For Immediate Release
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3Degrees and America Makes Lead Roundtable Discussion with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo on Workforce Development in Additive Manufacturing

Roundtable focused enhancements to the US manufacturing ecosystem through workforce development and training programs

CHICAGO, IL, November 12, 2021 – America Makes, the national additive manufacturing institute and 3Degrees, a leading 3D Printing consulting firm welcomed US Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo to the hard technology accelerator mHub for a round table discussion with local and national government representatives, and partners developing workforce training around the country.

The visit highlighted the recent completion of the pilot Advanced Manufacturing Experience (AMx) course on the West Side of Chicago. Led by 3Degrees, LLC, in collaboration with the non-profit West Side Forward, the AMx program is a first of its kind immersive 3D Printing Apprenticeship program to train students between 22-50 years old on the West Side of Chicago. The course aimed to bring the excitement and opportunity for jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector to underserved communities. Several AMx participants attended the event and shared their first-hand experiences with the technology and impacts of the program.

The 3D Printing industry has grown up to 30% over the past five years, adding thousands of new-collar jobs to the American workforce. Yet the additive manufacturing industry, like many industries today, still has difficulty filling them. New collar positions, like the ones created by industrial 3D Printing, value technical skills over college degrees—something difficult to find in today’s workforce. 3Degrees is working to solve this problem.

“I've seen this first-hand as an entrepreneur running two companies that help large manufacturing organizations (e.g., government, aerospace, automotive) implement 3D Printing technology. My clients tell me time and again that they have well-paying, benefit-eligible jobs that they cannot fill. It seems the US has forgotten how to train its workforce for today's jobs that do not require a college degree,” says Mike Vasquez, CEO of 3Degrees. “On the flip side, access to finding jobs in this industry is not straightforward. Most of these companies are small (<100 employees) and unless you have some network or understanding of the industry you may not know what’s happening in the white, non-descript, windowless buildings on the side of the highway.’

The pilot course was a combination of in person instruction, tours of leading 3D Printing facilities like Renishaw, Impossible Objects, and mHub as well as mentors from companies across the industry such as Siemens Energy, EOS, Desktop Metal, Met-l-Flo, Dyndrite, Forecast3D). Throughout the duration of the course, the class explored different technologies and designed their own parts using the Future of Jewelry online software. Students had the opportunity to receive the Certified Manufacturing Technologist (CMfgT) certification from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers upon completing the course. This curriculum was provided directly by America Makes.

“The mission of the America Makes Education and Workforce Development program is to empower our members to engage at the local level through access to our national network of credentialed materials and expertise,” said America Makes Education and Workforce Director Josh Cramer. “The program
implemented by 3Degrees and their partners epitomizes exactly what we hope to achieve with our EWD program.” @Josh Cramer.

The program culminated with a guided tour of North America’s largest 3D Printing trade show Rapid. Several iterations of the course will be deployed in 2022 starting in March with the aim to expand the program to areas across the United States later in the year.

About 3Degrees
3Degrees helps companies implement winning 3D Printing solutions through practical insights and materials expertise. It was founded in 2012 by Dr. Mike Vasquez. The team has decades of expertise in material design and selection, part evaluation, training and safety and designing 3D Printing roadmaps and long-term strategies. 3Degrees is also a member of America Makes and is based in Chicago, IL.

About America Makes
America Makes is the nation’s leading public-private partnership for additive manufacturing (AM) technology and education. America Makes members from industry, academia, government, workforce and economic development organizations, work together to accelerate the adoption of AM and the nation’s global manufacturing competitiveness. Founded in 2012 as the Department of Defense’s manufacturing innovation institute for AM and first of the Manufacturing USA network, America Makes is based in Youngstown, Ohio and managed by the not-for-profit National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining (NCDMM). Visit americamakes.us to learn more.

Images from the August 2021 Pilot
Tour of Renishaw

Tour of mHub
Tour of Impossible Objects

Images from the Visit with Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo