling the pipeline of tomorrow's employees, with a focus on sales and customer service. This session will share information about the collaborative's efforts to reach tomorrow's potential employees and to provide an array of educational opportunities to prepare them for jobs in manufacturing and industrial distribution. Information and materials will be shared about:

- Characteristics of the younger workforce
- Effective messages for this workforce
- Outreach and awareness efforts underway or being developed to reach tomorrow's workforce
- How employers can be involved in reaching and connecting with tomorrow's potential employees
- Building relationships and programs at colleges, community colleges and technical schools
- The work of the ICP initiative