

**NEW Manufacturing Alliance
General Membership Meeting**

June 9, 2011

Neenah High School
1275 Tullar Road, Neenah
12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present: Bill Bartnik, Chris Linn, Dan Verbeten, Dave LeBrun, Deb Smith, Derek Lineberry, Gene Schultz, Gordy Dybdahl, Jeff Sachse, Jerry Eyer, Jerry Murphy, Jim Golembeski, Jim Schlies, Joe Guell, John Davis, John Rogers, John West, Julie Wendt, Margaret LeBrun, Mark Kaiser, Mark Rahmlow, Mark Weber, Mike Thomas, Mike Troyer, Scott Selby, Shannon Niccum, Tara LeClair, Tom Verboncouer, Elise Moreau, Suzanne Pagel, Mike Tofflke, Jim Koronkiewicz, Tony White, Mike Elkin, Colleen Doyle, Mary Pfeiffer, Ann Franz, and Bobbi Miller

1. Welcome – John Davis welcomed attendees to the Alliance meeting and led conversation in follow up to discussion questions posed during lunch. During the discussion report out, every table expressed concerns over having a future workforce interested in manufacturing careers or the current ability to fill skilled positions.

2. Updates on Task Forces

Development Task Force – John Davis said that the following companies have recently joined the Alliance: KUS Industries, Miller Electric, Rockline Industries, Plexus, Leicht Transfer & Storage, MECA & Technology Machine, and Centerline Machine. In addition, representatives from Sargento Cheese were attending the meeting and considering membership.

In addition to increasing membership, Davis said that the Development Task Force is also charged with developing workers and training issues. To reach our goals, Davis said that a skills survey will be emailed to members in the near future. He asked all attendees to complete the survey so that we will have meaningful data to help in grant writing efforts and plan future training initiatives.

Communications Task Force: Chris Linn reminded attendees that the Communications Task Force helps enhance the image of manufacturing. This year, the Alliance will be creating the 4th All Star publication to feature young talent at member companies in addition to featuring a mentor. Linn asked everyone to consider nominating outstanding employees for this award later this summer.

Linn also said that the second study in conjunction with UWO regarding skill gaps and the results of the survey will go to members soon.

Manufacturing the Future documentary will be aired at 9:30 pm June 21 on PBS (to check your local listings, go to <http://www.wpt.org/>). NEW Manufacturing Alliance helped fund this documentary and some Alliance companies are featured in the documentary.

K-12 Task Force: Shannon Niccum who chairs the K-12 Task Force said that this task force has started working on curriculum 'chunks' from the *Manufacturing the Future* documentary for educators. One of the goals of the Alliance is to become the 'go to' organization for schools

regarding manufacturing careers. This year, the Alliance will be targeting five school districts to work with in 2011-12 so we can refine our outreach and create programming.

3. Manufacturing & Engineering Academy at Neenah High School, overview on Project Lead the Way

Mike Elkin from NHS said the school is excited about the opportunity to host the Alliance meeting and address the group. He said that basically, we are all attacking the same issue but from a different perspective. As John Davis introduced Elkin, Davis asked members to think about how they can connect with their local school.

Elkin said that he has been with NHS for 16 years and at the time he joined the school, all 'shop' classes were segregated in one wing of the school behind a door. Now, he says there's a totally different 'feel' for the technical education classes. The Academy concept did not start overnight, but much of the initial push to start the program came from Plexus wanting to ensure that they would continue to have a future workforce. In planning for the Academy concept, the school had input from employers in addition to math, science and English teachers and guidance counselors. Elkin said that ideally, the process would have taken less time because some of the delays they encountered caused them to have a bit of a disconnect with some employers who are used to having things happen quickly.

The outcome of this approach has helped create a STEM focused education to help students choose manufacturing careers. The goal at the end of the program is that students should know why they are doing something and how it impacts their future career.

As NHS looked at other models (TESLA in Appleton and Brillion High), the school ultimately decided it would be beneficial to become a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) school. This allows classes to be taught in an integrated way with traditional math, science and English classes and gives students the ability to earn college credit (this is not always achieved in the first year, but NHS was able to accomplish this). Despite the benefits, becoming a PLTW school has increased the costs of starting the Academy; while some of the initial costs were covered by a three year grant, that grant is coming to an end. Additional funding currently comes from the school and also some from Perkins funding.

To further expand the program, Neenah Schools will be working with programs at Shattuck Middle School to get students excited about tech ed classes at an earlier age. Elkin said that at this grade level, girls are more willing to take a tech ed class rather than waiting until high school. Elkin also said that the advisory board needs to be reformed and take a leadership role in moving the program forward.

Elkin can be contacted at 920-751-6900 x250 or melkin@neenah.k12.wi.us.

4. CNC Mobile Training Lab

Mark Weber from NWTC explained that a Mobile Technology Lab is currently being created and will feature CAD/CNC equipment that can be taken directly to area high schools. He said that manual machines at most area high schools depict a 'low tech' image and in order to get excited about pursuing a future career path, students need to see how exciting the technology really is.

Weber said the goal of the program is to keep it cost effective to have this equipment at a school for a brief period of time. The trailer they have ordered will accommodate up to 12 students at a time and the self-contained lab can be set up in 15 minutes.

Ultimately, Weber expects the cost of the lab to be approximately \$335,000 and schools will be able to have the lab available for four hours per week (serving between 120-240 students per semester). Bay Area Workforce Development Board has committed \$250,000 towards the project and ten area schools will contract to host the lab; each area school will pay about \$5,000 per semester. Weber encouraged manufacturers to consider sponsoring the CNC Mobile Training Lab to offset the cost for the schools.

5. Youth Apprenticeship presentation – topic tabled for future meeting (feel free to link to John Rank’s video in the 2011 All Star publication:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vM9y6k35d98>

Optional tour of the school after the meeting: members were invited to view NHS tech ed classrooms

Upcoming task force meetings:

Communications

July 21 at 3 p.m.

NWTC

Development

July 14 at 8:30 a.m.

Aarrowcast

K-12 Outreach/Training

July 15 at 8:30 a.m.

NWTC

Quarterly General Membership

October 6 at 12 p.m.

NWTC

If you would like more information about joining a task force, contact either Ann Franz at 920 498-5587 or Bobbi Miller at 920 720-5600.