



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lizette Downey | 260.278.8478

Don Wood Foundation rolls out another CTE ecosystem study—but for five counties south of Allen County

Study focusing on Adams, Grant, Huntington, Wabash, and Wells counties

FORT WAYNE, IND. (April 23, 2024) – The Don Wood Foundation, a private foundation dedicated to advancing manufacturing, entrepreneurship, and leadership-related education in the region, is partnering with TPMA, an Indianapolis-based national consulting firm, to complete a comprehensive research study on the career and technical education (CTE) ecosystem in Adams, Grant, Huntington, Wabash, and Wells counties. The results of the study will help guide the DWF strategy for potential funding allocation and provide data and recommendations specific to each county.

“While our service area is primarily northeast Indiana, the Don Wood Foundation recognizes that each of the 12 counties in our region has unique needs,” said Patrick Buesching, vice president, strategic initiatives, Don Wood Foundation. “We want to understand the nuances specific to each county.”

The 5-county study is the fourth research project that the DWF has conducted since April 2023, and the findings will be released this summer.

“We will complete this series of studies with an overview of the state of CTE in our region, including partnership opportunities for area manufacturers, CTE centers, and higher education institutions in an effort to help communities find solutions to meet manufacturing workforce needs,” Buesching added.

Career and technical education combines employer needs with hands-on and relevant training in skilled trades, applied sciences, and modern technologies. Courses provide students with the skills and experience to excel in careers in agriculture, building and construction, culinary arts, education and child development, engineering and architecture, fashion and interior design, healthcare, hospitality, information technologies, manufacturing, marketing, medical technology, product development, robotics, and others.

“Working with the Don Wood Foundation on this vital study highlights our dedication to improving the career and technical education landscape in northeast Indiana,” said Nioka Clark, project lead, TPMA. “We’re committed to a thorough understanding of the current educational dynamic in each county and discovering how best to enhance them. Our aim is to create an environment where all students have access to robust technical education, equipping them for successful futures right here in northeast Indiana.”

The study will build upon existing information to provide a clear picture of regional activities in place and understand challenges and opportunities. TPMA initiated the study earlier this year duplicating the same process as the previous studies, with a discovery phase, a review of current data, plans, and resources. Input from key stakeholders is critical to the success of the study.

(MORE)



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lizette Downey | 260.278.8478

(DWF ANNOUNCES CTE STUDY FOR FIVE COUNTIES SOUTH OF ALLEN, P. 2)

About the Don Wood Foundation

The Don Wood Foundation is a private foundation, established in 2018 by Don Wood, founder of 80/20, Inc., that serves and supports innovators, leaders, collaborators, and skilled workers with the potential to create and sustain opportunities in manufacturing. DWF partners with non-profits and educational institutions to provide sustained investment that supports the development of a diverse workforce through exposure, education, and training to create strong communities rooted in the advancement of manufacturing.

Follow Don Wood Foundation on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About TPMA

TPMA is a national consulting firm that works at the intersection of workforce development, economic development, education, and community impact. The firm empowers organizations and communities through strategic partnerships and data-informed solutions that create positive, sustainable change. TPMA envisions a world that thinks strategically, works collaboratively, and acts sustainably. Working toward that vision, TPMA has provided clients with a range of services to design, develop, evaluate, and implement effective plans and programs.

###