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Who/What is SVAM??

The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc. (SVAM) is a non-profit, 501c3 organization focused on supporting and strengthening all manufacturers currently in the region as well as welcoming new industry. SVAM accomplishes this in a unique way—by being governed by a Board of Directors made of up southwest Virginia manufacturers. Programs and initiatives —many outlined in this newsletter—are held to carry out SVAM's strategic plan. More information about SVAM can be found at www.swvam.org/about-svam.

Our Mission Statement: To establish and promote the regional collaborations in support of manufacturing and manufacturing careers as part of an economic development initiative.

Dress for Success

Since the beginning of the school year SVAM has worked with the Washington County Career and Technical Education Center and the Smyth Career and Technology Center to provide 6 students starting their senior year with clothing that they could wear to school and on the job. This project, called Dress for Success, came to SVAM from Communities in Schools which serves these two counties. SVAM, seeing a direct correlation between the intent of this program and our Goals, decided to take on this project.

SVAM (in the name of our membership) funded 2 students. Universal Fibers and Utility Trailer of Glade Spring gave additional funds to cover the remaining students. The purpose of this program was to give confidence to students who may not be able to afford new clothes, while letting them know that manufacturers in Southwest Virginia care about their future. The students chosen had financial need, were in good academic standing, had

good attendance, and are pursuing technical education in a manufacturing related field.

In November the students, along

“Because of this opportunity I’ve been much more confident in my appearance at school and in public. Dress for Success has helped me dress to impress. As well I feel more confident learning and applying my mechanical trade.”

-Adam Elliott

with school representatives, went on a shopping trip to purchase clothes that they could wear to school, on the job, and in interviews. The students were told that funding came from manufacturers in Southwest Virginia. It was a big success! The students had a fantastic time and were able to get what they need to be successful in the workplace and to have more confidence in school. The school representatives used some of their own money to treat these students to a nice

lunch on the day of their trip to round out the experience.

This program falls directly in line with SVAM's goal to change the perception of manufacturing. It allows students, as well as their parents, to think of manufacturers in a positive light. It lets them know that manufacturers care about their community and those who reside here. It's also provided opportunities to let the community know more about SVAM as many of the school representatives involved with this program are going out and telling the community about SVAM and Dress for Success.

In February, these students will be given the opportunity to tour manufacturing facilities as well as an opportunity to sit down with Human Resources professionals to obtain insights into how to become work ready and marketable in manufacturing. The ending measure of success for SVAM will be for these students to receive jobs in manufacturing. SVAM will keep in contact with these students as they graduate and enter the workforce.



Smyth Career and Technology Center Dress for Success participants

Motivating Employees Lunch-N-Learn

In November SVAM hosted a one-hour training session to educate manufacturers on how to motivate employees. Virginia Highlands Community College, Workforce Development representative Robert Phillips led the session. He discussed the differences in generations and referenced various points to consider when trying to increase production. Thank you to General Dynamics for hosting and providing lunch!



Aleta Spicer accepts Trail Blazer of the Year Award presented by Kevin Mumpower, Vice President of Product Engineering at Bristol Compressors and member of the SVAM Board.



Gil Graham, Plant Manager at Scholle Packaging, accepts Innovations in Manufacturing Award presented by Nelson Teed, Manufacturing Technology Center Executive Director and Innovative Environmental Product Award presented by Allen Newman, Regional Director of SW Regional DEQ



Stephen McCready, Manager of Environmental Health and Safety at Bristol Compressors accepts Environmental Stewardship Award



Pictured: Larry Souverielle, President of the SVAM Board of Directors; Lennie Gail Dunlop, SVAM Executive Director, and Sam Cassell, Plant Manager at Utility Trailer Manufacturing Company of Glade Spring.

Manufacturers Appreciation Dinner

More than one hundred business, government and community leaders from all across Southwest Virginia gathered at the General Francis Marion Hotel on Thursday, October 9, 2014, to celebrate manufacturing and its contributions to the economy in the region.

