

Toyota Recognized by Project Lead The Way for Commitment to America's Students and Teachers

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ORLANDO, Fla. (Oct. 25, 2017) – From advanced manufacturing to computer science, developing and connecting youth to high-demand, high-growth career opportunities is something companies throughout the nation are trying to tackle. For Toyota, this kind of workforce development has been a focus in the U.S. for decades.

To recognize its focus on developing and connecting students to career opportunities, [Project Lead The Way](#) (PLTW) welcomed Toyota as a “Transformative Partner” at its [2017 National Summit](#). Awarded just six times in 20 years, the distinction of Transformative Partner is the highest level of commitment for PLTW partners. In addition to Toyota, PLTW’s Transformative Partners include Autodesk, Chevron, Kern Family Foundation, Lockheed Martin, and Verizon.

“Providing students with career-learning opportunities in growing industries is critical to empowering students with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in our global economy,” said Dr. Vince Bertram, president and CEO of PLTW. “Through its support of PLTW programs and facilitation of student opportunities through its work/study and technician-training programs, Toyota has been an invaluable partner in this effort. We are proud to recognize Toyota as a Transformative Partner.”

Toyota began recruiting PLTW high school graduates to enroll in its Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT) program in 2010. The two-year, intensive technical work/study program prepares global-best graduates for in-demand manufacturing careers and offers them a unique opportunity to earn a salary with Toyota while working toward an associate degree through a local community college partner. Today, the program is active in nine states, with 22 programs and over 300 engaged employers.

“PLTW programs help to empower teachers and students, providing the skills, resources, and training necessary to compete for the jobs of tomorrow,” said Dennis Dio Parker, who leads Toyota’s AMT program. “We part of a rapidly changing and complex industry, and PLTW helps produce graduates who are well prepared to succeed in our global-best AMT pathway.”

In addition, Toyota engages in targeted recruitment of PLTW students for its Technician Training & Education Network (T-TEN) program, currently in 36 U.S. colleges. In its 31-year history, T-TEN has developed and graduated over 11,000 factory-certified automotive technicians in challenging, rewarding, and well-paid positions in Toyota and Lexus dealerships around the country.

“Throughout the nation, we are investing in workforce development programs to provide youth with opportunity,” said Rick Lester, who leads Toyota’s T-TEN program. “By partnering with PLTW, we are able to build a pipeline of students with the skill sets that help prepare them for future success in our program.”

Expanding access to career-learning opportunities in manufacturing and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is vital to preparing students for careers in high-demand, high-growth fields. A study from Deloitte found that over the next decade, U.S. employers will need to fill nearly 3.5 million skilled manufacturing jobs; however, the skills gap is expected to result in two million of those jobs remaining unfilled. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Commerce reports that employment in STEM is projected to grow by 8.9 percent from 2014 to 2024, compared to 6.4 percent growth for non-STEM occupations.

Earlier this year, The Toyota USA Foundation awarded PLTW a grant to support the implementation of PLTW programs in approximately 115 K-12 schools throughout the United States. The grant will help with the implementation of PLTW Launch (grades K-5); PLTW Gateway (grades 6-8); and PLTW Engineering and PLTW Computer Science programs (grades 9-12). In 2015, the Foundation awarded PLTW a grant which gave 40 high schools the opportunity to implement PLTW’s [Computer Integrated Manufacturing \(CIM\) course](#).

The grant application window for this year’s funding is currently open. Eligible schools must submit an application through the Grants tool in [myPLTW](#) before Dec. 15.