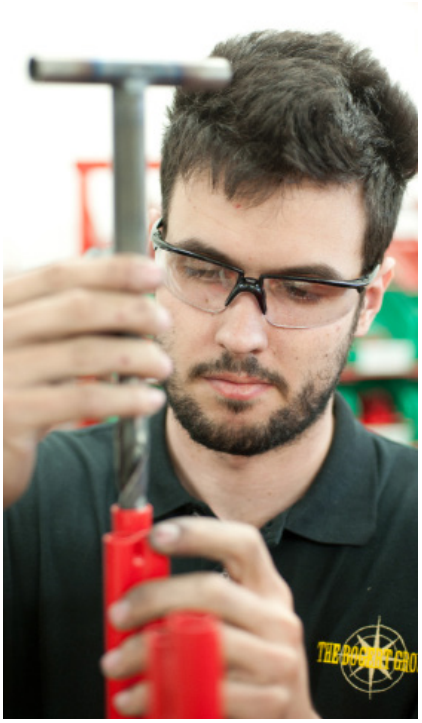
















2015 NIST MEP ANNUAL REPORT

www.nist.gov/mep

MEP • MANUFACTURING
EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Making an Impact on U. S. Manufacturing

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MESSAGE FROM THE **MEP DIRECTOR**

REFLECTIONS FROM 2015: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

In April 2015, I had the honor and privilege of being named Director of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program. In my 30 plus years of experience in manufacturing and small business development, I have never encountered such a talented, passionate group of people committed to their ideals. It has been an extraordinary experience watching MEP Centers all around the country serve as a tireless advocate for the U.S. manufacturing community.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

Small and medium-sized enterprises represent almost 99% of manufacturing in the U.S. and we will continue to support their growth. MEP will achieve this through its four key strategic goals:

1. Enhance Competitiveness
2. Champion Manufacturing
3. Support Partnerships
4. Develop Capabilities

I am proud of the MEP program for many reasons. First, in the midst of a multi-year open competition, Centers have made incredible progress with furthering our goal to optimize the impact of the federal investment on U.S. manufacturers. The simplification of reporting requirements and administrative changes will additionally reduce Center paperwork by 60 percent while maintaining fiduciary oversight. Our full system competition is on track to be completed by April 2017.

Second, the MEP national network has continued to make U.S. manufacturers more innovative, profitable, and globally competitive. From new product development and supply chain optimization, to exporting and process improvement initiatives, MEP Centers help businesses overcome all kinds of obstacles to achieve sustainable growth.

Finally, I believe an important impact we have on U.S. manufacturing is a renewed focus on putting people and their stories first. Manufacturers are more than just facilities filled with equipment or companies creating products. U.S. manufacturers are comprised of incredible people, each with their own unique story to share. We are a system that has helped U.S. manufacturers create and retain nearly *798,000* jobs[1] for our families, friends and neighbors.

I look forward to another extraordinary year with the MEP community!

Carroll Thomas, Director of MEP



1 About MEP (http://www.nist.gov/mep/about/index.cfm)



Dill, Kristen, *Landtamer* (2011) Photograph

ABOUT **MEP**

Since 1988, the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) has worked to strengthen U.S. manufacturing. Our national network of MEP Centers work directly with small and medium-sized manufacturers and contribute to the growth of well-paying jobs, the development of dynamic manufacturing communities, and the enhancement of American innovation and global competitiveness.

MEP's strength is in its partnerships. Through its collaborations at the federal, state, and local level, MEP positions manufacturers to develop new products and customers, expand and diversify markets, adopt new technologies, and enhance value within supply chains. MEP serves as a valuable bridge to other organizations and federal research labs that share a passion for enhancing the manufacturing community.

MEP is a part of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), under the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Our Mission

To enhance the productivity and technological performance of U.S. Manufacturing.

Our Role

To facilitate and accelerate the transfer of manufacturing technology in partnership with industry, universities and educational institutions, state governments, NIST and other federal research laboratories and agencies.

Since 1988, MEP has worked with nearly 86,620 manufacturers, leading to $96.4 billion in sales and $15.7 billion in cost savings, and has helped create and retain more than 797, 994 jobs.

MEP AT A **GLANCE**

MEP is built around fostering the national network of Centers locally positioned throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico. With more than 580 service locations, including 1,200 MEP technical experts and over 2,300 service providers, the national network serves as trusted business advisors ready and able to assist manufacturing companies.

29,101

Manufacturers Served in 2015

The national network of MEP Centers interacted with 29,101 manufacturers to improve their performance.

$130 MILLION

MEP Federal Budget

The federal contribution in FY2015 was $130 million, with more than $110 million going directly to the Centers.

