

MANUFACTURING MATTERS

A newsletter of The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing

Volume 6 Issue 3

July - September 2019

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Member Listing

On August 13th, at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, SVAM hosted its annual Manufacturers' Expo. The sixth annual Expo welcomed manufacturers, vendors, and resource providers. This event provided an excellent opportunity for manufacturers to network and share ideas.

17 manufacturers from across Southwest Virginia, representing a wide variety of products and company sizes, attended this year's Expo. This was in addition to resource providers and vendors. This led to better awareness and exposure of other manufacturers in the region, allowed manufacturers to connect with valuable resources and possible suppliers, and was a way of making local contacts. The day was structured with several blocks of networking time to fulfill these goals. Several manufacturers and organizations also took the opportunity to give brief presentations about their companies at the event.

Breakout sessions were offered by Volvo and Scholle IPN Packaging. Volvo hosted a breakout session titled, "Advanced Manufacturing Technologies & Adapting the Culture of Manufacturing" and shared some exciting things happening at their facility. They also brought a VR demonstration to enhance their presentation. Scholle IPN Packaging hosted a breakout session to share about their successful employee engagement and continuous improvement programs.

The event was a great success. One attendee noted, "The event was well organized and the attendees were positive and excited." Another mentioned, "Networking was fabulous, we had several customers in attendance."

SVAM would like to thank all the participants of this event, especially the sponsors: GENEDGE, who also offered free headshots for those in attendance, SWCC Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Joint IDA of Wythe, and Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority.



"Continuous improvement is a core tenant of our business model and we look forward to the fellowship and industry knowledge shared at each and every SVAM sponsored event. Our first expo experience introduced us to one of our most valued vendors. Through this relationship and additional product offerings, our sales have increased 25%. I would highly encourage participation in the SVAM Manufacturers' Expo!"

-- Pete Savage, West River Conveyors and Machinery

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.

#MadeinSWVA Manufacturing Tours for Teachers

Once again educators from the Washington County Career and Technical Education Center participated in manufacturing tours to give them a better understanding of the skills manufacturers look for in new hires. The intent of these tours was to inform educators of available job opportunities, help them to point students to appropriate classes, and understand how better to prepare students to enter the workforce. One participant stated how the tours impacted her, "I now have a better perception of job requirements, wages, and benefit packages offered to employees. Also, I noticed that there is a demand for skilled laborers."

The group of about twenty educators toured five facilities over the course of two days: Universal Fibers in Bristol, Utility Trailer in Glade Spring, Hapco in Abingdon, Wolf Hills Fabricators in Abingdon, and General Engineering in Abingdon. After the tours representatives from these companies took time to answer questions about what manufacturers are looking for in a potential employee. Attendees heard similar answers from all the employers, mainly centering around soft skills and basic competencies. SVAM would like to sincerely thank each of these manufacturing facilities for giving of their time and expertise.

Manufacturing Careers Promotion

Virginia Tech PEERS Assemblies

SVAM participated in the Virginia Tech PEERS (Partnering with Educators and Engineers in Rural Schools) Technical and Career Assemblies in Smyth County on September 5th and 6th. VT PEERS works to bring hands-on engineering activities to middle schoolers. SVAM spent fifteen minute blocks of time talking to 521 total students about potential careers in manufacturing and the benefits of working in manufacturing. Students were also able to participate in a virtual reality tour of a manufacturing facility using virtual reality goggles.

Pulaski Manufacturing Education Expo

SVAM participated in the Pulaski Manufacturing Education Expo at New River Community College on September 17th hosted by Pulaski County Schools and Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce. Students cycled through the booths of manufacturers in attendance learning about career opportunities. SVAM answered questions from 161 students and provided a VR tour of a manufacturing facility.

United Way of Southwest Virginia Careers Expo for Youth

On September 24th-25th, SVAM once again participated in the United Way of Southwest Virginia's Careers Expo for Youth. The Careers Expo is an extension of the United Way of Southwest Virginia Ignite Program and is held at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Over the course of the two day event, students from Southwest Virginia moved through four zones filled with hands-on activities by regional employers. At the SVAM booth, 1,285 students used VR goggles to view a virtual reality manufacturing tour of a manufacturing facility.



Member Exclusive Opportunities

Women in Manufacturing Peer Group

The Women in Manufacturing Peer Group is made up of women who have been honored through the Outstanding Woman in Manufacturing Award. In July the group held a meeting hosted by General Dynamics in Marion. General Dynamics gave a presentation about their "Women Focused Employee Resource Group" and then the women held a brainstorming session about ways to promote manufacturing.

Manufacturing and Legislative Council Meeting

In July, manufacturers and legislators met to discuss updates from the General Assembly, updates from other legislators and legislative representatives, and then held an open forum discussing legislation that could be beneficial to manufacturers. SVAM would like to thank Universal Fibers in Bristol for hosting this event.

