

## Festo Tackles the Industry Talent Shortage with Next-Gen Workforce Development Solutions at Automate 2026

Visit Festo at Booth #831 in the South Building from June 22-25

**CHICAGO, IL** – Festo Didactic, a global leader in technical education and workforce development, is returning to Automate this summer to showcase its latest cyber-physical training systems and human-machine collaboration. As a long-time industrial workforce development partner, Festo bridges the gap between technology adoption and workforce capability.

With U.S. manufacturers facing a talent crisis of up to **2.1 million** unfilled roles by 2030, acquiring new automation technology is only half the battle. Modeled upon a century of automation innovation, Festo's training solutions are engineered to align with employers' most pressing needs, such as accelerated onboarding, scalable troubleshooting and knowledge transfer.

"Preparing workers to utilize new technology effectively is just as important as acquiring it," said Karolyn Ellingson, Head of Industrial Workforce Development at Festo Didactic. "At Festo, we don't just provide hardware, we develop the human capital needed to operate complex manufacturing environments at peak efficiency. That development includes training individuals to work in biopharma labs, semiconductor cleanrooms, even data centers."

### Human-Machine Collaboration & Responsible AI

Digital transformation towards Industry 5.0 demands a shift from hardware-centric automation to human-centric collaboration. While physical and agentic AI systems continue to reshape the factory floor, human ingenuity, oversight and accountability remain crucial.

As part of the Automate Educator Day Agenda, on Tuesday, June 23 at 11:00 AM, Ted Rozier, Director of Digital, Advanced Technology and Robotics at Festo Didactic North America, will lead a panel on **"Robotic Safety, Risk Assessment & Responsible AI in Education and Training."** The panelists will explore the ethical frameworks, robotic safety standards and technical competencies required to develop augmented workers who can safely collaborate with AI-driven robotics.

### Next-Gen Demonstrations: The "Humanoid-in-the-Loop" Real-World Use Case

To experience Industry 5.0 in action, employers and educators are invited to a joint demonstration by Festo and Dobot at Booth #841. Visitors will see a cutting-edge cyber-physical environment featuring a specialized humanoid robot and an autonomous mobile robotic dog integrated with Festo's advanced mechatronic ecosystems. This demonstration highlights a practical, "crawl-before-you-walk" mentality for qualifying future automation concepts. By utilizing a Festo pick-by-light station, the display illustrates how a humanoid robot can step into a workflow to maintain accuracy, while human operators remain "in the loop" to handle interpretation, troubleshooting and high-level process data management via the Manufacturing Execution System (MES).

17. June 2026

Responsible  
according to press  
law:  
Christian Österle



Download/View press  
release and press  
images.

### **From the Factory Floor to the Classroom: Upskilling for Facility Automation**

At Booth #831, Festo will feature the [MPS 400 Distributing Pro](#). Engineered with the same modular components found in multi-million dollar manufacturing facilities, the MPS 400 Distributing Pro represents a significant evolution in modular learning factories to facilitate the mastery of high-level process control.

Supported by the Festo LX online learning hub and Festo AX artificial intelligence software, the MPS 400 serves as a high-fidelity learning factory. It provides a zero-risk, hands-on environment where learners master agnostic, competency-based skills. Through this systems-thinking approach, operators learn to analyze process data, manage predictive maintenance and optimize machine efficiency—skills that drastically reduce factory downtime and boost operational resilience.

“Productivity depends on advanced automation coupled with sophisticated human-machine collaboration,” said Ted Rozier. “By integrating real mechatronic competencies with some of the newer AI-driven training methods, we are preparing the next generation of workforce talent to keep up with the speed of technology that never stops moving.”

### **Photos de presse**