

CHALLENGE EXAMS FOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS CREATES THOUSANDS OF JOBS

ABOUT HUNTINGTON INGALLS INCORPORATED. Ingalls Shipbuilding is the largest manufacturing employer in Mississippi. Based in Pascagoula, the shipyard covers 800 acres and has over 11,000 employees. Ingalls is a pioneer in the development and production of technologically advanced, highly capable warships for the surface Navy fleet, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, and foreign and commercial customers. The over-75-year-old company is now the largest supplier of U.S. Navy surface combatants, building over 70 percent of the Navy's fleet of warships. Ingalls is a major contributor to the economic growth of Mississippi and its surrounding communities.

THE CHALLENGE. Deeply committed to apprenticeship training, Ingalls offers 12 different apprenticeship programs to provide a combination of 2-5 years of on-the-job training (OJT) and related classroom instruction under the supervision of a journey-level craft person or trades professional. This structure allows the apprentice to learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation. Unfortunately, Ingalls apprentices were taking college-level course work without the benefit of receiving academic college credit. The company reached out to the InnovateMEP Center at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, a NIST MEP affiliate, to find an appropriate solution.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Innovate MS helped Ingalls to establish cross-walks between the company's apprenticeship courses and community colleges in the area. The colleges worked with Ingalls to match learning objectives to existing college courses and develop tests (challenge exams) for the students. The company's substantial investment in college-based apprenticeship programs created thousands of jobs. In 2015, Ingalls was proud to promote over 560 trainees to the status of journeyman in their specific craft.

"With the help of InnovateMEP, our apprentices set educational goals because they know how greatly it will impact their careers. This partnership allows them to invest in achieving those goals. It also makes them better shipbuilders—this is truly a win-win. No doubt partnering with InnovateMEP Mississippi contributed to the success of the apprenticeship programs."

-Mark Scott, Manager of Resource and Talent Training and Development

RESULTS



Created **2,500** jobs



\$669,600 in cost-savings



\$4,900,000 investment in apprenticeship programs



Promoted **564** trainees to journeyman status in 2015

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