1:17 RATIO

High Return on Investment

For every one dollar of federal investment, MEP generates nearly $17 in new sales growth and $24 in new client investment. This translates into $2.4 billion in new manufacturing sales annually. For every $1,900 of federal investment, MEP creates or retains one manufacturing job.

A NATIONAL **NETWORK**

MEP Centers in 2015

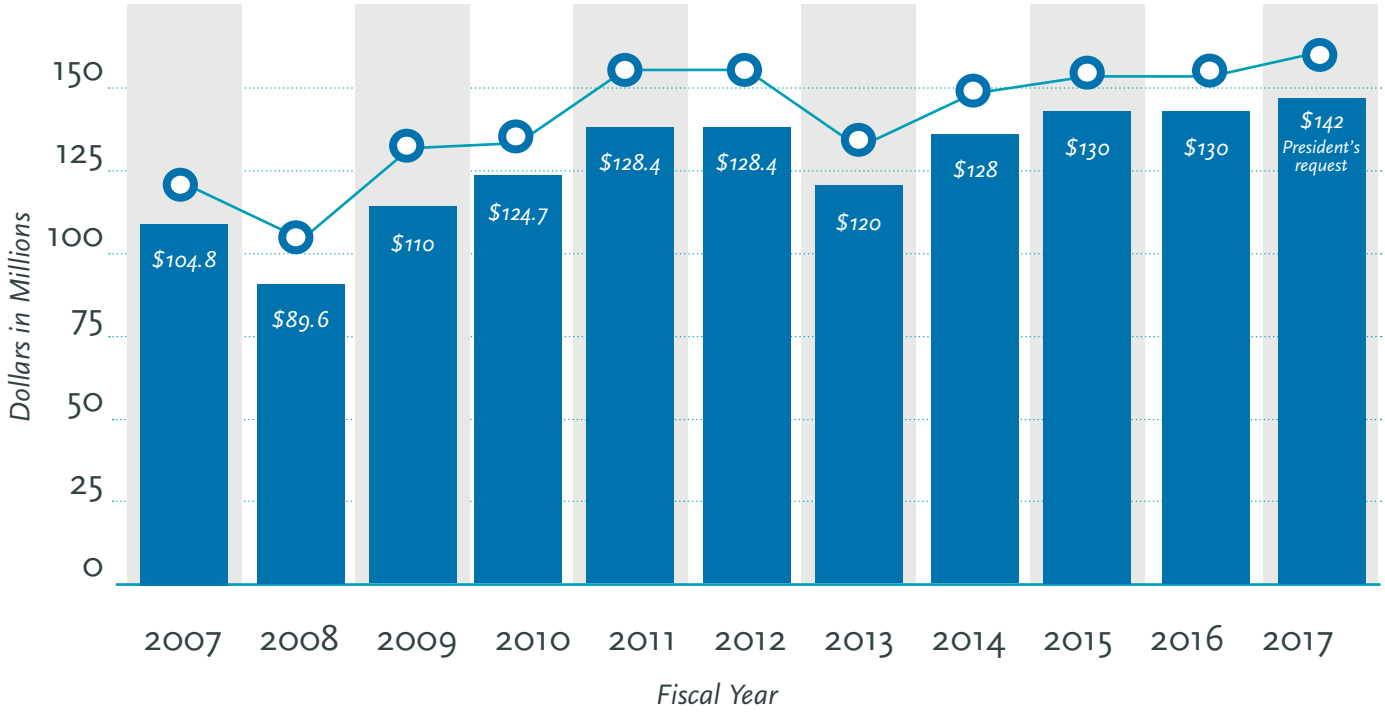


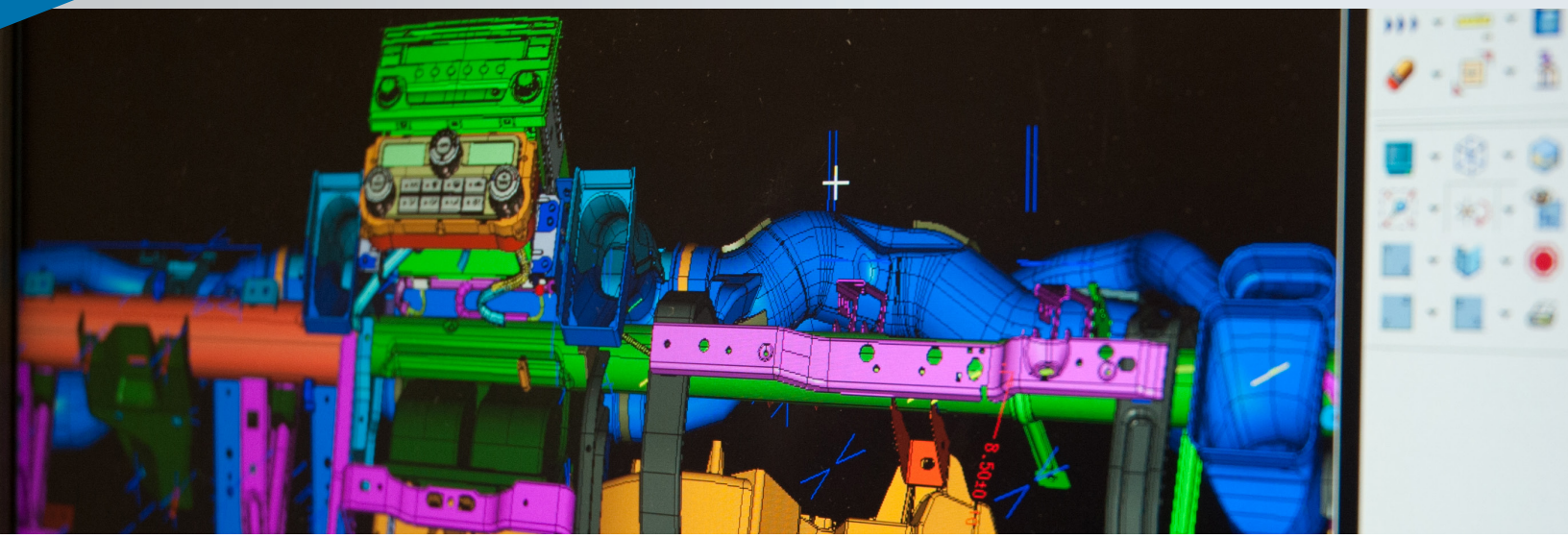
FUNDING HISTORY

MEP is the only public-private partnership program providing tangible assistance to the manufacturing sector, helping small and medium-sized companies stay in business and retain jobs.

The program receives wide bipartisan support. In 2015, Congress approved $130 million for the MEP program, a 1.6% increase over FY2014 funding. Funding for the MEP program remained the same in FY2016 and $142 million was requested for FY2017.

Any additional funding appropriated for the program in FY 2017 would be used to give Centers the opportunity to serve more manufacturers and reach out to those they might not have served in the past, including manufacturers in emerging industries, in rural areas or those that are very small. The funding will also help Centers develop new tools to support innovative supply chains, technology acceleration and workforce development.





Dill, Kristen, *Harada* (2013) Photograph

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

MEP's strategic goals provide the foundation for economic growth and opportunity by focusing on four key priorities. As manufacturers work to keep pace with accelerating changes, MEP's strategy is critical to small and medium-sized manufacturing firms, industrial communities, and the manufacturing sector as a whole. These priorities provide a pathway for the program's long-term goals and objectives. This report highlights how MEP nurtured its four strategic goals throughout 2015.

SUMMARY OF MEP'S FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1. ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS
We will enhance the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers, with particular focus on small and medium-sized companies.

