



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## New Partnership Supports Advanced Manufacturing Careers for Alaskans

**Vigor and Maritime Works announce partnership to train a new generation of advanced manufacturing workers in Alaska**

KETCHIKAN, AK – (January 26, 2017) Vigor, Alaska’s largest shipbuilder and ship repair expert, along with leaders of Alaska’s maritime industry, *Maritime Works*, jointly announced plans for an innovative training program aimed at developing an advanced manufacturing workforce comprised of Alaska residents.

This initiative, called **Advancing Alaskan Workers**, is aimed at combatting the high turnover rates seen at the Ketchikan shipyard and elsewhere that result when non-Alaskans are recruited to fill the critical skills gap in our state.

In 2016 Vigor employed 191 people at the Ketchikan Shipyard (KSY), up substantially from just 21 employees in 1994. With large contracts to build two Alaska-class ferries for the Alaska Marine Highway System - and other large projects forecasted for the future - Vigor and Maritime Works are taking proactive steps to build a skilled local workforce to meet the demand.

“The maritime sector holds great promise for the future of our state,” said Doug Ward, Director of Shipyard Development at Vigor. “To realize that promise we must have a stable, best-in-class Alaska resident workforce which will enable us to win more contracts and in turn provide a steady flow of work for our community.”

The **Advancing Alaskan Workers** project offers structured on-the-job training, leading to industry-recognized credentials and family wage careers. “This is key to providing sustainable opportunities for Alaskans in the Ketchikan workforce as well as providing Vigor’s current workforce a path for upgrading skills, advancing to leadership positions and higher earnings,” says Cari-Ann Carty, spokesperson for Maritime Works. Carty is the Executive Director of the Alaska Process Industry Careers Consortium (APICC), an industry backed nonprofit, which serves as staff and fiscal agent for Maritime Works. This is Maritime works’ first major project launch.

More than 50 employees registered in the first week.

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