

Department of Defense grants second phase funding for JSMC workforce project

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LIMA — Allen County commissioners voted Thursday to accept the resignation of Denis Glenn as project manager for a workforce development and innovation initiative, allowing former Van Wert economic and community development director Cynthia Leis to take his place, complete with new funding from the Department of Defense for the project's second phase.

Glenn has helmed the project since last year, with funding from the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment, to develop strategies to maintain and enhance the skill sets of workers at Joint Systems Manufacturing Center. The second phase of this project, which will include the implementation of those strategies, along with setting up a social media presence for JSMC workforce development and funding for the commercialization of a new metal joining process at the Ohio Energy & Advanced Manufacturing Center, will be backed by a new OEA grant, which will combine with local source funding for a total of over \$3.4 million.

Local congressional delegates praised the approval, having each sent letters to the defense department requesting the additional funding.

"The Phase Two grant money will be well-spent ensuring that Lima's hardworking residents will continue to play a vital role in keeping our country safe, and growing Ohio's manufacturing sector for decades to come," Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Urbana, said.

"These federal resources will help ensure that workers in Lima are equipped with resources and training opportunities," Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, said. "I will continue fighting for JSMC and the workers in Allen County."

"This is really a success story of the value of organizing the JSMC stakeholders through Task Force Lima," Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio said. "The Task Force leadership has run with this grant opportunity and made it an important resource for managing through the changes at the tank plant to make sure it's ready for future work."

Leis is excited to take on this new opportunity. "I look forward to the opportunity of going forward with Phase II of the OEA grant," she said. "Denis has done a great job in transitioning me into this position."