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Macon State College Brings the Classroom to the Production Floor

YKK USA and Boeing employees learn to work Lean; earn Six Sigma belts through ICAPP project

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Macon State College began its ICAPP project with Boeing and YKK USA in 2007. Today, Macon State is teaching the principles of **Lean and Six Sigma** at the YKK manufacturing plant in Macon and YKK national headquarters in Marietta by broadcasting from its Warner Robins campus to each location.

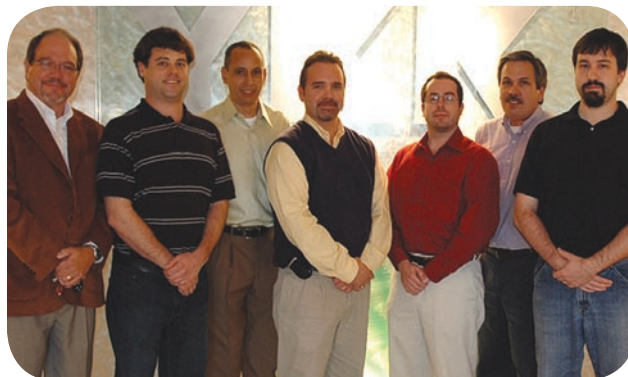
Students can earn one of two professional certificates in Lean, and can use the credit hours they earn toward completing a college degree. Courses in the certificate curriculum are part of Macon State's Production/Operations Management major within the Bachelor of Science in Business & Information Technology degree. Macon State worked with YKK and Boeing to develop the curriculum—a blend of Lean and Six Sigma principles.

After earning one of the certificates, employees are prepared to participate in Lean/Six Sigma process improvement teams, which can lead to both one-time and recurring savings.

During and after these programs, students are encouraged to take the **Certified Six Sigma Green Belt** and **Certified Six Sigma Black Belt** examinations from the American Society for Quality (ASQ). "ASQ's certifications are internationally recognized, and serve as an external validation for the quality of what we do in the program," says Dr. Anthony L. Patti, Georgia Eminent Scholar and Professor of Management at Macon State. The first-time pass rate for the students in this program who have taken the ASQ Green Belt examination is 88%, while the first-time pass rate so far for the ASQ Black Belt examination is 100%.



Barbara Burwell and Chris Hayes, Lean/Six Sigma students and employees at Robins Air Force Base, where Macon State has taught Lean and Six Sigma since 2003. "We want to work with other companies across Georgia that are interested in these Lean/Six Sigma certificate programs, and with companies interested in non-credit training programs," said Mike Hale, Executive Director of Macon State's Warner Robins campuses and Director of the Institute for Business & Information Management.



Bill Brown (far left), former vice president of manufacturing, was project champion at YKK. Recent YKK graduates include (left to right) Jason Hawkins, R&D engineer; Eggy Beltran, sales operations manager; Keith Flury, manufacturing operations planning manager; Brian Lawrie, quality engineer; Mike Larkin, scheduling manager; and Jason Borden, R&D engineer.



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