

# Integrated Systems Technology Employment Report



## Felipe Salazar

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**T**he Institute for Supply Management reported recently that its manufacturing index rose for the second straight month, indicating expansion in the industry. This expansion in the manufacturing sector is welcome news to individuals like Felipe Salazar of Chicago, Illinois. Salazar was laid off from his job as a Quality Manager at the Chicago-based Morse Company in October 2002, and recently helped strengthen the manufacturing index by becoming another person hired in the industry expansion.

After being laid off, Salazar searched unsuccessfully for more than 12 months for new career opportunities. Frustrated with no results from his job search, Salazar visited the Pilsen One Stop Career Center in Chicago for assistance. Career counselors at the Center suggested that his background in manufacturing would make him a good candidate for the Integrated Systems Training (IST) program at Richard J. Daley College. Since he was having difficulty finding a job on his own, he decided that a training program might be the answer. Salazar began the IST program in April and graduated in June 2003. “The IST

training was very helpful. The instructors, the facility and the equipment were fantastic,” stated Salazar. “This experience gave me new skills, which boosted my confidence when interviewing for jobs.”

While attending the IST program at Daley College, Salazar began receiving career guidance from counselors at the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development (MOWD) member agencies Instituto del Progreso Latino (IPL) and Office of Applied Innovation. “They helped me a lot by preparing me for the interviews. They even set up my interviews with employers,” stated Salazar. One interview was for a Quality Technician position at Tower Automotive – a company at which he had previously applied for a position. Salazar’s newfound confidence must have shown in the interview because he was offered the position and began working for Tower Automotive in July 2003.

Tower Automotive is one of the new Ford suppliers at the Chicago Manufacturing Campus located in the southeast section of the city. The company is headquartered in Grand

Rapids, Michigan and has over 12,000 employees worldwide.

Tower Automotive is engaged in the design and production of structural components and assemblies used by original equipment manufacturers. The company’s current products involve automotive body structural stampings and assemblies, including exposed sheet metal components, lower vehicle structural stampings, and assemblies, suspension components, modules and systems.

When asked if he would recommend the IST training program to other dislocated workers, Salazar responded, “Yes, I would definitely recommend the IST training program to other individuals. The program exposes them to state-of-the-art equipment, good instructors and a very nice training facility.”



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