

Minco, Inc. Wins State Award for Worker Training



Commissioner Neeley presents MINCO, Inc. the Jim Alford Award.

Training Investments Increase Sales and Expand Workforce by 25%

NASHVILLE – (Dec 17, 2010) Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner James Neeley and the State Workforce Board presented the fourth annual Jim Alford Memorial Award today for Outstanding Incumbent Worker Training to MINCO, Inc. of Midway, Tennessee. The award publicly acknowledges the exceptional efforts of a Tennessee business that has provided training through the Incumbent Worker Training program.

MINCO, Inc. was awarded \$25,000 allowing 96 employees to receive specialized training. Investments were made in improving the skill level of their maintenance technicians and certified welders, training their supervisors and production operators in Lean Manufacturing Techniques and statistical process control, and produced a Six Sigma Black Belt trained quality manager. As a result of training investments, MINCO has increased sales and expanded their workforce from 98 employees to 125.

Mike McCullough, Director of Human Resources at MINCO, Inc., stated the Incumbent Worker Training Grant “gave us the incentive and opportunity to move forward with this significant investment in our workforce.”

MINCO is a manufacturer of Fused Silica that has operated in Greene County for 33 years. Their Fused Silica grains and flour materials are primarily used in the precision investment casting industry to make molds for precision metal castings and for refractory materials. The material is also used to produce the ceramic molds used in making photo-voltaic cells for solar panels.

“I am honored to give this award to MINCO,” said Labor Commissioner James Neeley. “It’s a bold move for management to provide workplace training in tough economic times, and as a result they have been able to add and stabilize jobs for employees. I know Jim Alford would be proud of the hard work MINCO Incorporated has accomplished.”

The Jim Alford Memorial Award is given to companies that enhance job skills and personal development, help to prevent downsizing, create new jobs, prevent relocation while increasing the profitability of the company and improve short and long-term wage levels of the employees being trained. The award is given in memory of Jim Alford, former director of employer services for the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. His hard work and dedication helped train more than 24,000 employees. Alford passed away in 2007.

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development administers the Incumbent Worker Training program. To qualify for the grant, employers must be in operation in Tennessee for at least one year, employ at least five full-time workers, demonstrate financial viability and be current on all state tax obligations. Funding priority is given to businesses whose grant proposals represent a significant layoff avoidance strategy and represent a significant upgrade of skills.

****Photo: Commissioner Neeley presents MINCO, Inc. the Jim Alford award. Pictured from left to right: Patrick Bleecker, Incumbent Worker Program Manager, TDLWD, James Neeley, Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Wallace Grills, State Workforce Board Chair, Dr. Nancy Brown, LWIA 2 Director, John Greeter, LWIA 6 State Workforce Board.***