2. CHAMPION MANUFACTURING
We will serve as a voice to and a voice for manufacturing and manufacturers in engaging policy makers, stakeholders, and clients.

3. SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS
We will support national, state, and regional manufacturing eco-systems and partnerships.

4. DEVELOP CAPABILITIES
We will develop MEP's capabilities as a learning organization and high performance system.

1. ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS

We will enhance the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs).

In 2015, MEP made a significant economic impact on clients in diverse industries by enabling SMMs to use new manufacturing technologies, techniques, and processes. Initiatives with supply chain, innovation, and workforce development were continued. The following are examples of the different initiatives and activities MEP executed during 2015 and the positive impact they have had on SMMs.

ECONOMIC IMPACT DATA FROM CLIENTS

29,101 MANUFACTURERS IN FY2015

$8 billion	*New & Retained Sales*
68,477 jobs	*Jobs Created & Retained*
$3.2 million	*New Client Investments*
$1.2 million	*Cost Savings*

Each year, manufacturers work with their local MEP Center to solve problems, increase productivity, improve their economic competitiveness, and enhance their technological capabilities.

Services manufacturers can receive through their local MEP Centers include:

- Innovation & Business Strategies
- Product Development & Prototyping
- Lean & Process Improvements
- Workforce Development
- Supply Chain Development
- Technology Scouting & Transfer

Results reported by MEP clients surveyed in FY2015. Of the 8,419 clients selected to be surveyed, 5,940 completed the survey. Measures are a conservative snapshop of benefits. Recurring or cumulative benefits may be larger.



Dill, Kristen, *Bogert* (2013) Photograph

"The MEP program is an example of a successful public-private partnership that works to help America stay competitive and innovative in the 21st century. Not only does the MEP program provide a return on investment to taxpayers, it brings real financial benefits to the businesses that use its services."