At its annual Manufacturer's Appreciation Dinner, the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing (SVAM) reviewed its successful year of promotion of manufacturing as a career, support of manufacturers across the region, and renewed

its commitment to continued growth in this all-important sector of Southwest Virginia's economy.

Senator Mark Warner and Senator Tim Kaine sent remarks to the attendees at the Manufacturer's Appreciation Dinner showing their support for Manufacturing and SVAM. Keynote speaker for the evening was Bill Donohue, Interim Executive Director of Genedge Alliance. The topic of the Keynote address was "Accelerating Exports," during which Donohue spoke of opportunities available for growth and advancement for

manufacturing companies through exporting.

SVAM also gave out several awards, highlighted below.

SVAM would like to thank its sponsors for the event: Virginia Economic Development Partnership, International Trade; Southwest Virginia Workforce Investment Board; Genedge Alliance; New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area; and the General Francis Marion Hotel.

Manufacturers Appreciation Dinner Award Winners

SVAM Trail Blazer of the Year Award—presented to Aleta Spicer: This award is given to an individual or organization that has gone above and beyond to take one element of SVAM's goals and help to develop it. Aleta did that and more by serving as the engine behind SVAM's proposal for a Center of Excellence.

Environmental Stewardship Award—presented to Bristol Compressors: This award recognizes environmental stewardship by a manu-

facturer. This helps to change some of the negative images that tend to be associated with manufacturing. Bristol Compressors was chosen based on their program that included all relevant stakeholders with a focus on long-term and sustained impact.

Innovative Environmental Product Award—presented to Scholle Packaging: Scholle positioned itself as an advocate for environmental responsibility by getting innovative about reducing their carbon footprint. Scholle's

packaging and equipment divisions were the first to create a product that would keep residual oil from being wasted and landfilled by oil plants.

Innovations in Manufacturing Award—presented to Scholle Packaging: Innovations play a huge role in the growing success of manufacturing. Scholle took the initiative to see a need in their industry and create a product that fulfilled that need in a new and creative way.

Utility Trailer, Glade Spring – 2014 Manufacturer of the Year



The First Name In Trailers

The Manufacturer of the Year award seeks to highlight a company who has gone above and beyond in the categories of Innovation, Corporate Citizenship, and Advocacy.

SVAM requested nominations for this award from manufacturers and their supporters across the region. One nomination, received from David Matlock, Vice President - Virginia Highlands Community College, spoke highly of Utility Trailer and their willingness to partner with VHCC's Career and College Readiness Coaching Program. Matlock stated, "VHCC

needed a manufacturing partner and Utility Trailer was a perfect fit. I cannot explain in words the value they added to the Career & College Readiness Coaching Program. Utility was the perfect partner in educating students about closing the skills gap for regional manufacturers...Utility Trailer's partnership with VHCC lives up to the SVAM mission and vision!"

"By shining a spotlight on a company that meets or exceeds the criteria of Manufacturer of the Year, year after year SVAM is able to show the community some of the exceptional manufacturers we have right here in the region, thereby changing the perception of what it means to work in manufacturing," said SVAM Executive Director, Lennie Gail Dunlop.

Utility Trailer Manufacturing Company was ultimately chosen based on the

impact they have made to the quality of life in our region, the many benefits they offer to employees, their role in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life by United Way Virginia Highlands, their involvement in Dress for Success-a program in collaboration with SVAM and local manufacturers to help secure clothes for underprivileged high school seniors entering the manufacturing field, their enthusiasm to host plant tours, and much more.

The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing was excited to present Utility Trailer Manufacturing Company of Glade Spring, Virginia as the 2014 Manufacturer of the Year as they are an excellent representative of the purpose of this award.

Hiring Our Heroes Spotlight

In April of this year SVAM hosted Hiring Our Heroes, a hiring event to bring together employers with pre-qualified veterans and service members. Through this program SVAM was able to provide jobs for 14 veterans.

A note from Hiring Our Heroes participant Tracie Hyatt, Quality Assurance Specialist at General Dynamics:

"I deployed to Iraq for the 2nd time in 2009 returning in 2010. I spent the next two years out of work and actively looking for a job. I spent money for professional services in assisting me with my

Resume—translating experience with the military and it's lingo into civilian talk.

