



## **Industry-Led Apprenticeship Program in Florida's Space Coast Welcomes First Apprentices at Signing Event Attended by Gov. DeSantis and Other Local Business Leaders**

- *Student apprentices will mix classroom-based learning at Eastern Florida State College and work-based learning at local advanced technology manufacturing companies for a well-rounded talent development approach*
- *Program will enhance the Space Coast workforce, further cementing it as the center for high-technology aerospace manufacturing*
- *Participating companies gain a solid pipeline of highly-skilled workers*
- *Kick-off comes weeks after Governor DeSantis signs apprenticeship bill CS/HB 7071*

**EXPLORATION PARK, Florida, USA, July 29, 2019** – The Space Coast Consortium Apprenticeship Program – an industry-driven apprenticeship program led by a group of advanced manufacturing companies operating on the Space Coast– today formally welcomed its first nine students into the two-year program at a formal event attended by government and business leaders, including Governor Ron DeSantis, Frank DiBello, President and CEO of Space Florida, Dr. James Richey, President of Eastern Florida State College, and Thomas Lichtenberger, CEO of Festo Didactic.

Under the program, student apprentices will attend classes at Eastern Florida State two days a week and will work on the manufacturing floors of participating companies, including OneWeb Satellites, RUAG Space, Rocket Crafters, and Knights Armament, three days a week. By mixing classroom learning with “on-the-job” learning, students will graduate with real, immediately marketable skills.

The program will develop mechatronics technicians in the first cohort of the program and, in the coming year, strives to also develop fiber composite technicians and advanced CNC/DNC machinists.

Upon graduation, students will earn world-class apprenticeship certifications, as well as a two-year associate degree from Eastern Florida State College.

The consortium approach to the apprenticeship program is the first of its kind in Florida and comes only weeks after Governor DeSantis visited the Space Coast to sign CS/HB 7071, a broad workforce education bill that includes a number of provisions enhancing apprenticeship programs in Florida.

The consortium was formed in 2017 by Kai Schmidt, Human Resources Director of OneWeb Satellites and Bryan Kamm, Founder and Principal of Kamm Consulting, to address a shortage of highly skilled advanced manufacturing workforce on the Space Coast.

Having recently relocated to Florida from Germany, Mr. Schmidt knows first-hand how similar programs are critical to Germany's manufacturing prowess.

Mr. Kamm likewise had experience with the German model and saw how it could not only help with his own mission to staff up technology company RUAG's new Titusville factory but could benefit the region as a whole.

“The Space Coast is an area where the future is being staged in advanced manufacturing for commercial space, aerospace, aircraft and defense industries,” said Bryan Kamm. “This area has seen



its highs and lows during past space programs. Now, in order for these companies to supply their workforce with the technical skills required for the future, they are looking ahead to assure they remain competitive to build a more sustainable and stronger future economy.”

In February 2019, SCCAP received full approval from FDOE as a state-registered apprenticeship program and today will become only the second entity in the United States to implement Festo Didactics’ Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program Partners (MAP2).

“MAP2 expansion in Florida marks an important milestone for industrial education,” said Thomas Lichtenberger, CEO of Festo Didactic Inc., North America. “We couldn’t be more proud to partner with SCCAP and Eastern Florida State College. The support and visionary implementation from Governor DeSantis and state legislators will catalyze Industry 4.0 career-readiness, giving students a competitive edge and critical exposure to jobs of the future.”

The Space Coast Consortium Apprenticeship Program looks forward to an exciting future and encourages any local companies looking to develop an advanced manufacturing workforce pipeline to join them in their mission.

### **About OneWeb Satellites**

OneWeb Satellites is the world’s first high volume, low-cost satellite manufacturer. Formed in 2016, it has revolutionized satellite manufacturing by applying the commoditization and mass production techniques utilized in aircraft and auto manufacturing to dramatically reduce production times and costs. Where a traditional satellite may cost tens of millions of dollars and take years to build, OneWeb Satellites can do it at a far lower cost and at a production rate of up to two per day.

### **About Festo Didactic**

Festo Didactic is a leading provider of technical education equipment and training. Festo’s educational solutions evolved from its world-class automation and engineering division and integrates the latest trends in each learning system it offers. The innovative product range allows educators and trainers to equip their classrooms with the technology they need, from individual workstations to complete Learning Factories, as well as training and consulting, eLearning, courseware solutions, and LMS integration. [www.festo-didactic.com](http://www.festo-didactic.com)

### **About Kamm Consulting**

Kamm Consulting Group, LLC is a Florida-based company that provides site selection consulting for German-speaking companies in the US and assists in GAP™ (Germanic Apprenticeship Program) Turnkey Solution Partner implementations within local US communities. GAP™ Turnkey Solution Partners are Hoffmann Group, Festo, KUKA, Siemens, EMCO Group, Bluegrass, EOS and Weiler which, together with Kamm Consulting Group offer world-class equipment, standards and curriculum for GAP™ implementations. For more information about Kamm Consulting Group, visit



[www.bkammconsulting.com](http://www.bkammconsulting.com) , or to learn more about the Space Coast Consortium Apprenticeship Program, call Bryan Kamm at 813-415-7514.

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