SVAM-CoE Offering IT Managed Services to Small and Medium Manufacturing Companies

Effective October 1, 2019, SVAM-CoE is offering IT Managed Services to Small and Medium Manufacturing (SMM) Companies, as well as the companies in their supply chain. SVAM-CoE strives to assist the manufacturing companies with meeting the requirements for DFARS compliance so they can do business with the Federal Government and large manufacturing companies. With the lack of quality, reliable, and affordable IT companies in far Southwest Virginia, SVAM-CoE strives to offer a solution to this challenge for our manufacturing companies. It is the goal to also develop more IT professionals by utilizing students enrolled in the K-12 CTE and Community College IT Programs, with some of them starting their own IT companies. To schedule a consultation with Phillip Coppededge, Infrastructure Engineer, email msp@svamcoe.org.

Your Network . . . Oh How Easily Hacked & How to Protect It

As a part of the IT Managed Services, SVAM-CoE has planned educational workshops to bring attention to relevant and vital topics as well as action steps. The first workshop focuses on your network and how easily it is hacked. Passwords, when used alone, are an essentially useless form of security. Join us for a discussion and live demonstration of some of the tools and tactics an attacker can use to compromise your organization. The workshop will be offered at all three CoE sites and three sessions per site. The locations and dates: Abingdon – 11/14, Duffield – 12/5, and Bluefield – 12/12.

To register, visit <https://svamcoe.eventbrite.com>

Welding Inspection Training Held at Duffield CoE Site

The second cohort of Welding Inspection Training began in September at SVAM-CoE's Duffield Satellite located within the Pioneer Center in Duffield. The students are employees of Komatsu and seeking the skills to become Welding Inspectors and an AWS Certified Welding Inspector (CWI). The course is expected to finish in January 23, 2020.

“Leadership for Women in Manufacturing” Course Kicks Off

The first cohort of “Leadership for Women in Manufacturing” Course kicked off in September. This award-winning Leadership Management International (LMI) program, delivered by OpX Solutions, helps women: Realize their potential for personal leadership through building on strengths and improving self-image; Develop the critical attitudes, self-confidence and qualities that meet the demands of modern business; Increase self-motivation by altering attitudes, behaviors, and habits; Examine the organization’s culture and how it impacts success; Align leadership skills with organizational culture; Make choices and trade-offs necessary to attain, regain, or maintain work-life balance; Develop a written and specific Plan of Action for success. The 12 sessions are set to wrap up February 27, 2020.

Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Training Course Scheduled

The fourth cohort of Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Training is scheduled to begin March 11, 2020. The course will meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays every other week until June 18th in Abingdon. The cost is \$7,950, which includes tuition, fees, all materials, morning refreshments, lunch, CEUs, one-on-one coaching, and a framed certificate from VT upon submission and approval of final Black Belt Project.

To register, <https://svamcoelssbbspring2020.eventbrite.com>

Marketing Activity as of September 30, 2019:

388 Presentations - 4,981 People • 222 Tours of CoE -1,339 People • 106 Industry Tours - 1,036 People

AWS ATF Activity as of September 30, 2019:

195 Welding Tests • 118 Passed Tests/Certifications • 99 Welders

Upcoming Trainings

- Customized welding and machining training
- Lean Six Sigma Black Belt – March 2020
- Your Network . . . Oh How Easily Hacked & How to Protect It

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

If you would like to learn more about SVAM-CoE, contact Ms. Surrett to schedule a presentation at your business or organization by calling (276) 525-1400 or ssurrett@svamcoe.org

SVAM-CoE is Certified to Operate by SCHEV.

Members of the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing



STRONGWELL



Associate Members

Manufacturing Technology Center; Machine Tech Inc. (Mazak Corp.); Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board; Virginia Highlands Community College; Hollingsworth and Vose; Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center; HR Alliance, LLC.; AtWork Personnel Services; Brown Edwards & Company, L.L.P.; Dynamic Health Strategies

Affiliate Members

Tri-County Skill Center; Occupational Enterprises, Inc.; United Way of Southwest Virginia; Virginia Coalfield EDA; Alliance Engineering; GKT Properties; Dickenson County Board of Supervisors; New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board; Joint IDA of Wythe; Mountain Empire Community College; Micronic Technologies; Virginia's Industrial Advancement Alliance; OpX Solutions, LLC; SWCC's Procurement Technical Assistance Center; The Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development; Wytheville Community College; The Southwestern Virginia Technology Council; People Incorporated of Virginia-Workforce Development Services; US Small Business Administration; King University; Smyth County Chamber of Commerce; Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce; UVa-Wise Office of Economic Development; Allegheny Brokerage Company; Emory & Henry College; UVa-Wise; Radford University; Old Dominion University; Virginia Tech; Ballad Health

County Partners: Smyth County Board of Supervisors and Washington County Board of Supervisors
Affiliate County Partner: Wythe County Board of Supervisors



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