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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.svwam.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.

2015 Southwest Virginia Manufacturers' Expo

On August 4th, the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc. invited manufacturers across Virginia and their vendors to attend its second annual Southwest Virginia Manufacturers' Expo at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, Virginia. The purpose of the event was to provide a venue for manufacturers to network and share best practices in a peer-to-peer environment. It provided a way for manufacturers to learn more about the local resources available to them through the capabilities of their fellow manufacturers.

During the event, fourteen manufacturers and manufacturing vendors set up booths/exhibits showcasing their companies. The day was structured with several blocks of networking time to provide participants an opportunity to spend some time getting to know the other exhibitors and attendees.

Several manufacturers and organizations in attendance took a few minutes to provide a presentation about their company during the event.

Two manufacturer-led Breakout Sessions were also held to provide peer-to-peer learning opportunities: The first session was The Benefits of the Domestic Markets Expansion Program and the second was a Scholle Packaging led session about their employee recognition and rewards program, "Schollemwood". A lunch-time presentation recapping the progress and expected benefits of the Center of Excellence was provided by Kevin Mumpower, Vice President of Engineering at Bristol Compressors and Chair of the Center of Excellence Board of Directors.

"This event was another success for SVAM," said Lennie Gail Mitcham, "The Expo is a unique opportunity for manufacturers to see the capabilities in their region that they may have otherwise never known were there. I heard so many people say they never knew about several of the manufacturers in attendance. It was very encouraging to look around the room and see manufacturers sharing business cards, learning from each other, and hearing about their plans to work together in the future."

SVAM would like to thank the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board; Virginia Economic Development Partnership, International Trade; and the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Consortium Board for Partnering with SVAM for this event.

SWCC Pluggin' Students Receive Jobs after Attending Expo

When we heard about the Manufacturing Expo, we knew it would be a great place for our Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC), TAACCCT 4 Grant Welding students to connect with employers... we were right. Heather Lester and I accompanied the students, Mark Grose, Michael Endicott, Jonathan Kelly, and Brian Stapleton on the field trip to the Manufacturing Expo at the Higher Ed Center in Abingdon, VA. We all walked around introducing ourselves to each employer while asking questions about the company and whether or not they were hiring. Among other employers, Steel Fab Corporation, Electro-Mechanical Corporation, and Tadano Mantis, were a few that the students had already become acquainted. Brandi Peters, with Electro-Mechanical Corporation in Bristol, VA, was one of the human resource managers the students had previously met at the SWCC Career Fair in April and the Capstone Presentation a few weeks ago on September 2, 2015. That day at the Manufacturing Expo, she informed them that EMC was interested in interviewing them; she asked them to email her directly their updated resumes. After interviewing several of our students, three were offered positions; two of them accepted. These two, Mark Grose and David Skeens, began working for EMC in Bristol, VA, while continuing their training at SWCC, which they did on September 29, 2015. All-in-all, our trip to the Manufacturing Expo was very educational and beneficial to the SWCC, TAACCCT 4 Grant Welding students.

-Diana L. Stinson, Employment Specialist at Southwest Virginia Community College

Manufacturers' Appreciation and Awards Dinner

Nearly one hundred and fifty business, government and community leaders from all across Southwest Virginia gathered at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center on Thursday, September 24th, to celebrate manufacturing and its contributions to the economy in the region.

At its annual Manufacturer's Appreciation and Awards Dinner, the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing (SVAM) reviewed its successful year of promotion of manufacturing as a career and renewed its commitment to continued growth in this all

important sector of Southwest Virginia's economy. During the dinner, SVAM provided a panel discussion about the Economic Development Benefits of the Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence. Joe Gillespie, Business Expansion Manager for the Virginia Economic Development Partnership; Bruce Sobczak, Director of Workforce Development for the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing; and Stephanie Surrent, Director of the SVAM Center of Excellence provided information based on their levels of expertise about the role that the Center of Excellence will play to grow the manufacturing base in Southwest Virginia

and the benefits to the region's economy.

To end the evening, four manufacturers received awards to recognize their growth and contributions to the community. SVAM would like to thank its sponsors for this event: Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board, The Manufacturing Technology Center, United Way of Southwest Virginia, and The Southwestern Virginia Technology Council.



Bill Kahl, Chair of the SVAM Board Pete Savage with West River Conveyors, and Bruce Sobczak with the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing

The Manufacturer of the Year award was given to West River Conveyors located in Buchanan County, Virginia:

Being selected for Manufacturer of the Year means a lot to us here at West River. We are proud of the quality products we manufacture, the charities we support and the advocacy for the industries that we support/support us. In such a volatile market, we feel very fortunate to have visionaries here at West River who knew we needed to diversify our products and markets. It was awesome to be recognized for the many accomplishments that West River has achieved in the past year alone.

