Manufacturing Leaders Seek Solutions for Shortage of Skilled Workers at First imX Summit

Society of Manufacturing Engineers

"Mission Critical: Workforce 2021" makes imX event a destination for one of manufacturing's most daunting challenges

LAS VEGAS — August 1, 2011 — An unprecedented manufacturing event this September will examine and offer solutions to the critical shortage of skilled workers threatening the future of manufacturing in America. Experts cite rapidly changing industrial technology and the pending retirement of millions of baby boomers as driving forces behind the depleted workforce. Recognizing the gravity of the situation and potential impact on the nation's future, industry leaders will bring potential solutions to the forefront at the inaugural imX event [1] – the Interactive Manufacturing Experience – Sept. 12 to 14, 2011 in Las Vegas.

Announced today by the imX executive committee, the newest addition to the event's agenda is "Mission Critical: Workforce 2021." Located on the imX event floor, "Workforce 2021" will provide manufacturers with information on practical solutions to their individual workforce development challenges. It will be one of a number of imX elements driving conversation about the need for skilled workers in American manufacturing, among other industry topics.

"The ability to make things in America is at risk," said Jeannine Kunz, director of professional development for the Dearborn, Mich.-based Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) [2], an imX partner. ""If companies don't address this shortage of qualified labor now, hundreds of thousands of jobs will go unfilled by 2021, jeopardizing our workers, our companies and our nation's future. With so many manufacturing and other leaders participating, imX is the perfect venue to push for action and offer solutions to address the workforce skills development issue."

Other imX event components will grant attendees access to the latest manufacturing technologies and facilitate the conversations and collaborative learning event organizers believe the industry requires to compete in a global economy.

At imX, manufacturing leaders from across the country will work together and learn from each other like never before as they address challenges threatening the future of manufacturing. Manufacturing executives can apply to be an eXecutive Guest at the invitation-only event at http://imxevent.com [3].

The imX manufacturing summit is a collaboration among eight leading machine tool manufacturers and two national industry associations. The event's founders are executives from eXperience partners DMG/Mori Seiki U.S.A., FANUC, Kennametal,

MAG IAS LLC, Makino, Methods Machine Tools, Okuma America and Sandvik Coromant. imX is jointly presented by leading industry associations the American Machine Tool Distributors' Association (AMTDA) [4] and SME. Together, these partners and top executives from up to 9,000 companies, organizations and government bodies will chart a new course for the domestic manufacturing industry.

The "Workforce 2021" experience area will be presented by SME Professional Development and by Tooling U, an SME company and the world's leading provider of online training solutions for manufacturing companies and educational institutions. Also offering insight and guidance will be the SME Education Foundation, nationally recognized for its commitment to inspiring, supporting and preparing the next generation of manufacturing engineers and technologists for the advancement of manufacturing education.

"The manufacturing industry is at a crossroads and manufacturers must work together to determine the best course of action," said Carlos Cardoso, chairman, president and CEO of Kennametal Inc. "Addressing the critical shortage of skilled workers is an important issue for the future of the manufacturing industry and for the economic future of the United States. The manufacturing workforce shortage will be among the most prominent topics discussed at imX."

In the interactive "Workforce 2021" area, manufacturing leaders participating in imX will receive a free assessment of their organization's ability to meet the industry's workforce challenges. The first component of the assessment will require companies to answer questions about how they are preparing to meet the needs of the 2021 workforce. Questions include "Have you identified what skills your employees will need?" and "Have you assessed your current employees' current skills against those they will require in the future?" Tooling U and SME Professional Development experts will be available to explain solutions for readiness deficiencies identified in the assessments. imX participants also will experience some of the evaluation techniques used to determine a current workforce's ability to meet the skill requirements of the coming decade.

Participants also will experiment with advanced online training tools and gain access to experts who can assist in the exploration of existing and upcoming training and recruitment strategies.

In addition to helping manufacturers navigate the most imminent workforce development challenges and opportunities, "Workforce 2021" will engage industry leaders in conversations about a more holistic approach to this industry-wide threat. Included will be opportunities for manufacturers to support programs that begin with K-12 education and continue with two- and four-year educational institutions. Through mentorship programs, partnering manufacturing companies will provide students with career guidance and internship opportunities.

