

Nestlé Announces New Career Acceleration Program in the U.S.

WASHINGTON, Jul. 09 /CSRwire/ - Today, Nestlé in the United States launched Project Opportunity, a new career acceleration initiative to help people of all ages gain work experience and strengthen their professional development skills in food and beverage manufacturing. As part of Nestlé's broader global initiative to address the global unemployment crisis, the company has pledged to expand its apprenticeship program to 31 Nestlé factories in the United States, hire 1,000 paid interns and trainees by 2017, and reach 300,000 people with "readiness for work" activities annually.

Project Opportunity will expand the number of Nestlé apprenticeships from 20 to 136 across its U.S. operations by 2017, offering an up to three-year program that combines on-the-job and coursework-based training to develop critical manufacturing job skills. This year, Project Opportunity's apprenticeship program will launch for Electrical and Controls Technicians, and in 2016, Nestlé will begin the Maintenance Mechanic apprenticeship program.

"We're thrilled to be launching Project Opportunity to increase the number of skilled workers entering careers in U.S. manufacturing," said Paul Grimwood, Chairman and CEO Nestlé USA. "We're committed to providing job and training opportunities for people of all ages through a range of initiatives. Starting with apprenticeships, our goal is to bridge the worlds of education and work and set the foundation for a successful career with Nestlé and beyond."

Project Opportunity was announced in conjunction with Swiss Vice President Johann Schneider Amman's signing of a Joint Declaration of Intent with the U.S. Departments of Labor, Commerce and Education in Washington, D.C. The Declaration includes U.S.-Swiss cooperation, promoting vocational and professional education and training, career and technical education, and apprenticeships. The pledge builds off the Obama administration's emphasis on apprenticeship training, including its plans to double the number of apprentices within the next five years through a \$100 million program.

"Apprenticeships are a win-win for workers and employers alike and a great way to help young people punch their ticket to the middle class," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez. "Companies like Nestlé that invest in apprenticeships are not only expanding opportunities for their workers, they are helping to develop a workforce able to compete in the 21st century global economy."

While popular in Europe, companies with a U.S. presence have traditionally offered a relatively low number of apprenticeship programs, leaving a critical skills gap in key industries such as manufacturing. Beyond manufacturing, employers are increasingly finding that applicants lack the necessary skills for the positions they need to fill. This "skills gap" is only expected to grow over time if left unaddressed.

Project Opportunity will focus on four key areas:

- Increase the number of existing apprenticeships to 136 across 31 of Nestlé's factories in the US by 2017;
- Increase the number of participants in Nestlé Purina's Maintenance, IS, and Controls (MIC) Training program, a development program consisting of technical training for maintenance and electrical technicians, from 41 participants to more than 200 by the end of 2016;
- Hire 1,000 paid interns and trainees in manufacturing, supply chain, sales, finance, marketing, audit, IT and human resources in the United States by 2017;

- Enhance “readiness for work” activities (e.g. participation in job fairs, information sessions, resume workshops, etc.) to reach 300,000 people annually and continue our efforts to hire military veterans across all of our U.S. operations.

Project Opportunity is part of Nestlé’s broader efforts to develop talent for the company and help tackle the global unemployment crisis. Nestlé recently joined the Global Apprenticeships Network (GAN), a coalition of companies, employers’ federations and associations that addresses the global unemployment crisis and the need for business to ensure skills for the future.

In Europe, the efforts have focused on the Global Youth Initiative, which has already been a success in several European countries. Mexico’s Youth Initiative, launched in February 2015, will create close to 3,000 jobs and 500 internships, and career workshops delivered by Nestlé employee volunteers in schools across the country will reach 300,000 students at public middle schools and technical colleges to be better prepared to join the labor market.

###

About Nestlé in the United States

Nestlé in the United States is committed to being a trusted leader in nutrition, health and wellness. Our diverse portfolio of food and beverage products provide nutritious options for every member of the family, including infants, toddlers, teens and adults, mature adults, and dogs and cats. Nestlé in the U.S. consists of seven main businesses: Nestlé USA, Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, Nestlé Waters North America, Nestlé Nutrition, Nestlé Professional, Nespresso and Nestlé Health Science. Together, these companies operate in more than 120 locations in 47 states and employ over 51,000 people. The United States is Nestlé S.A.’s largest market with combined product sales in the United States totaling more than \$26 billion in 2014.

At Nestlé, we believe that for our business to prosper in the long term, we must create value for our employees, customers, stakeholders, consumers and the communities where we live and work. Nestlé embeds Creating Shared Value (CSV) into every part of its business, from nutrition and wellness to environmental sustainability and responsible sourcing. For more information, visit: <http://www.nestleusa.com/creating-shared-value>.

For more information, please contact:
Michaela R. Balderston Nestlé Corporate Affairs
Phone: (202) 292-2929 - Direct
Phone 2: (202) 253-4995 - Cell

For more from this organization:
Nestle