



Spangler Candy - Bryan, Ohio



Story produced by:



Candymaker Sweetens the Pot by Hiring WorkAdvance Participants Before the Bootcamp

Northwest Ohio Industry Sector Partnership (ISP) Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (AMC) and a prominent local employer piloted an innovative approach to WorkAdvance. They hired an entire cohort BEFORE starting the two-week bootcamp and paid them a competitive hourly wage during training.

Spangler Candy of Bryan, Ohio, makers of the well-known Dum Dums lollipops, plus other familiar chewy and hard candy products, sponsored the cohort and started each completor the Monday following the training in entry-level candy packer positions.

Spangler is among the largest employers in its area, bringing on 115 new employees in the last year alone. It tapped into

WorkAdvance to supplement its own recruiting efforts.

“When these employees came in here, they were really excited to join Spangler Candy,” said Niki Mosier, VP of human capital, Spangler. “A lot of them said they wanted to work here for a long time, but they’ve never had the opportunity.”

Through WorkAdvance, participants learn both technical

and interpersonal skills to get them job-ready despite having little to no prior manufacturing experience. In AMC’s model, the ISP itself serves as the recruiter, trainer and career coach post-hire.

The employer said the bootcamp was like an extended “tryout” that participants passed with flying colors.

“The fact they completed the two weeks of classroom training sends a message that they’re truly committed and that this is something they WANT to do,” Mosier said.

Plant tour generates excitement

AMC career coach Amber Leppelmeier said Spangler hosted a plant tour during the first week of bootcamp.

“The tour is a must!” she said. “It got them excited. They could see

what they would be doing, and it helped motivate them through that second week of class.”

Another incentive for participants was the commitment of a pay raise on day-one on the job once they completed the training.

Employer reimbursed for wages

Candidates were recruited and screened using AMC’s standard procedures in addition to the employer’s hiring policies and criteria. Spangler participated in interviews and retained the final hiring authority.

AMC leveraged available funding streams to establish an innovative, federal- and state-compliant framework that enabled the ISP to refund the employer for all gross wages earned during the two-week bootcamp. Additionally, the employer was eligible

for reimbursement through TechCred for the credentials obtained by the participants.

Among the participants was a young, single mother of three children who was looking to turn her life around after a drug conviction and incarceration. Following her release, she started taking college courses.

“She wanted a good-paying job, and she was excited and grateful for this opportunity,” Leppelmeier said. “She’s doing great at Spangler, and is continuing her college courses while working full-time.”

Spangler considers the sponsored cohort such a success that it plans on repeating it in 2024. AMC has heard from at least one other member manufacturer that would like to sponsor one, as well.

Workforce Ecosystem Players



Advanced
Manufacturing
Consortium

*ISP, Recruiter, Trainer
(technical and job-readiness),
Career Coach*



Employer

Visit tinyurl.com/WorkAdvance for more information on WorkAdvance.



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