

MANUFACTURING MATTERS

A newsletter of The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Manufacturers' Awards
- Podcast Launch
- Peer-to-Peer Meetings
- Input Sessions
- Panel Discussions
- Free Trainings

Why become a member of SVAM?

- Networking opportunities
- Training opportunities
- Priority access to SVAM worker pool
- Company exposure on website, at events, on newsletter, etc
- Peer-to-Peer Best Practices Meetings
- Free admission to Manufacturers' Appreciation Dinner
- Community outreach opportunities to change the image of manufacturing



Manufacturers' Awards



Each year, in celebration of National Manufacturing Month (October) SVAM seeks to highlight the significant accomplishments of our region's manufacturing companies. The main way we do this is by presenting manufacturers with awards to showcase their achievements.

The purpose of the Banquet is to recognize and celebrate the amazing manufacturers in our area. SVAM's eighth annual Manufacturers' Awards Banquet was held online due to COVID-19 restrictions. SVAM accepted award nominations from manufacturers across the region to highlight their significant achievements over the past year. SVAM presented winners with their awards via Zoom throughout October and November. The winners gave a presentation about their companies and projects for which they were being recognized. Available presentations can be viewed on SVAM's [YouTube channel](#).

Congratulations to the five manufacturers who were recognized for their achievements!

2020 Winners

- Environmental Excellence Award: Hapco Concord American Flagpole in Abingdon, VA
- Innovations in Manufacturing Award: Wolf Hills Fabricators of Abingdon, VA
- Excellence in Safety Award: Utility Trailer Manufacturing Company of Glade Spring, VA
- Manufacturer of the Year Award: West River Conveyors and Machinery of Oakwood, VA
- Community Choice Award: Tempur Sealy of Duffield, VA

Podcast Launch

In 2020, SVAM launched our Made In SWVA podcast! This podcast is a way for us to share all things manufacturing and educate the community, in an engaging way, about the incredible things happening in manufacturing in their own backyards. We will be speaking with guests about manufacturing careers and opportunities, the benefits of working in manufacturing, how to get started with a career in manufacturing, and more! Through this podcast, SVAM hopes to achieve its goal of increasing the number of job seekers pursuing careers in manufacturing.

The first series on our podcast features Women in Manufacturing. Through this series, we speak with several women holding careers in manufacturing. We talk about their companies and careers, how they found themselves working in manufacturing, and advice they would give to women considering careers in manufacturing. These amazing women offer us their knowledge, insight, and experience, sharing their paths to success.

In October we released our interview with Julie Fuller, COO of Tadano Mantis Corporation. In November we released our interview with Christa Glassburn, Chief Operating Officer for PBE in North Tazewell, Virginia.

Listen on your favorite podcast app by searching "Made in SWVA" or check us out on [Buzzsprout](#)!

Made in SWVA
Podcast

Highlighting the great things
happening in manufacturing in
Southwest Virginia.



SVAM GOALS:

The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing operates under the following three goals which guide programming and initiatives to support the sustainment and advancement of manufacturing in the region:

1. To establish and promote the regional collaborations in support of manufacturing and manufacturing careers as part of an economic development initiative.
2. To redefine the image of manufacturing with young people and their parents, their educators, the community and policy makers in a manner that increases the number of young adults and other members of the workforce who pursue manufacturing careers.
3. To close the skills gap for regional manufacturers by aligning educational and workforce training resources with the most pressing demands of area industry.

SVAM Member Peer-to-Peer Virtual Meetings

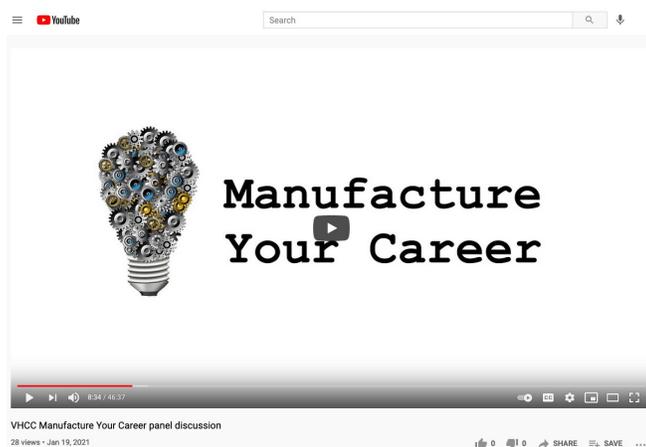
In the face of ever-changing regulations and the uncertain environment of a global pandemic, it was clear that now, more than ever, manufacturers needed the ability to connect with their peers and share ideas. SVAM has held multiple peer group sessions and virtual opportunities to bring together membership. These groups are made up of professionals within SVAM member companies who meet for networking and to discuss challenges and best practices.

Input Sessions

In an effort to ensure SVAM understands the needs of our membership, ensuring our programs remain relevant, we provided the opportunity for members to discuss their needs during a series of Member Input Sessions which were open to all member companies. The basis of SVAM’s founding was to bring manufacturers together so that they could determine what their needs were and how to meet them. These sessions have been an excellent opportunity to find new ways for SVAM to meet member needs. A variety of topics were discussed and ideas from these sessions are currently being brought to fruition.

Manufacture Your Career Panel Discussions

For the fall of 2020 SVAM moved our Manufacture Your Career panel discussions to virtual events. Students and educators tuned in via Zoom both individually and as classes. These events focused on a panel discussion highlighting the manufacturing sector and the career paths it offers. Panelists discussed multiple topics including pay and benefits, facility safety, common misconceptions, employer desired soft skills, and different job opportunities. Students took the opportunity to ask the panel members interesting and insightful questions about manufacturing. The events were a terrific opportunity for students to get an idea of the manufacturing careers available for them and gain exposure to local businesses.



The first event was hosted by Southwest Virginia Community College. Panelists included: Tyler Vandall, Manufacturing Engineer at The PBE Group; Lisa Jones, Director – Human Resources and Safety at Hapco and Concord American Flaggpole (VA, TX, MN, China); Eric Miller, President and Owner of Wolf Hills Fabricators, LLC; and Charles Pruett, Certified Welding Inspector at Tadano Mantis Corporation.

The second event was hosted by Virginia Highlands Community College and open to students and community members. Panelists included: Martha Rasnake, Senior Human Resources Advisor at General Dynamics Mission Systems; Melinda Roberts, Human Resources Manager at Scholle IPN Packaging; and Anthony Dunnack, Machine Operator at Atsumi Car Equipment.

SVAM would like to thank the volunteer panelists and the colleges for hosting these events. A replay of the events can be watched on SVAM’s [YouTube channel](#).

Free Trainings for Members

SVAM offered free virtual trainings for its membership. Members also have the option of watching the replay of these training videos [online](#) at their convenience. The trainings included:

- Virginia OSHA Q&A
- Microsoft Word Training
- Microsoft Excel Training
- Supervisor to Peer Communication Training