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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](http://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.**

## Manufacture Your Career-SVAM and MECC

On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, in cooperation with Mountain Empire Community College, Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing co-hosted Manufacture Your Career, an evening panel discussion highlighting the manufacturing sector and the career paths it offers. Beth Boggs, Career and Transfer Counselor at MECC, successfully promoted the event and recruited students from a variety of technical programs to participate. Overall, there were 60 people in attendance at the event.

Panelists pointed out that manufacturing has changed, along with the rest of the global economy. Job-seekers in the manufacturing industry are going to be required to possess skills and pursue training that will make them competitive in a manufacturing environment that emphasizes technology and adaptability.

The evening began with a panel discussion featuring professionals in different positions within manufacturing organizations in Southwest Virginia. Panelists included Alex Lupi-Director of Operations at Tempur Pedic in Duffield, VA; Christa Glassburn-Chief Operating Officer at PBE in Tazewell, VA; Ethan Gillam-IT Systems Engineer at Tempur Pedic in Duffield, VA; and Gregory Farmer-Duffield Site Manager at Joy Global in Duffield, VA. The panelists discussed a range of topics including the types of careers available in manufacturing, soft skills sought after in the manufacturing sector, the future of manufacturing in Southwest Virginia, and more.

Students asked insightful questions about the growth of manufacturing, the possibility for advancement in the field and the educational benefits an employer might provide to employees. Overall, the sense was that the students valued the opportunity to grow in a manufacturing career. Attendees discussed some of the challenges of the regional economy and how manufacturing may help to ameliorate some unemployment. The evening concluded with door prizes provided by West River Conveyors, Somic America, Utility Trailer and Tempur Pedic. Students enjoyed light refreshments and were given the opportunity to network with panelists after the event.

SVAM would like to thank the volunteer panelists, give-away sponsors, Mountain Empire Community College, Beth Boggs, and the instructors who encouraged their students to attend.

## Dress for Success

SVAM has recently been working with schools in Washington, Smyth, Russell and Buchanan counties to provide selected students with an opportunity to shop for and purchase clothing that they could wear to school, interviews and on the job after graduation. This project, called Dress for Success, has allowed SVAM and member companies to connect with students around the region in a meaningful way.

Following the student shopping trips, led by school faculty and staff, SVAM organized tours of manufacturing facilities for students to witness what manufacturing looks like today. Russell County students toured Steel Fab in Lebanon. Washington and Smyth Counties both toured Utility Trailer. Afterwards, Washington County students headed to Universal Fibers in Bristol and Smyth County students went to Scholle IPN in Chilhowie, where

they were given the opportunity to tour the manufacturing facilities and ask questions about manufacturing and the available careers in the industry. Washington and Smyth County students also enjoyed lunch provided by Universal Fibers and Scholle IPN respectively. Students from Buchanan County toured West River Conveyors in Oakwood.

SVAM would like to thank faculty and staff from Russell, Smyth, Washington and Buchanan Career and Technical Schools for their participation in this program. A big thanks also goes out to Steel Fab, Universal Fibers, Utility Trailer, Scholle IPN and West River Conveyors for opening their doors to students. Through programs like Dress for Success, we are working towards the SVAM goal of changing the perception of manufacturing among young people, their parents and their educators.



**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**



## Outstanding Woman in Manufacturing



SVAM was pleased to present Vicky Kiser, Chief Financial Officer at Bristol Compressors, with the 2016 Outstanding Woman in Manufacturing Award! Vicky has worked for over 20 years in manufacturing, takes on projects of her own initiative, has great leadership and teamwork skills, displays quick adaptation to change, is proactive in solving problems, and is the “go-to” person for information for Bristol Compressors employees.

Her nominator, Edward Gniewek, President and CEO of Bristol Compressors stated, “Ms. Kiser is an exceptional example as an accomplished woman in manufacturing reaching the pinnacle of her financial profession, CFO of a major international manufacturing company. The Bristol Executive Team is an accomplished group and Ms. Kiser stands out amongst

them. She has been integral to the success and growth of the company.”

The finalists for this year’s award were: Shelly Wiseman, Materials Manager at Strongwell in Bristol, Va; Dawn Archer, Director, Production Planning and Control/Aerostructures Operations Manager, General Dynamics in Marion, Va; Vicky Wade, Mill Scheduler at Hollingsworth and Vose in Floyd, Va; Tabetha Church, Human Resources Manager at Tempur Productions in Duffield, Va; Tina Clevinger, Purchasing/Office Manager at West River Conveyors in Oakwood, Va

Congratulations to our winner and finalists, and thank you all who submitted nominations!