Penny Pritzker

U.S. Secretary of Commerce



Photo © Department of Commerce

ENHANCE COMPETITNENESS

SUPPLY CHAIN

On July 9th, 2015, the White House convened the Supply Chain Innovation Initiative Roundtable; a gathering of two dozen manufacturing leaders committed to expanding the capabilities of small and medium-sized manufacturers. The roundtable participants focused the discussion on policies and programs aimed at improving the competitiveness of America's supply chains.

MEP leadership and MEP clients were featured prominently throughout the day. U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, along with the U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, Director of the National Economic Council Jeffrey Zients, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy John Holdren, and Administrator of the Small Business Administration Maria Contreras-Sweet, shared their perspectives among the participating executives.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker emphasized the importance of the gathering, noting "We have a window of opportunity right now to rebuild a competitive manufacturing sector in this country by strengthening manufacturing eco-systems and widening the lines of communication between small and large suppliers." The roundtable served as clarion-call for the important role that MEP plays in improving the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing.

Champion Manufacturing

STATE-BASED EXAMPLES OF MANUFACTURING INNOVATION

CIRAS METAL 3D PRINTER

On October 2015, Iowa State University's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS), the Iowa MEP Center, installed a metal 3-D printer to help educate Iowa businesses on the many benefits of metal additive manufacturing. The brand new printer has opened new doors and sparked innovative opportunities to Iowa's manufacturers. The machine's purchase was funded by NIST MEP, CIRAS, the College of Engineering, and the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

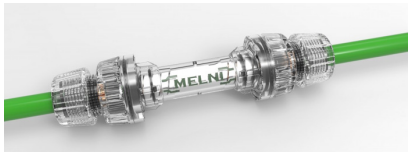
CIRAS expects metal additive manufacturing to change the way companies make almost everything and hopes to help Iowa businesses prepare for the change by helping companies try out and test the boundaries of this technology through experimentation. As more state universities adopt 3-D printing programs, a new generation of students will be able to access the job training benefits from this budding manufacturing technology.

PRESIDENT OBAMA VISITS TECHHELP



On January 21, 2015, President Obama visited TechHelp's (Idaho MEP) New Product Development (NPD) Lab at Boise State University. One project example shared with President Obama was of an Idaho start-up company and MEP client Melni Connectors:

In his garage in 2008, Mark Melni of Twin Falls, Idaho, invented The Melni



Electrical Connector, a concept for an electrically-conductive spiral that connects electrical wires with a novel secured grip. After many months, seven patents, and numerous iterations of computer aided design models, analysis, and prototypes, Melni and the NPD Lab team successfully transformed his concept into a finalized product that garnered the attention of a number of investors, regional economic development partners, as well as President Obama.



In the spring of 2015, Melni presented "show-quality" NPD Lab prototypes of his connector on NBC's *Shark Tank*, where his invention and business model successfully landed an offer from billionaire Mark Cuban.

Photos © TechHelp

2. CHAMPION MANUFACTURING

We will serve as a voice to and a voice for manufacturing and manufacturers in engaging policy makers, stakeholders, and clients.

In 2015, MEP championed the importance of SMMs and ensured their inclusion in the economic competitiveness policies and programs of the U.S. government. This included participation in Manufacturing Day, leveraging new technology in local communities, and creating new campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of manufacturing in the United States.

MANUFACTURING DAY

The fourth annual Manufacturing Day (MFG Day) was celebrated on October 2, 2015. Established in 2012, MGF Day is designed to improve the public's perception about manufacturing, highlight the industry's value to the U.S. economy, and showcase the diverse and exciting career opportunities in manufacturing for the next generation of workers. Thousands of students, parents, and teachers learned about the rewarding careers that the manufacturing sector offers through plant tours in communities across the country.

In 2015, **over 2,600 events took place with more than 400,000 attendees**. MEP Centers and their partners got the word out and provided "on the ground" grassroots support. Nine states had more than 100 events, with Ohio, Michigan, Florida, and California each exceeding 150; and with Iowa having accomplished at least one registered event in each county.

1. Florida – 278 events
2. Ohio – 181 events
3. Michigan – 176 events
4. California – 158 events
5. Iowa – 139 events
6. Indiana – 131 events
7. Pennsylvania – 120 events
8. Illinois – 119 events
9. New York – 113 events
10. Minnesota – 92 events

Extensive media coverage helped spread the word – the hashtag #MFGDay trended on social media, thousands of news articles and Science Channel's in-program-messaging on *How It's Made* reached millions of people. There was extensive day-of participation across the Administration and more than 175 state and city proclamations were issued, with Missouri leading the way with 42 different proclamations. Learn more at www.mfgday.com.

POSITIVELY CHANGING PERCEPTION

A first-ever Deloitte perception survey was conducted for Manufacturing Day in 2015. After attending a Manufacturing Day event, 81% of student respondents were more convinced manufacturing provides interesting, rewarding careers. In addition, 90% of educators indicated they were more likely to encourage students to pursue a career in manufacturing.

