

Success/Impact Story

Enstrom Helicopter Corporation of Menominee, Michigan manufactures helicopters for governmental, police, commercial, and private customers around the world. Over 90% of Enstrom's helicopters are manufactured in their Menominee facility, which requires a highly skilled workforce.

In 2014, Enstrom Helicopter Corporation completed its 77,000 square foot expansion to help foster the demand for manufacturing helicopters. Enstrom also hired 91 employees to increase their workforce to support increased market demand. As a result of retirement of experienced employees, and the hiring of less experienced new employees, Enstrom embarked on an aggressive training program for their staff to address the accelerated production schedule.

In January, Enstrom began training with the help of Michigan Works, NWTTC, and the STTF Grant provided through the State of Michigan: Workforce Development Agency. Aircraft Welding Visual Inspection was the first training completed through the grant. This training provided employees from several departments with the knowledge needed for inspecting welds on critical components of their helicopter. The instructor also worked with welders to help them with techniques, tips, and provided them with information about the most current welding supplies. This training had a direct impact on their processes and efficiencies, adding to the bottom line of the company

Enstrom's welding leadman, Shane Betzinger, said the following of the training, "the welding tips and techniques helped us cut down on irregularities in welds and helped us with knowing what to look for."



Enstrom is currently in the process of Geometric

Pictured above is welder Garrett Wolsker who is welding a pylon for a piston-powered helicopter.

Dimensioning & Tolerancing training, which includes training a total of 46 employees, including Engineers, Quality Assurance, and Machine Shop personnel. This training will assist Enstrom by formulating common practices and nomenclature to be used by Engineering to better communicate information on blueprints and help reduce manufacturing costs.

The training done thus far has helped improve Enstrom's employee's skills by improving techniques, communication, and knowledge.

"The UP is not a hot bed of aviation. It is extremely important for Enstrom to be able to attract and train local employees that enjoy the area and want to be here. That is why I am so grateful to Michigan Works, NWTC, and the STTF Grant Program which has supported us through the beginning of this process", said Tracy Biegler, President & CEO of Enstrom. "In speaking with other industry leaders in the area, it is not only aviation, but all industry that can benefit from this type of program. Furthermore, the investment made in the local population will keep quality employees in the UP that will continue to attract other businesses and employers to this area of the country."