

**Congressional Testimony**  
**House Education and Workforce**  
**Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development**  
**Stacey Hughes**  
**KY FAME State Chairperson**  
**HR Manager, Logan Aluminum**

Chairman Guthrie, Ranking Member Davis, and all the members of the House Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development, I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here. It is my pleasure. I am honored to testify this morning. My name is Stacey Hughes and I currently serve as the State Chairperson for KY FAME, the Kentucky Federation of Advanced Manufacturing Education.

In addition to KY FAME, since 2008, I had the honor of leading a team of HR professionals in the areas of employee relations, legal, benefits, medical, wellness, and education and development as Logan Aluminum's Human Resources Manager. Logan Aluminum located in Russellville, KY is one of the largest aluminum rolling mills in North America, if not the largest. It has grown to more than four times its initial capacity and provides over 40% of North America's beverage can sheet production. Today, Logan Aluminum employs over 1200 team members, produces 2 billion pounds per year and is in the middle of a nearly \$500 million expansion which will add automotive sheet capability.

Logan Aluminum's education and development department manages a successful maintenance apprenticeship program. This apprenticeship has produced over 175 graduates over the last 30 years and 58% of our current engineering and maintenance leadership are graduates of this program. Furthermore, our historic plant turnover from this apprenticeship program has been less than 6%. In 2014, Logan Aluminum became a member of KY FAME, and soon transitioned our thriving program to FAME's Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT) earn and learn apprenticeship program. Logan Aluminum entrusted our existing program due to its belief in KY FAME's vision and mission.

So what is KY FAME and why would Logan Aluminum and now over 200 Kentucky manufacturers join this effort? KY FAME is an **industry-led** public private partnership dedicated to implementing world-class models for developing manufacturing talent. FAME's vision is to transform Kentucky's manufacturing workforce to ensure the economic success of its member companies and our Commonwealth.

KY FAME is an active **employer-led** partnership that achieves its mission and vision through a variety of core functions. Comprised of over 200 employer members in 10 regional chapters, along with education and economic development partners, FAME identifies critical skill needs in manufacturing; creates market driven career paths for manufacturing, standardizes technical education curriculum and program delivery; provides meaningful work experience concurrent

to a student's educational experience; markets and promotes manufacturing careers; and recruits manufacturing's next generation of employees through student sponsorship.

FAME is not a new organization. With the leadership of our founding member, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, FAME launched in 2009 with nine manufacturers in central Kentucky. This initial group collaborated with their local technical college to develop a new program to meet the growing need for multi-skilled maintenance technicians. The Advanced Manufacturing Technician program, known as AMT, is a two-year associate's degree that incorporates technical skills, personal behaviors (soft skills), manufacturing core exercises, and work experience. Each AMT attends class two days a week for eight hours a day. The other three days a week, AMT students work for a sponsoring employer who matches their work experience with the AMT curriculum.

Since 2009, FAME has grown exponentially. To date, over 225 students have graduated from AMT and over 95% of them currently work full-time for the employers who sponsored them. Most AMT graduates earn an average \$45,000 per year when they enter full-time employment they have little to no student debt. AMT graduation rates also exceed current trends. AMT students maintain an on-time graduation rate of 89%. This compares to 12.8% and 49.4% for other associate's and bachelor's degree programs respectively. In the Fall semester of 2017 over 650 first and second year students will be enrolled in FAME endorsed programs.

As previously mentioned, employer numbers have increased as well. What started with nine companies now consists of a statewide organization, with 10 regional chapters and over 200 manufacturing members. In addition to the AMT program, FAME also endorses and sponsors students enrolled in other manufacturing career pathways such as entry-level production operation, computerized machining and manufacturing, tool and die as well as manufacturing focused engineering and business bachelor's degree programs. KY FAME employers also invited almost 100 high school teachers into their facilities this summer for paid one-week externships to learn about manufacturing. Furthermore, other business sectors such as healthcare, finance and IT have expressed interest in duplicating the FAME model to build apprenticeships in their trades. The success of KY FAME has caused it to spread to other states including Indiana, Texas, West Virginia, Missouri, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

FAME has received numerous awards and recognition from entities such as National Network of Business and Industry Associations, the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute, the National Career Pathways Network, the German-American Chamber of Commerce, the National Academies of Science and Engineering, and the National Association of Manufacturing. Each of these organizations recognize KY FAME as a model for technical and apprenticeship- style education.

In closing, the benefits of KY FAME to employers, educators, and students are numerous. FAME helps companies develop curriculum and programs to grow their current and future talent base. The partnership between employers and educators ensures a high standard of industry

quality in program delivery. Because of company collaboration, companies both large and small can participate. FAME's largest employer has over 9,000 employees and its smallest member employees 25. Students earn a technical, practical and high-demand education that leads to a promising career with little to no student debt.

Speaking on behalf of KY FAME as its State Chairperson, I appreciate this committee's work on this important issue. A skilled and ready workforce is critical for the growth of my company, my state and our nation. KY FAME believes we have created a proven apprenticeship model to increase the quality of our workforce and I am proud to share it with you today. KY FAME supports the spirit of the Presidential Executive Order Expanding Apprenticeships in America and respectfully requests this Subcommittee to introduce legislation to promote **employer-led** programs such as KY FAME. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you again for your time.