Champion Manufacturing

FACES OF MANUFACTURING CAMPAIGN

In 2015, Georgia MEP (GaMEP) launched the Faces of Manufacturing Campaign, honoring hard-working, dedicated people throughout Georgia who work within, or are affected by manufacturing. Their stories help showcase manufacturing's impact on Georgia communities, as well as help promote manufacturing as a thriving industry filled with exciting career opportunities.



RHONDA BEASLEY | JANUARY
Roper Corporation, LaFayette



JAMIE WEATHERFORD | APRIL
Crown Candy, Macon



RANDELL HARPER | JULY
JAC Products, Franklin



LINDA WILLIAMS | OCTOBER
WestRock, Atlanta



STEVEN SHAW | FEBRUARY
GTVC, Newnan



WERHNER WASHINGTON | MAY
Procter & Gamble, Albany



ASHLEY (JORDAN) ADAMS | AUGUST
Meadowbrook Machine & Tool, Toccoa



CHRIS LUCAS & STEPHEN HILLIARD
NOVEMBER | JCB & Blue Force Gear, Pooler



KURT JACOBUS & KEN GALL | MARCH
MedShape, Atlanta



BRIAN COOKSEY | JUNE
Shaw Industries, Dalton



NATHAN WILMOTH | SEPTEMBER
M.A. Industries, Peachtree City



JACKSON SMITH, KHATERA BALLARD & WES JONES | DECEMBER
Honeysuckle Gelato, Atlanta

Learn more at www.facesofmanufacturing.com

Photo © GaMEP

ENTERPRISE MINNESOTA "THE STATE OF MANUFACTURING" STUDY

Enterprise Minnesota, along with its partners, conducted its annual State of Manufacturing® Study. Four-hundred Minnesota-based manufacturing executives were surveyed. Key findings from the study include:

- **89 percent of manufacturing executives express confidence about the future of their firms.**
  - Highest mark in the survey's seven-year history.
- **The ability to attract and retain qualified workers** continues to be the main concern growing at 33 percent.
- **Health insurance costs top the list of concerns** at 56 percent, which is down from its high of 71 percent in 2011.
- **42 percent of executives believe the coming year will be one of economic expansion.**

Read the full results at http://bit.ly/2983IoN.

3. SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS

We will support national, state, and regional manufacturing eco-systems and partnerships.

MEP partners with organizations that share a commitment to fostering U.S. manufacturing. As the U.S. adapts to rapidly changing global dynamics, MEP's partnerships expand to meet evolving needs. From the federal and national level to the state, regional and local levels, MEP values the expertise and support that our partners share to help grow the manufacturing community. In 2015, MEP partnered with a diverse array of organizations in a variety of ways:

- With the **National Network for Manufacturing Innovation Institutes** to support advanced manufacturing innovation initiatives aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the United States in advanced manufacturing.

- With the **NIST Engineering Lab** to create and conduct the first Collaborative Robotics Workshop that allowed small manufacturers to discuss the advantages and challenges of implementing robotics into their manufacturing processes and facilities. Over 50 attendees from around the country gained extensive insights and valuable information on flexible automation trends and processes, ground-breaking tools, and newly emerging robotic technologies.

- As part of a multi-agency initiative [**Make it in America Challenge]** to accelerate job creation and encourage business investment in the United States. Launched in 2013, this 3 year program supports the efforts of U.S. companies to keep, expand, or reshore manufacturing operations and jobs in the United States, and to encourage foreign companies to build facilities in the United States and make products domestically. The Make it in America Challenge grants are intended to support greater connectivity in regional supply chains and to assist SMMs.

> "There's no question the MEP program has helped make thousands of manufacturers stronger."

Willie E. May

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology and NIST Director

LOCAL PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

CALIFORNIA NETWORK FOR INNOVATION MANUFACTURING INC. (CNMI)

CNMI is a 501 (c 3) focused on the transfer of Advanced Manufacturing Technologies to SMMs. CNMI also serves to better connect MEP Centers with state and regional partners, including Federal Labs, and to establish or enhance the MEP Center's role as their state's go-to source for advanced manufacturing technology.

CNMI covers all manufacturing sectors in the California manufacturing community. Its main objective is to identify and transfer technologies that can be sensibly applied by smaller manufacturers to improve their competitiveness.

In 2015, CNMI assisted SMMs in becoming aware of technologies that could potentially go unnoticed. The assistance enabled SMMs to take advantage of new technologies, such as Smart and Additive Manufacturing. By having complete access to these new technologies, SMMs are able to improve their logistical processes and global competitiveness.

CNMI's educational technology awareness program focused on Smart Manufacturing in 2015. Statewide conferences, followed by regional workshops were held to enforce the benefits and applications of Smart Manufacturing for SMMs. CNMI plans to embark on Cybersecurity for 2016.

