



# National Tooling & Machining Association

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[www.ntma.org](http://www.ntma.org)

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Help Wanted: 35,000 machinists!**

The first quarterly Charmilles/NTMA survey of job openings and starting wages for skilled production employees showed strong results in August/September 2005. Job openings, with an average starting wage of \$16.34/hour, equaled 4.7% of total shop employment. The online survey targeted the NTMA membership list and achieved a 25% response rate (300 responses/1,200 valid email addresses).

This high level of job openings is consistent with the current strength in manufacturing indicated by the *NTMA Business Conditions Survey* and *Customer Forecast Reports* as well as private data from the *Charmilles Machining Business Activity Index*. It is also in line with indicators of recent improved financial stability of the industry as measured by the *Charmilles/USBEF Machining Industry Financial Strength Index*.

The impact of this shortage of skilled technicians extends beyond the machining industries. By immediately reducing production capacity and limiting the longer-term ability of manufacturers to implement new and more competitive technologies, the shortage contributes to the balance of trade deficit and causes a shortfall in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). If the 4.7% vacancy rate is consistent throughout the U.S.'s approximately 750,000 "machinist" positions, there are openings for about 35,000 machinists. At the NTMA average of \$120,000 in sales per employee per year, having these machinists available would cause a \$4.2 billion decrease in the trade deficit and a corresponding increase in the U.S. GDP. Allowing for manufacturing's approximately 2.4x multiplier effect, the GDP might be \$10.1 billion per year higher.

These are probably conservative estimates since some projections place the total number of machinists at closer to one million. The variance depends on how you choose to define the job of "machinist."

Future surveys will include data from groups outside NTMA (e.g. Chicago's Tooling & Manufacturing Association) to increase the validity of the results. We will also explore other manufacturing workforce topics like: expected workforce losses due to retirement and the primary machining processes or skills sought by employers.

Survey results showing responses by company size, number of job openings and average hourly wage levels are available through NTMA at

[https://research.zarca.com/zarca\\_report/Bar\\_graph.aspx?share=Y9G8D9K7](https://research.zarca.com/zarca_report/Bar_graph.aspx?share=Y9G8D9K7)

Data on the two Charmilles Indices is available at

[www.charmillesus.com/newsroom/bizindex.cfm](http://www.charmillesus.com/newsroom/bizindex.cfm).

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Charmilles, a Swiss company, is the North American leading supplier of wire EDM, CNC die sinking and manual EDM systems and a long-standing promoter U.S. manufacturing careers. Its sister company Mikron is a supplier of high speed and 5-axis CNC milling machines. For more information on company products/services or manufacturing career material, contact Gisbert Ledvon, Tel: 1-800-CTC-1EDM. or visit <http://www.charmillesus.com>.

*The National Tooling and Machining Association is the national voice of the precision custom manufacturing industry representing 1700 member companies in 50 local chapters. Our members design and manufacture tools, dies, molds, fixtures, special machines, and precision machined parts for customers in the U S and abroad.*