The process for Hiring Our Heroes was simple and explained well. Everything was planned and executed as described. I prepared for the interviews even though I really did not know what to expect. In the military you learn to be flexible. So that's what I did.

I interviewed with two different companies. General Dynamics called a few days after the interview and set up a phone interview. Then they called a few days

after that and set up four more in-person interviews at the plant in Marion, VA. A week later they called with a job offer.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work at a great place. I love my job. I love the people I work with. I can see how the military has shaped my way of thinking, work ethic and has positively influenced my life so that others could see the benefit of hiring me.

Lennie Gail and her team did an exceptional job with all the details needed to make this program a success. "

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.**

What to expect from SVAM in 2015

You can expect to see several of our successful programs from 2014 reoccurring such as the Outstanding Woman in Manufacturing Award, Hiring Our Heroes, the Manufacturers Expo, and much more. You can expect monthly trainings such as Lunch-N-Learns, Seminars, the sharing of Best Practices for members and Training Sharing for members. There will be an increase in networking and training opportunities that are exclusive to members.

Be sure to regularly check the SVAM website at www.svnam.org for event details and registration links.

Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence Update

The most exciting news from the Center of Excellence for this issue is the Hiring of the CoE Director! See more information below.

On other fronts, the space for the main campus has been secured at the Virginia Highlands Small Business

Incubator in Abingdon – with satellites to follow in Duffield, Bluefield and Wytheville.

The Center of Excellence Board of Directors has been appointed and will hold its first meeting on January 22. The Partnership Council and the Aca-

demic Council members are in place and will be holding their first meetings in the near future; the Industry Council is in the development stage.

Beginning with the next issue, there will be regular updates from Stephanie Surrett, the new Director.

Center of Excellence Director Hired!

SVAM is pleased to announce Stephanie Surrett as the SVAM Center of Excellence Director.

Stephanie Surrett comes with 20 years of experience in strategic planning, program and project management, employee development and organizational leadership. In addition to working in the private sector, Ms. Surrett has gained experience in the non-profit sector by developing and implementing programs focused on workforce and community development.

Kevin Mumpower, Chair of the SVAM Center of Excellence Board, said "During the interview and se-

lection process, we had one candidate that clearly displayed key attributes we were looking for in an Executive Director; high energy, professionalism, training experience, strong regional relationships, a vision, commitment and strong passion toward the Center of Excellence project, and it was Stephanie."

As the Director, Ms. Surrett will provide leadership in promoting and maintaining the SVAM CoE as a recognizable and highly valuable component in southwest Virginia's economic and workforce development initiatives. With the largest area to cover of the three Centers established, the Southwest Virginia Center of Excellence will cover the 17-jurisdiction footprint of the Virginia

Tobacco Commission. Stephanie will be tasked with fulfilling the Center's goal of being a truly regional effort.

Ms. Surrett said the new center represents the "next generation of collaboration" in Southwest Virginia, linking the state's public institutions of higher education with manufacturing companies, community members, civic organizations, and charitable foundations in support of workforce and economic development. "The spirit of collaboration and commitment out of which this center has grown will continue to fuel its success with a close alignment between workforce development and regional economic needs," Surrett said.

Why become a member of SVAM?

- Networking opportunities
- Access and free admission to trainings
- Priority access to SVAM worker pool
- Company exposure on website, at events, on newsletter, etc.
- Peer-to-Peer Best Practices
- Free admission to all SVAM events to include Manufacturers Appreciation Dinner
- Newsletter
- Community outreach opportunities to change the image of manufacturing
- And much more!

Members of The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc.



Associate Members:

Manufacturing Technology Center, American Wood Fibers, Mazak Corporation, Southwest Virginia Workforce Investment Board

Affiliate Members:

Tri-County Driving Academy, Occupational Enterprises, Inc., United Way Virginia Highlands, Russell County IDA, Russell County Government, Spectrum Design, Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, Alliance Engineering, Virginia Economic Development Partnership-International Trade, Keith Thompson, Dickenson County Board of Supervisors, Genedge Alliance



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