LONG STANDING CNMI TEAM

- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory
- Centers for Applied Competitive Technologies (CACTs)
- El Camino Community College
- California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTC), California
- Corporation for Manufacturing Excellence (MANEX), California
- University of California
- Irvine
- University of Southern California
- Sierra Energy (Industry partner)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

The Manufacturing Extension Partnership is collaborating with the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) at the U.S. Department of Defense. The partnership between MEP and OEA is combining resources in states, regions and communities where fluctuations in DoD spending has adversely affected the competitiveness of small and medium-sized manufacturers. MEP Centers are levering OEA funding and combining it with their outreach and technical or business acumen to assist companies by; reducing costs through process improvements; developing growth plans for new customers, new products, and new markets; and matching manufacturing capabilities to new business opportunities.

MEP's collaboration with OEA is predicated on the premise that MEP resources can bring positive economic impact results to companies in the DoD supply chain. By working together we are identifying companies affected by downturns in the defense-spending, and assisting them in adapting to new economic realities to stay in business, retain employees, preserve key defense critical capabilities, and grow profitably.

In 2015, 16 MEP Centers were involved with the OEA program. The Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MASSMEP) was one of them: MASSMEP, the Massachusetts MEP Center, was awarded $400,000 to accelerate outreach and training programs for the defense supply chain. In an effort to identify gaps and resources available to manufacturing companies in the defense industry that were impacted, the Center conducted a comprehensive economic diversification study and developed an implementation strategy with defined objectives. These objectives include capitalizing on the Commonwealth's competitive advantage within its defense industry and generating an economic base that is less dependent on defense contracting.

4. DEVELOP CAPABILITIES

Developing MEP's capabilities as a learning organization and high performance system is the fourth strategic goal. In 2015, MEP promoted system learning, evolved the MEP Performance System, and continued administrative reforms. The MEP Advisory Board played a significant role in these efforts.

ADVISORY BOARD ACTIVITIES IN 2015

TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATION

The Technology Acceleration subcommittee provided guidance in shaping MEP's Technology Acceleration strategy and activities. The Technology Acceleration Subcommittee developed a charter, a plan for gathering research, and an implementation plan. The subcommittee briefed the full Board at every meeting on its recommendations and progress. At the May 2015 Board meeting, the Advisory Board was unanimous in agreement to move forward with the Implementation Plan.

Recommendations from the subcommittee include:

Setting Priorities: Adopt a rubric of agreed-upon criteria for evaluating future Technology Acceleration opportunities, and investing and allocation resources. Partnering with NIST, NNMI Institutes, and labs for technology opportunities was set as a priority.

Professional Development/System Learning: Develop an 18-month plan for system learning across the MEP system that would include education on new technologies, their implications, and Technology Acceleration strategies employed by Centers.

BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

The subcommittee was tasked with developing opportunities to improve Board governance and identifying distinctive practices. The purpose of forming this Subcommittee was to help implement the strategic objective of increasing roles of the National and Center Boards.

The Board Governance Subcommittee examined how to increase connectivity between the National Board and Center Boards, ensure that Board members serve as manufacturing advocates, and strengthen Board accountability.

The goals and objectives of this subcommittee were to:

- Evaluate mechanisms and facilitate linkages to increase communication between the MEP Advisory Board and MEP Center Boards
- Inventory distinctive practices across Center Boards
- Develop and evaluate performance systems for Fiduciary and Advisory Boards

The Advisory Board is re-engaging with MEP senior leadership to help provide direction and advice as MEP creates its 2017 – 2022 strategic plan.

The Board also hopes to see continued progress on the work of the two Subcommittees, and in particular, working closely to continue improving the opportunities to better connect research and technologies at NIST and other federal labs with U.S. small and mid-sized manufacturers.

In addition, the Board continues to promote any and all efforts to permanently readjust the cost share to 1:1 in order for MEP Centers to better deliver on mission and reach more small and mid-size manufacturers. The Advisory Board remains committed to the MEP Program and the opportunity to assist U.S. manufacturers.



2015 ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



Vickie Wessel, Chair
President
Spirit Electronics, Inc.
Phoenix, Arizona



Jeffrey Wilcox, Vice Chair
VP for Engineering
Lockheed Martin Corporation
Bethesda, Maryland



Dr. Carolyn Cason,
Associate Dean for Research,
College of Nursing
University of Texas Arlington
Arlington, Texas



Dr. Roy, A. Church,
President
Lorain County Community College
Elyria, Ohio



Dennis Dotson,
President
Dotson Iron Castings
Mankato, Minnesota



Eileen Guarino,
President & CEO
Greno Industries
Scotia, New York



Bernadine Hawes,
Research Analyst
Community Marketing Concepts
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Thomas M. Lee,
President
Vulcan, Inc.
Foley Alabama



William Shorma,
President
Rush-Co.
Springfield, South Dakota



Ed Wolbert,
President
Transco Products, Inc.
Chicago Illinois

MEP CENTERS *in 2015*

The national network of MEP Centers serves as the foundation of the MEP program. Throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, more than 580 field offices comprised of 1,200 experts help make U.S. manufacturing stronger.