## 8th Grade Career Carnival

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, SVAM and member companies Steel Fab, General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems, and Scholle IPN Packaging attended Virginia Highlands Community College’s Career Carnival. The Career Carnival’s purpose is to expose 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the area to various career opportunities that are available to them. The hope is to open their eyes to new possibilities.

Students walked around a the very full Grand Hall at Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center viewing various careers and talking with representatives for each booth. Our member companies spoke about what they manufacturer and the types of careers available at their companies. At the SVAM booth, students learned about the presence of manufacturing across southwest Virginia. SVAM staff talked about the common myths associated with manufacturing and explained that in southwest Virginia, there are over 500 companies employing over 22,000 people who make, on average, \$10,000 more a year than people working in other fields. Several items were on display showcasing what is made in southwest Virginia such as a Pepsi (made in Wytheville, Virginia), carpet (made in Bristol, Virginia), a Tempur-Pedic pillow

(made in Duffield Virginia), an airplane (parts made in Marion, Virginia), and a small Utility Trailer tractor trailer (made in Atkins and Glade Spring, Virginia). SVAM staff also talked about the diversity of careers available in manufacturing from the administrative side to the technical side and even careers most people don’t think of such as seamstresses and chemists.

Each student who visited the SVAM booth received a ticket for a chance to win a \$25 gift certificate to Cinemark movie theaters. 1 student from each of the four groups took home a gift certificate.



## Trainings

### Active Shooter Training-

On February 24th, Sheriff Newman and Major Ashbrook of Washington County Sheriff’s Office, led the training, Surviving an Active Shooter, at Utility Trailer in Glade Spring, Va. The training provided highly topical information related to workplace violence and active shooter events. Attendees were given instruction on how to properly prepare their places of work in the case of an active shooter, including tips on recognizing, preventing and dealing with active shooter events.

Thank you to Sheriff Newman and Major Ashbrook and to Utility Trailer for hosting the event and providing lunch.

### Implementing the Value Optimization System Seminar-

On March 15th, Mountain States Health Alliance hosted and led a training seminar, Implementing the Value Optimization System at Johnston Memorial Hospital in Abingdon, Virginia. The seminar provided attendees with an in-depth look into what it really means for a company to “get lean” . Participants were instructed on lean methodologies and A3 thinking and were given the opportunity to participate in a group activity where they put the methods to work.

Thank you to Mountain States Health Alliance and staff for leading and hosting this seminar in addition to providing a wonderful lunch.

## Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence Update

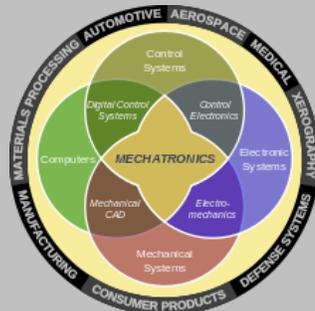
The SVAM Center of Excellence (SVAM-CoE) has completed another busy, but productive, quarter despite a small setback when the Abingdon CoE campus experienced water damage to in two of the classroom spaces. The renovations and improvements at the CoE Satellites in Bluefield and Duffield are almost complete. In addition, the mechatronics equipment for two sites was ordered and the machining and fab lab equipment were delivered.

**CoE Satellites Renovations and Improvements almost complete**—Bluefield – Renovations and improvements at the CoE Satellite in Bluefield have been overseen and completed by the Tazewell County Maintenance Department. The Bluestone Workforce Training Center, located on Camp Joy Road in Bluefield, is the home of the CoE Satellite serving Tazewell and contiguous counties. Advanced welding and Siemens Mechatronics Level 2 training will be offered on site. The building has been modified to accommodate the training needs. The site is expected to be fully operational by the end of April.

**Duffield**—Renovations and improvements at the CoE Satellite in Duffield have been overseen by Tempur Sealy management in coordination with the Pioneer Center staff and local vendors. The three rooms dedicated to CoE training needed work to ready the site for equipment and students. All of the spaces have been painted. The floors have been redone. The Fab Lab floor was professionally cleaned, courtesy of Scott County. The Welding Lab floor tiles were removed. The floor was then ground smooth and painted. The classroom/computer lab had new carpet installed. Electrical upgrades were also necessary and are mostly completed. All equipment has been delivered, including new computers courtesy of Mountain Empire Community College. Final assembly and installation of welding and fab lab equipment will be completed in April.

**What is Mechatronics?** SVAM-CoE will offer Siemens Mechatronics Level 2 training, which leads to Siemens Certified Mechatronic Systems Associate, at the Abingdon Campus and Bluefield Satellite. Many are familiar with “industrial maintenance mechanic” positions in manufacturing; however, maintenance in the more advanced and automated facilities requires more than a wrench and screwdriver. The advancement of technology has made it necessary for maintenance staff to increase

their skill set. Mechatronics is a synergistic combination of precision engineering, electronic control and mechanic systems. It is the science that exists at the interface among the other five disciplines: mechanics, electronics, information technology, automation and robotics. It is one of the most dynamically developing fields of technology and science.



