



# FireWorks Conference Presented by the MEP National Network

September 16-18, 2024

MAGNET: The Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network  
1800 E 63rd Street, Cleveland, Ohio

## Monday, September 16

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<b>Manufacturing USA Education and Workforce Development Network Meeting</b> <i>(Invitation only)</i>
12:00 p.m.	<b>Registration opens and lunch for all attendees</b>
12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<b>Registration open</b>
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Group activity: Oregon MEP Manufacturing Simulation Game – Ready or Not</b>
5:00 p.m.	<b>Meet and Greet and Tours of MAGNET</b> <i>(Optional)</i> Meet the MAGNET refreshment robot, take tours of the facility, and network with your colleagues from around the country!

## Tuesday, September 17

8:00 a.m.	<b>Registration opens</b>
8:15 a.m.	<b>Tours of MAGNET’s Manufacturing Innovation, Technology, and Jobs Center</b> <i>(Optional)</i> <b>Guide:</b> Jennie Becker, Manufacturing Experience Designer, MAGNET If you could build a manufacturing workforce and technology hub from the ground up, what would you include? Find out how MAGNET answered this question with interactive Industry 4.0 training technologies, worker training stations, youth engagement activities, and more. Experience some of the technologies used in MAGNET’s training programs firsthand.
9:00 a.m.	<b>Opening Session – Welcome and Hot Topics in Workforce Development</b>  <b>Welcome from MEP</b>  <b>Hot Topics in Workforce Development</b> During this interactive session, facilitated table discussions will allow attendees to meet colleagues, identify opportunities, build new relationships, and share information about education and workforce development. Attendees from MEP centers and the Manufacturing USA network will discuss the current status of our efforts, debate issues, identify pathways forward, and provide input to NIST.

	<b>Moderators:</b> Matt Fieldman, Senior Advisor for Workforce, NIST-MEP Brad Conrad, Education Workforce Development Manager, NIST-OAM
10:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome Remarks by Cleveland City Councilwoman Jenny Spencer</b>
10:15 a.m.	<b>Keynote Panel: Workforce – Where We Are and Where We’re Going</b> A panel discussion with workforce development leaders focused on the current state of education and workforce development. The panelists will include Ethan Karp, Annette Parker, Miguel Lugo with Mojdeh Bahar as panel moderator.
11:15 a.m.	<b>Speed Networking: MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Network</b>
12:00 p.m.	<b>Networking Lunch: Manufacturing USA and MEP Centers</b>
1:00 p.m.	<b>Parallel Sessions: That Could Work Here!</b> MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes will share successful best practices that can be replicated in communities around the country. Come with an open mind, and you’ll leave with the realization, “that could work here!”
1:45 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
2:00 p.m.	<b>Deep Dive Sessions: 25-minute Panel Discussions</b> Each session will be held twice, so you can pick two!
3:00 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
3:15 p.m.	<b>Learning Groups</b> This is your chance to learn from your peers over coffee and snacks.
4:00 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
4:10 p.m.	<b>Parallel Sessions: That Could Work Here!</b> Each session will be held twice, so you can pick two!
5:00 p.m.	<b>Sessions end</b>

## Wednesday, September 18

8:15 a.m.	<b>Meet with Blue Forge Community Leaders</b> <i>(Optional)</i>
9:00 a.m.	<b>Peer Learning Tables</b> Let’s kick off these topic-specific learning discussions together. We have a range of topics to choose from - you’ll have a chance to both share your knowledge and expertise, and also learn from others! You’ll start at a table for 30 minutes, then switch.

	<p>Last Name A-K: Start where you want to learn, then switch to where you want to share. Last Name L-Z: Start where you want to share, then switch to where you want to learn.</p> <p>Discussion topics are: Apprenticeships, Developing better local partnerships, Employer of choice consulting, Peer roundtables, Pipeline programs for adults; Pipeline programs for youth, Sector Partnership, Training focused on Industry 4.0; Training focused on lean and quality; Training for Frontline Workers, HR, and Supervisors; Training programs for re-entry/second chance</p>
10:00 a.m.	<b>Parallel sessions: That Could Work Here!</b>
11:00 a.m.	<p><b>Create the Playbook Activity</b> One thing the Network could really use are step-by-step guides to how to successfully implement outstanding programs. You'll get into groups with your colleagues to brainstorm and develop those guides, which we can then share nationally.</p>
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	<p><b>Final Casual Lunch</b> Feel free to grab food and bring it to the airport with you!</p>

**Sessions will include:**

- “Maximizing Institute Partnerships: How One MEP Center is Doing It” with Evelyn Brown, NCMEP
- “Engaging New Audiences in Manufacturing through Flex Factor” with Lauren Friedman and Courtney Tenhover, Next Flex
- “What is What’s So Cool About Manufacturing - and How to Bring it To Your Community” with Karen Buck, MRC
- “Speed Up the Adoption of Smart Manufacturing” with CESMII
- “Build Better Industry-Academic Partnerships” with John Balchunas, NIIMBL
- “Best Practices in Second Chance Training” with Aarin Clemons, Polaris (Rhode Island) MEP; Tim Waldo, Tennessee MEP; Monica Cortez, Texas MEP; and Gretchen Schultz of Tooling U-SME
- “Filling Critical Open Positions through Second Chance Hiring” with Tom McGraw, MAGNET, and Sean Cwynar, Diamond Metals
- “The ROI of Apprenticeship” with Mara Peduto, Catalyst Connection (PA MEP); Marcelo Dossantos, Florida Makes; and Brent Weil, JFF
- “Growing the Talent Pipeline for the Defense Industrial Base” with Chris Scafario, DVIRC (PA MEP), and Katherine Dames, Blue Forge
- 160: “From Interest to Job: How MassMEP is Ensuring a Quality Experience for Partners and Participants” with Matthew Berard, PhD, MassMEP
- “Using Vessel to Nail Your Client Assessments!” with Marcelo Dossantos, Florida Makes
- “Improving Your Workforce Ecosystem” with Bryan Wortmann, MAGNET
- “What is ITA? And how can it help MEP Clients?” with \_\_\_\_\_
- “Partnering with TPP to Engage More Defense Industrial Workers” with Amy Erickson, Long Island MEP (Part of NY MEP)

- “Recruiting Veterans Into the Talent Pipeline” with Marcelo Dossantos, Florida Makes and Laura Schmiegel, Orion Talent
- “Building Strong Re-Entry Partnerships” with Aarin Clemons, Polaris (Rhode Island) MEP; Chris Scafario, DVIRC (PA MEP), and Reagan Brewer, JARC
- “Creating a Whole Ecosystem Devoted to Manufacturing Recruitment” with Stewart Harrison, Oklahoma MEP
- “What Makes a Successful Emerging Leaders Program” with Steve Black, Utah MEP
- “Connecting College Students to Real-world Projects” with Catherine Cantley, Idaho MEP
- Training for Frontline Workers - Led by Danica Rome, Kansas Manufacturing Solutions
- Training Programs for Re-Entry - Led by Tom McGraw, MAGNET
- Developing Better Local Partnerships - Led by Lissy Rand, MAGNET
- Employer of Choice Consulting - Led by Dave Rea, Catalyst Connection

*Agenda Subject to Change  
All Times Eastern Time*

Rev. 9/02/2024