Alabama
Alabama Technology Network
135 South Union Street, Suite 441
Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone: 334-687-9405
www.atn.org

Alaska
MAKE Partnership
3300 Arctic Blvd. #203
Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone: 907-562-7380
www.swamc.org

Arizona
Arizona Commerce Authority
333 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1900
Phoenix, AZ 85004
Phone: 602-845-1200
www.revaz.org

Arkansas
Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions
900 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-683- 4411
www.mfgsolutions.org

California (Southern)
California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTC)
690 Knox Street, Suite 200
Torrance, CA 90502
Phone: 310-263-3060
www.cmtc.com

California (Northern)
Corporation for Manufacturing Excellence (Manex)
2010 Crow Canyon Place, Suite 320
San Ramon, CA 94583. Phone: 925-807- 5100
www.manexconsulting.com

Colorado
Manufacturer's Edge C/O REO
5505 Airport Blvd
Boulder, CO 80301
Phone: 303 -998-0303
www.manufacturersedge.com

Connecticut
CONNSTEP
1090 Elm Street, Suite 202
Rocky Hill, CT 06067
Phone: 860-529-5120
www.connstep.org

Delaware
Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMEP)
400 Stanton-Christiana Rd., Suite A-158
Newark, DE 19713
Phone: 302-283- 3131
www.demep.org

Florida
FloridaMakes
800 N. Magnolia Avenue, Suite 1850
Orlando, FL 32803
Phone: 407-450-7206
www.floridamakes.com

Georgia
Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP)
Georgia Tech
75 Fifth Street, NW Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-894- 5217
www.gamep.org

Hawaii
INNOVATE Hawaii
2800 Woodlawn Dr., Suite 100
Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone: 808-539-3652
www.innovatehawaii.org

Idaho
TechHelp
Boise State University
1910 University Drive
Boise ID 83725
Phone: 208-426- 3767
www.techhelp.org

Illinois
Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC)
1501 West Bradley Ave.
Peoria, IL 61625
Phone: 888-806-4632
www.imec.org

Indiana
Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership
8628 E. 116th Street, Suite 200
Fishers, IN 46038
Phone: 800-877-5182
www.mep.purdue.edu

Iowa
Iowa Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS)
Iowa State University
Extension 4-H Building, Ames, IA 50011
Phone: 515-294-3420
www.ciras.iastate.edu

Kansas
Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC)
10550 Barkley St, Suite 116
Overland Park, KS 66212
Phone: 913-649-4333
www.mamtc.com

Kentucky
Advantage Kentucky Alliance
2413 Nashville Road, B8, Suite 310
WKU Center for Research and Development
Bowling Green, KY 42101
Phone: 270-282-7103
www.advantageky.org

Louisiana
Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL)
P.O. Box 53445
Lafayette, LA 70505-3445
Phone: 337-482-6767
www.mepol.org

Maine
Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership
87 Winthrop Street
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: 207-623-0680
www.mainemep.org

Maryland
Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership
8894 Stanford Boulevard, Suite 304
Columbia, MD 21045
Phone: 410-505- 8936
www.mdmep.org

Massachusetts
Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership
100 Grove Street, Suite 108
Worcester, MA 01605
Phone: 508-831-7020
www.massmep.org

Michigan
Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center
47911 Halyard Dr.
Plymouth, MI 48170
Phone: 888-414-6682
www.mmtc.org

Minnesota
Enterprise Minnesota
310 4th Ave S, Suite 7050
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Phone: 612-373-2900
www.enterpriseminnesota.org

Mississippi
InnovateMEP Mississippi
134 Marketridge Drive
Ridgeland, MS 39157
Phone: 601-960-3610
www.innovatemep.ms

Missouri
Missouri Enterprise
900 Innovation Dr., Suite 300
Rolla, MO 65401
Phone: 573-341-0117
www.missourienterprise.org

Montana
Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC)
PO Box 174255, Montana State University, MT 2310
University Way Bldg 2, Ste 1
Bozeman, MT 59717
Phone: 406-994-3812
www.mtmanufacturingcenter.com

Nebraska
Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
301 Agricultural Hall
3550 East Campus Loop South
Lincoln, NE 68583
Phone: 402-472-5993
nemep.unl.edu

Nevada
Nevada Industry Excellence
UNR 1644 N. Virginia Street
204 Ross Hall M/S 325
Reno, NV 89557
Phone: 775-784-1935
www.nevadaie.com

