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**CUSTOM TRAINING SOLUTIONS CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A  
STANDARDS RECOGNITION ENTITY**

*Archbold, Ohio* – Custom Training Solutions, a division of Northwest State Community College received the distinct recognition from the Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship as a Standards Recognition Entity in December 2020. A Standards Recognition Entity (SRE) is a designation given to organizations that have applied and demonstrated expert industry knowledge and ability to recognize high quality Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAPs) in a set of occupations. CTS may recognize IRAPS within Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing for occupations such as Industrial Machinery Mechanics; Maintenance Workers, Machinery; Millwrights (non-construction related only); Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; Machinist; Tool and Die Makers; Welding; CNC Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastics; Production Workers; and others.

IRAPs have received a substantial amount of negative press in the recent weeks following a decision by the Biden Administration to rescind Executive Order 13801 which former President Trump signed in 2017 and led to the creation of IRAPs. The White House issued a statement stating "Industry-recognized apprenticeship programs have fewer quality standards than registered apprenticeship programs—for example, they fail to require the wage progression that reflects increasing apprentice skills and they lack the standardized training rigor that ensures employers know they are hiring a worker with high-quality training"[[1]](#footnote-1).

Custom Training Solutions submitted a highly detailed application providing evidence that we have the expert industry knowledge in the Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing sectors to recognize and uphold high-quality IRAPs that are still registered with the Department of Labor and must meet rigorous criteria to be recognized. IRAPs are meant to be flexible, employer driven, and based on competencies mastered vs. time spent completing on-the-job training. CTS, as a part of our application, created a panel of industry experts in various trades that will recognize all IRAPs to ensure that they are of high-quality. Every recognized IRAP will also be monitored and evaluated annually to ensure the program meets all federal, state, and local requirements.

Northwest State Community College through the Workforce Development division, Custom Training Solutions, was approved as a Sponsor for State Registered Apprenticeship programs in spring 2019. Currently, NSCC sponsors ten companies with a total of 15 registered apprenticeship programs. Being a sponsor for companies in Northwest Ohio allows manufacturing employers that do not have the resources or bandwidth to sponsor their own programs to create and implement Registered Apprenticeship Programs leaving the paperwork and responsibility with Northwest State. Having this capability and experience only adds to the legitimacy of being recognized as a Standards Recognition Entity.

Although President Biden has ordered the suspension of recognizing new SREs, those that have already been given this prestigious status are able to continue their important work and recognize high quality IRAPs. There are currently 27 SREs across the United States. Custom Training Solutions, as an approved Standards Recognition Entity, is able to recognize IRAPs in the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. We are also committed to continuing our work as a sponsor for State Registered Apprenticeship Programs. There is a need in our communities for both apprenticeship type programs. Custom Training Solutions is here to support the needs of Advanced Manufacturing.

To learn more about IRAPs, RAPs, or other training programs, please contact Tori Atkinson, Director of Workforce Development and Innovative Learning at Northwest State Community College by email at tatkinson@northweststate.edu.

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*Northwest State Community College is an accredited two-year, state-assisted institution of higher education that has served northwest Ohio since 1969. Northwest State is committed to providing a quality, affordable education with personal attention and small class sizes. The College offers associate degrees with numerous transfer options, short-term certificate programs, and workforce training programs designed to meet the needs of local businesses and industries. For more information, visit NorthwestState.edu or call 419.267.5511.*

1. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/02/17/fact-sheet-biden-administration-to-take-steps-to-bolster-registered-apprenticeships/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)