Award Winners Highlight

We have a great team at Scholle IPN, Chilhowie. We focus on sending people home safe and sound, so that they can enjoy their lives. Without engagement from the entire team, our safety programs will not work. It was wonderful to see their hard work and perseverance recognized with the Excellence in Safety Award. Thanks again. I am certainly proud of our team. are indeed making progress.

H&V is honored and proud to receive this award. We would like to thank SVAM for the recognition and their work in support of manufacturing in Southwest Virginia.

The Environmental Stewardship Award was presented to Universal Fibers, located in Washington County, Virginia:

Universal Fibers is both humbled and proud to receive the SVAM 2015 Environmental Stewardship Award. It is clear to us that sustainability is a journey. It's one that our leadership and our strategy is dedicated to. To fully become part of the fabric / culture / DNA of Universal, it must be reflected by our associates in the communities in which we live and work. Thanks for telling us that we are indeed making progress.

The Innovations in Manufacturing Award was presented to Hollingsworth and Vose, located in Floyd County, Virginia:

Receiving the 2015 Innovations in Manufacturing Award is significant to H&V's Floyd operation and to the entire global company...Innovation is one of our company's stated values, so being recognized is confirmation that our products are seen as innovative by those outside our company...

The Excellence in Safety Award was presented to Scholle IPN, located in Smyth County, Virginia:

Seeing a need for greater collaborations between manufacturing and legislation, SVAM members invited legislators to a luncheon to provide a meet and greet between legislators and manufacturers and to discuss the next steps to make sure that the voices of SWVA manufacturers are heard.

With an air of excitement and readiness to support one another to aid in the growth of Southwest Virginia Manufacturing, the group agreed to establish a Manufacturing

and Legislative Council. This council would provide a venue for ongoing conversations between manufacturers and legislators to ensure that they were hearing the right messages and were making decisions that would best benefit industry in our region. It is not a lobbying opportunity, but more a venue to share information.

The first meeting of this Council took place at SVAM's Southwest Virginia Manufacturers Expo in August

involving area manufacturers as well as State and Federal Legislators.

Manufacturers and Legislators discussed their needs with one another and talked about the next steps for growth and formal structuring of the Council.

The Council will meet quarterly to allow each group to remain up-to-date and create strategies to grow manufacturing in Southwest Virginia.

SVAM Establishes Manufacturing and Legislative Council



Carolyn Powers with Scholle IPN



Vince Hatcher and Bruce Smith with Hollingsworth and Vose



Brendan Mcsheehy with Universal Fibers

SVAM Trainings for Manufacturers

State Employment Laws Seminar

In July, SVAM hosted a seminar on State Employment Laws led by Baker Donelson law firm. The three representatives from Baker Donelson touched on several key subjects including: The Top 10 FMLA Mistakes Employers Make, Latest Issues from the NLRB, Legislative and Supreme Court Update, and more. Discussions were had between the presenters and attendees on several court cases related to employment laws. The representatives of Baker Donelson also answered several questions from attendees regarding issues occurring in the workplace.

Free Webinar Offered In Partnership with PTAC

In August, SVAM and the SVAM Center of Excellence were happy to partner with the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at Southwest VA Community College to offer a free webinar entitled, "Selling to the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)". With more than \$11.6 billion a year being spent to purchase 5.2 million items to support our men and women in uniform, PTAC wanted to encourage businesses to look into the possibility of having "a piece of the pie". This webinar informed and educated attendees on the "how to's" of doing business with the DLA.

Communications Lunch-N-Learn

In September, Melissa Hite, Assistant Professor of Business at Mountain Empire Community College, answered the call to provide requested training in regard to professional communications in the workplace--specifically in regard to email. Melissa led a 1-hour training covering the following topics: Reply or Reply All?, CAPS and Emoticons: Yes or No?, Now or Later: Urgency and Timeliness. Thank you to General Dynamics for hosting this training.

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 Meetings**
- **Free admission to all SVAM events to include Manufacturers Appreciation Dinner**
- **Community outreach opportunities to change the image of manufacturing**
- **Training Sharing**
- **And much more!**

Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence Update

September 2015 marked the one-year anniversary of the Phase I Grant Award to Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc. (SVAM) by the Tobacco Commission for the start-up of the Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence (SVAM-CoE). Much has been accomplished and many milestones have been met. During the third quarter of 2015, four (4) instructors completed Siemens Level I Instructor Certification, equipment (welding and machining) was delivered and set up, new staff was added, the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of SVAM-CoE's main campus in Abingdon was held, and Phase 2 funding was approved by the Tobacco Commission.

Welding Equipment Delivered and Set up – Advanced Welding training, leading to American Welding Society (AWS) certifications, is the first priority training for SVAM-CoE. Welding equipment for three sites, ordered in June 2015, was delivered in September to the Abingdon campus. The Abingdon welding lab was set up and equipment installed. The welding equipment for the Bluefield satellite will be delivered late October. The Duffield satellite, upon the completion of final renovations and electrical improvements, will be ready for equipment install in early November. Welders will be able to get hands-on training in order to

prepare them for their SMAW, GMAW, FCAM and SAW certifications once all equipment is installed at the Abingdon campus and at the satellites in Duffield and Bluefield.