**Mechatronics Lab Equipment Ordered**—The required equipment for Siemens Level 2 Mechatronics training has been ordered with expected delivery in April 2016. The Siemens Mechatronics Level 2 training leads to Siemens Certified Mechatronic Systems Associate. Upon completion of Siemens Level 1 or with experience, students can start coursework for Siemens Level 2 Certification. For more information about the Level 2 certification and what it means to you, visit <http://www.siemens-certifications.com/content/0/6/7/3389/44/>.

**Precision Machining Equipment Delivered**—Advanced Precision Machining training, leading to National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certifications, will be facilitated at the Abingdon CoE Campus and Wytheville Satellite. The Trak Lathe and CNC Milling Machine have been delivered and set up for manual machining training at the Abingdon Campus. In addition to traditional machining, training for the newest technology will also be facilitated. The Mazak Vertical Center 500A-5-Axis, Mazak Horizontal Center 40003R and Mazak Quick Turn 200MY machining centers have been delivered and set up at the Abingdon Campus. The Machining Lab will be fully operational by the end of April.

**Fab Lab Equipment Delivered**—The SVAM-CoE Satellite in Duffield, located within the Pioneer Center, will house a Fabrication Laboratory (Fab Lab). The

equipment for this facility has been delivered. Equipment for the Fab Lab has been ordered. A Fab Lab is a technical prototyping platform for innovation and invention, providing stimulus for local entrepreneurship. It is also a platform for learning and innovation: a place to play, to create, to learn, to mentor, to and to invent.



A Fab Lab is comprised of off-the-shelf, industrial-grade fabrication and electronics tools, wrapped in open source software and programs. The CoE Fab Lab includes a 3D printer, laser engraver, vinyl cutter, vacuum forming machine, injection molding machine, plasma cutting table, PCB engraver, a sign cutter that plots in copper to make antennas and flex circuits, a high-resolution CNC milling machine that makes circuit boards and precision parts, a large wood router for building furniture and housing, and a suite of electronic components and programming tools for low-cost, high-speed microprototyping for on-site rapid circuit prototyping. Originally designed for communities as prototyping platforms for local entrepreneurship, the Fab Lab will be available to new target groups such as manufacturers (for prototype work) and schools. Schools will be able to utilize the Fab Lab as platforms for project-based, hands-on STEM education. Users learn by designing and creating objects of personal interest or importance.

If you would like to learn more about SVAM-CoE, contact Ms. Surrentt to schedule a presentation at your business or organization. She can be reached at

(276) 525-1400 or

[ssurrentt@svamcoe.org](mailto:ssurrentt@svamcoe.org).

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!

# Thanks to SVAM Center of Excellence Partners

SVAM would like to thank the partners of the Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence listed below. The overwhelming support from organizations around the region has made this CoE a truly regional collaborative project. We are extremely grateful for your dedication to the project and to Southwest Virginia.

<p>94 FM</p> <p>Bristol Compressors International</p> <p>Dickenson County Board of Supervisors and Industrial Development Authority</p> <p>Genedge</p> <p>General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems</p> <p>General Engineering</p> <p>Joy Global</p> <p>Lamar</p> <p>Mountain Empire Community College</p> <p>New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board</p> <p>Occupational Enterprises, Inc. (OEI)</p> <p>Pioneer Center</p> <p>Russell County Schools</p> <p>Scholle IPN</p> <p>Scott County Economic Development Authority</p> <p>Smyth County Schools</p> <p>Southern Virginia Higher Education Center</p> <p>Southwest Virginia Community College</p> <p>Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center</p>	<p>Southwest Virginia Technology Council</p> <p>Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board</p> <p>Starscape</p> <p>Steel Fab</p> <p>Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing</p> <p>Tazewell Ida</p> <p>Tempur Sealy International, Inc.</p> <p>Tri-County Driving Academy</p> <p>United Way of Southwest Virginia</p> <p>Universal Fibers</p> <p>Utility Trailer Manufacturing Company</p> <p>Virginia Advanced Studies Strategies</p> <p>Virginia Highlands Community College</p> <p>Virginia Highlands Small Business Incubator</p> <p>Virginia Western Community College</p> <p>Virginia Manufacturers Association</p> <p>Washington County Board of Supervisors</p> <p>Washington County Schools</p> <p>Wytheville Community College</p>
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## 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, Titan Wheel, Vanguard Furniture

### 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 Alliance, Joint IDA of Wythe, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board, Mountain Empire Community College, Allegheny Brokerage Company, Inc., Virginia's aCorridor

### County Partners:

Washington County Board of Supervisors and Smyth County Board of Supervisors