New Hampshire
New Hampshire Manufacturing Extension Partnership
172 Pembroke Road
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 603-226-3200
www.nhmep.org

New Jersey
New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program
2 Ridgedale Avenue, Suite 305
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927
Phone: 973-998- 9801
www.njmep.org

New Mexico
New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership
4501 Indian School Road, NE, Suite 202
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: 505-262-0921
www.newmexicomep.org

New York
New York State Department of Economic Development dba Empire State Development
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207
Phone: 518-292-5729
www.esd.ny.gov/nystar/RegionalTechCtrs.asp

North Carolina
North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership
1005 Capability Drive, Research II Bldg.
Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606
Phone: 919 -513-6119
www.ncmep.org

North Dakota
Impact Dakota
1929 N. Washington St. Suite M
Bismark, ND 58501
Phone: 866-297-8250
www.impactdakota.com

Ohio
Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership
77 S. High Street 28th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: 614-644-5059
development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_mep.htm

Oklahoma
Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance (OK Alliance)
525 South Main Street, Suite 210
Tulsa, OK 74103
Phone: 918-592-0722
www.okalliance.com

Oregon
Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP)
12909 S.W. 68th Parkway, Suite 140
Portland, OR 97223
Phone: 503-406-3770
www.omep.org

Pennsylvania
Catalyst Connection
2000 Technology Drive, St 200
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone: 888-887-7472
www.catalystconnection.org

Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center (DVIRC)
2905 Southampton Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19154
Phone: 215-464-8550
www.dvirc.org

Innovative Manufacturers Center (IMC)
Address: One College Avenue, DIF 32
Williamsport, PA 17701
Phone: 570-329-3200
www.imcpa.com

MANTEC
600 North Hartley Street
Suite 100
York, PA 17404
Phone: 717-843-5054
www.mantec.org

Pennsylvania (Continued)
Manufacturers Resource Center
961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 200
Allentown, PA 18109
Phone: 610-628-4640
www.mrcpa.org

Northeastern Pennsylvania
Industrial Resource Center
75 Young Street
Hanover Industrial Estates
Hanover Township, PA 18706
Phone: 570-819-8966
www.nepirc.com

Northwest Pennsylvania
Industrial Resource Center
5340 Fryling Road, Suite 202
Erie, PA 16510
Phone: 814-898-6889
www.nwirc.org

Puerto Rico
Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc.
(PRIMEX)
#268 Muñoz Rivera Ave.
World Plaza Building, Suite 1002
Hato Rey, PR 00918
Phone: 787-756-0505
www.primexpr.org

Rhode Island
University of Rhode Island Research Foundation
dba Polaris MEP
75 Lower College Road
Carlotti Administration Building, Rm. 212
Kingston, RI 02881
Phone: 401-524-4911
www.polarismep.org

South Carolina
South Carolina Manufacturing Extension
Partnership
250 Berryhill Road, Suite 512
Columbia, SC 29210
Phone: 803-252-6976
www.scmep.org

South Dakota
South Dakota Manufacturing
and Technology Solutions
2329 N. Career Avenue, Suite 106
Sioux Falls, SD 57107
Phone: 605-367-4208
www.sdmanufacturing.com

Tennessee
Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership
193 Polk Ave, Suite C
University of Tennessee Center
for Industrial Services
Nashville, TN 37210
Phone: 615-532-8657
www.cis.tennessee.edu

Texas
TMAC
9390 Research Blvd
Austin, TX 78759
Phone: 800-625-4876
www.tmac.org

Utah
Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership
1025 Riverbreeze Drive
Suite 300
Orem, UT 8407
Phone: 801-863-7903
www.mep.org

Vermont
Vermont State Colleges d/b/a Vermont
Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC)
P.O. Box 12
Randolph, VT 05060
Randolph Center, 05061
Phone: 802-728-1432
www.vmec.org

Virginia
GENEDGE ALLIANCE
32 Bridge St. Suite 200
Martinsville, VA 24112
Phone: 276-666-8890
www.genedge.org

Washington
Impact Washington
3303 Monte Villa Parkway, Suite 340
Bothell, WA 98021
Phone: 425-438-1146
www.impactwashington.org

West Virginia
West Virginia Manufacturing
Extension Partnership
886 Chestnut Ridge Road
2nd Floor
Morgantown, WV 26506
Phone: 304-290-8425
www.statler.wvu.edu/mindext

Wisconsin
Wisconsin Center for
Manufacturing & Productivity
2601 Crossroads Drive
Suite 145
Madison, WI 53718
Phone: 608-240-1740
www.wicmp.org

Wyoming
Manufacturing-Works
Department 3362
1000 East University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071
Phone: 307-766-4811
www.manufacturing-works.com



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