Community College Instructors Complete Siemens Level I Instructor Certification– Four community college instructors attended the Siemens Level I Instructor Certification Program, in LaVergne, TN, August 3-14, 2015. The following instructors achieved their Siemens Level I Instructor Certification: Joe Mitchell (VHCC), Donnie Melvin (VHCC), Roger Greene (MECC), and Bryce Shular (MECC).



The completion and certification of the Siemens Level I program will enhance the mechatronics offerings through the local community colleges, which will feed into the training offered at the SVAM-CoE. SVAM-CoE covered all fees and expenses for the instructor trainings including: tuition, travel, lodging, and meals. Three of the Level I instructors will complete Siemens Level 2 Instructor Training in Berlin, Germany in April, 2016.

Welcome Aboard New Staff – SVAM-CoE is pleased to announce that Tony Skeen joined its team as the Facilities

Manager in August. Tony has amassed more than 25 years of progressive supervisory experience in all phases of the maintenance industry. His experience includes: troubleshooting, vendor management, preventative maintenance (TPM), safety and compliance, and production planning. Before joining SVAM-CoE, Tony managed all the operations of a major retail store maintenance department including fire system, electrical system, HVAC, building interior and exterior. Tony's previous experience also included the development and operation of a machine shop to service Southwest Virginia and surrounding areas. Tony earned his Journeyman's Card in both Maintenance

Machinist and CNC Machinist from the Commonwealth of Virginia Apprenticeship Program.

He has made professional development a

priority by continuing his training and education in areas of 5s concepts, Front Line Management, and Lean Concept certification from Xavier University. Tony is taking exams for the Certified Welding Inspector (CWI) and Certified Welding Educator (CWE) credentials in October. Tony will oversee TPM of all equipment for all CoE sites, maintain supplies for all training labs, ensure compliance of all safety and regulatory requirements and act as the onsite CWI as the CoE moves forward with becoming an Accredited Testing Facility through the AWS.

Center of Excellence Update (Continued)



Stephanie Surratt,
Director of SVAM-CoE



Bill Kahl, Chair of the SVAM Board and Bruce Sobczak with the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Held for Abingdon Campus-

The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Open House were held for the SVAM-CoE main campus in Abingdon on September 24. Over 100 partners and stakeholders attended the event. The diverse group of attendees represented the following sectors/entities: K-12, Community Colleges, Career and Technical Centers, 4-year colleges, nonprofits, town and county governments, economic development professionals, vendors, legislators, manufacturers, state agencies, federal agencies, and others.

Phase 2 Funding Approved –

During the September meeting of the Tobacco Commission, the SVAM-CoE Phase 2 Funding Application was approved for the amount of \$3,169,658. Phase 2 funding will be utilized to purchase machining and mechatronics equipment for all sites as well as a Metrology Lab for Abingdon and Fab Lab for Duffield. A comprehensive marketing plan will also be implemented during Phase 2. SVAM and the CoE staff are most appreciative of the award and all the support from the partners.

Phase 2 funding will ensure the full “stand up and start up” of the advanced manufacturing skills training, to be delivered in a distributive model across the service region so that anyone wanting training will have access

If you would like to learn more about SVAM-CoE, contact Ms. Surratt to schedule a presentation at your business or organization. She can be reached at (276) 525-1400 or ssurratt@svamcoe.org.

Employers Training Collaborative Grant Provides Training Funds for Manufacturers

The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc. (SVAM), a non-profit educational organization, is again providing a workforce skills training cost reimbursement program to manufacturers in the 17-jurisdiction SVAM footprint. This program is funded through a grant from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. It is an industry-led effort to provide better-trained workers for manufacturers and to promote manufacturing careers in the region. The \$200,000 grant will pay for workforce skills training to meet the needs of local industry in southwest Virginia. The Commission has limited reimbursement to 25-33% of training costs with documentation of a dollar-for-dollar match. It has also limited the types of training eligible for reimbursement to: Welding, Machining, National Career Readiness Credential Platinum Level, and Manufacturing Technician Level I. A complete listing of eligible subcategories can be achieved by contacting SVAM. If you have questions or would like more information please contact the SVAM office at 276-492-2100 or visit our website at www.svvam.org

Members of The Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc.



Associate Members:

Manufacturing Technology Center, American Wood Fibers, Mazak Corporation, Southwest Virginia Workforce Investment Board, Virginia Highlands Community College, Hollingsworth and Vose

Affiliate Members:

Tri-County Skill Center, Occupational Enterprises, Inc., United Way Virginia Highlands, Russell County IDA, Russell County Government, Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, Alliance Engineering, Virginia Economic Development Partnership-International Trade, Keith Thompson, Dickenson County Board of Supervisors, Genedge, Joint IDA of Wythe, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board, Mountain Empire Community College, Allegheny Brokerage Company, inc.

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