



MANUFACTURING MATTERS

A newsletter of The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing

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2022 Manufacturing Careers Scholarships Awarded

Each year, SVAM awards scholarships in pursuit of its goal to promote manufacturing and its careers. The purpose of the scholarship is to raise awareness about manufacturing careers and retain the talented worker pool we have in Southwest Virginia.

The scholarships are awarded to deserving high school seniors who wish to pursue a post-secondary education in a manufacturing-related field. For 2022, the qualifying fields of study were engineering, welding, machining, robotics, industrial maintenance, instrumentation, controls systems/PLC programming, drafting/design, and environmental health and safety.

After the application and interview process, SVAM was happy to award 13 deserving students with funding up to \$2000 each. These students all showed a strong desire to pursue a career in manufacturing and to stay in Southwest Virginia.

SVAM would like to thank the Scholarship Committee, made up of manufacturing members, for taking the time to interview the students and help choose the most qualified candidates.



*"When I got into high-school, I knew it was time to start looking for a career. I started taking Engineering and Manufacturing class and soon fell in love with it. Knowing that it was time to figure out where I was gonna go with it, I decided I wanted to stay close to home. The SVAM committee really spoke out to me because it was exactly for me. I wanted to stay in our region and make a life in Engineering. This scholarship has allowed me to get my degree in Mechanical Engineering and stay close to home."
- Tanner Hartford, Buchanan County*

SVAM Goals

Goal 1: Supporting manufacturing and its careers as part of an educational and economic development initiative.

Goal 2: Increasing the number of individuals who pursue manufacturing-based careers.

Goal 3: Aligning educational and workforce training resources with the most pressing demands of area industry.



Member-Exclusive Training Opportunities

SVAM offered numerous free trainings for its members, including an OSHA 30-Hour training and supervisor trainings.

OSHA 30-Hour Training: Johnnie Keene, Assistant Professor of Machine Technology at Virginia Highlands Community College, led SVAM's first member-exclusive OSHA 30-Hour Training at Wytheville Community College beginning in June. This training was provided in partnership with Virginia Highlands Community College and Wytheville Community College.

SVAM's Supervisor Training series continued with a virtual Team Building Training on April 21st. This training was led by Karae Foddrell, University of North Carolina in Greensboro, NC and provided in partnership with Virginia Tech, Southwest Center. The training covered the four keys of team building: Communicate, Create, Commit, and Cultivate.

Two in-person Supervisor Trainings were offered at the Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail Interpretive Center in Duffield, VA during the month of July. The class covered topics requested by membership - Inclusion & Diversity, Managing the New Generation, Setting Realistic Expectations, and Following Up with Employees. The training was led by David Hite in partnership with The University of Virginia's College at Wise. David is an Assistant Professor of Business and Department Chair of Business Administration at Bluefield College.

Careers Promotion

Member-Exclusive Job Openings Promotion: Many of SVAM's member companies are actively hiring and SVAM is providing advertisements of these openings, daily, on our website and across our social media platforms. SVAM has a page on our website that compiles all openings for member companies, with links for job seekers to apply. This page gets updated every Thursday.

Career Fairs: In addition, SVAM organized on-site job fairs for Scholle IPN in Chilhowie and Woodgrain in Marion. SVAM also sponsored Virginia Highlands Community College's "Get Hired" Career Fair and participated in Southwest Virginia Community College's Career Fair & Opportunity Showcase.



Opportunities in Manufacturing Presentations

High school students had a chance to learn more about manufacturing in Southwest Virginia through the Opportunities in Manufacturing program. The presentation included information about the expected salary and benefits of manufacturing jobs, the job outlook for students, and what manufacturing looks like today. This year, employees from SVAM member manufacturing companies also had the opportunity to educate students about their companies and available jobs. Presentations were given to over 600 students.



Manufacture Your Career Panel Discussions

Manufacture Your Career panel discussions are hosted each semester by local colleges. During these discussions a panel of manufacturing professionals answer questions about their companies, the benefits of working in manufacturing, and available opportunities. After the panel students and employers have the opportunity to network and further discuss job opportunities. During the spring semester some participating employers were able to gain employees through these panels. Panels were held at Mountain Empire Community College and Wytheville Community College.

SVAM would like to thank the participating companies and schools for making these important learning events possible.

HR Peer Group Meeting

SVAM held a Human Resources Peer Group meeting for its membership on June 15th. The meeting gave an opportunity for Human Resources professionals to network and discuss challenges and ideas with peers. The group discussed annual general wage increases, offering financial incentives, retention strategies, and SVAM's Wages and Benefits Survey that would be launched the next month.

Membership Benefits

Connections:

Members are provided opportunities to connect with other manufacturers as well as vendors - providing opportunities for business improvement and business growth.

Resources:

SVAM has saved its member companies thousands of dollars by providing them with access to resources that offset training and development costs.

Support:

Member companies have access to a menu of benefits offered that support business growth including training, marketing, and efforts to help member companies fill job openings.

SVAM Manufacturing Membership



SVAM Affiliate Members

Southwest Virginia WDB; Virginia Highlands Community College; Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center; Hollingsworth & Vose Company; At Work; Appalachian Environmental Resources; Employee Benefit Consultants; GBC Wellness Center/The Medfit Center; Bristol Rent All; SESCO Management Consultants; Tri-County Skill Center; Occupational Enterprises, Inc.; United Way of Southwest Virginia; Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority; GKT Properties, LLC; 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; Wytheville Community College; Appalachian Council for Innovation; King University; Smyth County Chamber of Commerce; Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce; UVA-WISE Office of Economic Development; The University of Virginia's College at Wise; Radford University; Old Dominion University; Virginia Tech; Ballad Health; Washington County IDA

Local Government Partners

Smyth County Board of Supervisors, Washington County Board of Supervisors, Wythe County Board of Supervisors (Affiliate), Scott County Board of Supervisors (Affiliate)



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