

NEWS RELEASE
GOVERNOR STEVE BULLOCK
STATE OF MONTANA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Awards \$325,000 for Job Training Program in Great Falls

GREAT FALLS – Governor Steve Bullock was at Great Falls College-Montana State University today, where he announced an award of \$325,000 to the school to assist in the development of job training programs related to the increased demand for welding professionals in Great Falls and across the western US and Canada. At the event, Bullock was joined by Dean Susan Wolff of Great Falls College MSU, General Manager of ADF International Dan Rooney and legislators who had supported this award.

“Having a talented and trained workforce is a crucial part of building a strong economy,” Bullock said. “By investing in Montana workers, we’re helping to meet the needs of businesses today and into the future. This job training program will be a boon to the Great Falls community, and Montana as a whole.”

The funding will allow Great Falls College-MSU to complete development of their unique welding curriculum that will train students for both the American Welding Society (AWS) and Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) certifications. It is one of few programs in the country that prepares students for dual certifications. The program will open doors for Montanans to access high paying jobs in Montana.

Bullock highlighted the collaboration between GFC-MSU and ADF in his State of the State address, where he also stated his strong support for such collaboration.

“Great Falls College MSU prides itself in being proactive to build a more diverse economic base for the City of Great Falls and surrounding region. Today’s workforce will have three to seven different careers in their lifetimes and must be well prepared to seek and apply new knowledge and skills for continually changing opportunities. This is what builds vibrant communities,” Wolff said. Wolff also thanked the Governor, the Great Falls legislators, the Commissioner of Higher Education, and President Cruzado for their support.

The demand for trained welders has dramatically increased due to the surge in oil production in the Bakken region of eastern Montana and western North Dakota as well as continued oil developments in Alberta. The program is an especially good fit for Great Falls as the community prepares for a rapid increase in the need for

welders locally at the ADF International fabrication facility. ADF expects to hire as many as 500 workers over the next couple of years and hopes to tap into the College's graduates to meet their workforce needs.

"Dean Wolff and her staff quickly identified the need for additional well trained and qualified welders in Great Falls and the surrounding communities. With full support and help from the legislature and Governor Bullock's office, they have adjusted their available space, added instructors and modified their curriculum to meet the immediate needs and future needs of ADF and similar manufacturing companies in the area," said Dan Rooney, General Manager of ADF International. "They are, along with all of Montana's universities and technical schools, producing exceptional graduates with the necessary skills and education to support manufacturing in Montana and providing graduates with well paid jobs and meaningful careers."

"Today's announcement is proof that if we put our partisan labels aside and instead focus on what is best for Montana and the Great Falls Community, we can do some good things," Rep. Bob Mehlhoff of Great Falls said. "Today, we're sending a strong signal to businesses about Montana's efforts to align our workforce development strategies with the careers that are most in demand."

The funds come from [Senate Bill 410](#), a budget measure negotiated between the Governor and Speaker Blasdel, which passed at the close of the 2013 legislative session.

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