



FUTURE READY OREGON: *Workforce Ready Grant Investments in Semiconductor Workforce and Talent Development*

Future Ready Oregon is a \$200 million investment in education and training that is advancing a more equitable workforce system and increasing opportunities for diverse workers. **Workforce Ready Grants**, the largest component of Future Ready Oregon, support talent development in key sectors of Oregon’s economy, including manufacturing and technology. These grants advance new and innovative education and training programs for underserved and underrepresented Oregonians, increasing access to the degrees, certificates, and credentials needed to obtain employment in high-wage, high-demand occupations, and careers. Grant-funded programs strengthen partnerships between employers, education providers, and community-based organizations to provide culturally specific and responsive support to participants.

Portland Community College, Mt. Hood Community College, and the University of Oregon, have each received Workforce Ready Grant funding from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to collaborate with partners in meeting Oregon employers’ needs for a talented semiconductor workforce.

PCC QUICK FACTS

40-hour program
Cohorts since 2022: **23**
79% of participants are women or people of color
Training stipend: **\$500**
Guaranteed interview with Intel for completers
Job placement rate: **72%**

Entry Points into the Workforce: Portland Community College Offers “Quick Start” Career Exploration

Portland Community College (PCC) is partnering with **Intel**, the **City of Hillsboro**, and the Portland-Metro area’s local workforce development board **Worksystems, Inc.** to deliver the Intel Quick Start to Semiconductor Manufacturing training program in Washington County. Located at PCC’s Willow Creek Opportunity Center, Quick Start is an intensive ten-day, entry-level training program that provides participants with the opportunity to explore careers in the semiconductor industry. PCC intentionally partners with 25 community-based organizations to recruit program participants and advances entry-level career opportunities for diverse workers, including women and people of color. Many of the instructors are retired Intel staff, and the program has trained more than 350 participants since launching in 2022. Participants receive a \$500 training stipend, and everyone who completes the program is qualified for entry-level positions as semiconductor processing technicians. Graduates are also guaranteed an interview with Intel, and over half have secured employment in the semiconductor field. They are also eligible to receive a \$1,000 scholarship to continue their education with PCC. Workforce Ready Grant funding has supported program expansion, allowing for additional participants, training stipends, and supports and services.

Upskilling on the Job: Mt. Hood Community College is Partnering with Employers to Bring Training to Incumbent Workers

Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) provides workforce training in introductory mechatronics for incumbent workers and provides supports for participants through student resource specialists—strengthening job attainment, retention, and career advancement. Workers who complete the training earn a Certified Maintenance Technician Certificate—a Mechatronics certificate that can be used towards MHCC’s Mechatronics degree. Several graduates have entered this full-time program or moved into new positions within their company. With support from Workforce Ready Grant funding, MHCC created a mobile teaching lab that provides the training onsite at local manufacturing businesses, including **Microchip** and **onsemi**. Committed to helping underserved communities and priority populations* achieve their education and career goals, MHCC and employer partners have removed barriers to accessing this training by enabling students to learn in a familiar workplace environment, among their peers, and where no additional transportation to the classroom is required. MHCC has also implemented flexible and responsive course scheduling, and ensured that workers have access to wraparound services, including the campus library, computer lab,

MHCC QUICK FACTS

175 applicants for **48** seats
Of the current participants, **17%** are women and **46%** are people of color
Participants who complete the program earn **38** transferrable college credits and a mechatronics certificate

Mechatronics lab and equipment, tutoring, and campus activities. Additionally, Microchip and onsemi have expanded tuition policies to provide for direct payment of tuition and fees, as opposed to reimbursement, further removing barriers to accessing the education and training needed for career advancement. These employer partnerships are critical to program success, informing curriculum, promoting the opportunity, and allowing for industry leaders to participate as faculty, providing both training and mentorship to participants. Consequently, the partnerships have both strengthened MHCC's communication with local industry and fostered increased engagement with MHCC and the surrounding community.

Advanced Degrees and Research: University of Oregon Offers Accelerated Pathways to Semiconductor Careers Through the Knight Campus Graduate Internship Program

The University of Oregon (UO) Knight Campus Graduate Internship Program (KCGIP) is an accelerated master's program that directly supports semiconductor workforce needs. KCGIP combines hands-on lab and lecture content, coupled with a paid nine-month industry internship. Students complete industry-specific graduate coursework and training, professional development, and career-focused training within six months, allowing an accelerated transition from academia to industry.

Oregon Pathways to Industry Research Careers (OPIRC) creates a pathway for students from regional community colleges to high-tech and manufacturing jobs by way of the KCGIP. A \$4.3 million multi-institutional National Science Foundation (NSF) grant launched the program in 2022, and a \$1 million Workforce Ready Grant awarded in 2023 has expanded the program through support for increased community building, professional development, industry site tours, expanded scholarship opportunities, research stipends, and access to tutoring.

OPIRC is designed to engage rural and low-income students from diverse communities across Oregon. Over the course of the NSF grant, 64 scholars from **Central Oregon Community College (COCC)**, **Lane Community College (LCC)**, and **Umpqua Community College (UCC)** will participate in OPIRC, receiving up to \$45,000 in financial support, mentorship from KCGIP students working in high tech, specialized UO advising, and 100+ hours of career readiness and professional development training. An additional 30 scholars will be funded through Workforce Ready and will have access to OPIRC wrap around and career training supports.

Through OPIRC, UO together with COCC, LCC, and UCC, is helping rural and low-income students overcome barriers to completing their education by leveraging industry partnerships and implementing comprehensive supports. OPIRC prepares community college students to successfully transfer to UO for their junior and senior years, while also offering supports to build their competitiveness for admission into the KCGIP for their master's degree in applied physics or chemistry.

Employer partnerships are critical to students' successful transition to careers. Paid nine-month internships provide students with the opportunity to gain hands-on training and career skills while completing their master's degrees. Historically, 90 percent of recent KCGIP graduates gain full-time employment within three months of completing their degrees. Oregon employers who have hosted semiconductor interns include **Analog Devices**, **Applied Materials**, **HP**, **FormFactor**, **Intel**, **Microchip**, **MKS Instruments**, **Oregon Physics**, **Onto Innovation**, **Qorvo**, and **Thermo Fisher Scientific**.

**Priority Populations include communities of color, women, low-income communities, rural and frontier communities, veterans, persons with disabilities, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, members of Oregon's tribes, older adults, and individuals who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community.*

UO QUICK FACTS

Knight Campus Graduate Internship Program

6 months of graduate coursework

9-month paid internship with an average annualized salary of **\$76,000**

98% career placement rate

Approximately **30** students/year transition to the semiconductor industry

250% increase in enrollment of women and underrepresented scholars since 2017

98% program retention rate

Oregon Pathways to Industry Research Careers with Workforce Ready

\$4.3M NSF Grant + **\$1M** Workforce Ready Grant for new and expanded scholarships, research training stipends, and academic success tutors

Up to **\$45,000** in financial support for each scholar

94 OPIRC and Workforce Ready scholars will receive supports to launch their careers