"Discrete parts manufacturers, as well as original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) across all industries in the U.S. are increasing capacity, but are still finding it difficult to add qualified workers at their plants because of a lack of skilled

candidates," said Greg Jones, director of education and training for AMTDA. "As industry, education and government officials work to solve this issue, manufacturers can look to the imX event for solutions to help them increase productivity."

"Workforce 2021" organizers expect participation from executives at manufacturing companies with successful training programs, representatives from a coalition of community colleges and Tooling U clients.

The Event

At imX, the manufacturing industry will, for the first time, come together not as competitors but as collaborators [5] with a common goal and focus of long-term industry viability. Participants will meet to discuss and foster an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing their customers, their competition and the latest manufacturing technologies. The event is expected to draw 9,000 manufacturing leaders, top suppliers and high-level, qualified U.S. buyers to the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas.

Dozens of eXhibit Partners already have committed to joining the conversation and to demonstrating their own manufacturing innovations at imX, among them: **Alicona, Allied Machine & Eng Corp, Anca Inc, Automated Precision, Balluf Inc, Big Kaiser, BigC, Blaser Swisslube, Blum LMT, Briney Tooling Systems, Busche Workholding, CAMplete, CAMWorks/Geometric Tech, Carl Zeiss IMT, Carmex Precision Tools, Caron Engineering, Castrol Industrial, CGS North America, CGTech, Chiron America Inc, Cimcool Industrial Products, dataZen Engineering, Delcam, DMT Workholding, Epicor Software, ERI America, ERIEZ Hydroflow, Esprit/DP Technology, Exsys Tool, Factory Automation Systems, Fastems, Fidia, Gardner Publications, Grainger, GTR mbH, Haimer USA, Hainbuch America Corp, Hangsterfers Lab, Heimatec GmbH, Hermle Machine Co., Hexagon Metrology, HORN USA, Huot Mfg, Hurco Companies, Index Corp, Innovative Workholding Alliance, Ion Quality Systems, Iscar Metals Inc, J&M Machine, Jauch Schmider GmbH, Kitigawa-Northtech Inc, Koma Precision, Kuka Robotics, Losma, Marubeni Citizen-Cincom, MasterCAM, MD Tooling, Midaco Corp, Mitsui Seiki, MP Systems, Okamoto Corp, Parlec Inc, Pat Mooney Inc, PEM Technologies, Precision Dormer, Rego-Fix, REM Sales, Renishaw, RobbJack Corp/Crystallume, Royal Products, Schunk, Scientific Cutting Tools, Seco Tools, Selway Machine Tool Inc, Servotech Inc, Sescoi USA, SIC Marking USA, Siemens PLM Software, SMW Autoblok Corp, SNK America, SpaceClaim Corp, Spring Technologies, Star CNC Machine Tool, StarragHeckert, Stratasys, Sumitomo Electric Carbide, Surfware, System 3R, TDM Systems, TE-CO, TRUMPF Inc, Unisig, United Grinding Tech, Von Ruden Mfg, Wohlhaupter Corp, WTO Inc, Yamazen Inc, YCM Americas, Zimmermann Inc, Zoller.**

Registration and other information about imX can be found at http://imxevent.com [3]. For the latest event details, follow imX on Twitter at http://twitter.com/imxevent

[6] or find the event on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/imXevent [7].

To receive the latest up-to-the-minute SME news, subscribe to RSS [8].

The Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) [2] is the premier source for manufacturing knowledge, education and networking. Through its many programs, events, magazine, publications and online training division, Tooling U [9], SME connects manufacturing practitioners to each other, to the latest technologies and to the most up-to-date manufacturing processes. SME has members around the world and is supported by a network of chapters and technical communities. A 501(c)3 organization, SME is a leader in manufacturing workforce development issues, working with industry, academic and government partners to support the current and future skilled workforce.

Founded in 1925, the American Machine Tool Distributors' Association [4] is a trade association dedicated to advancing the marketing of machine tools in the United States through distribution. The 250 machine tool distributor members represent the latest in manufacturing technology and machine tools in the international marketplace. These companies encompass over 80 percent of all distribution sales in the United States and serve as a vital link between builders and end-users of machine tools and related products.

SOURCE [10]

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http://www.mdtmag.com/news/2011/08/manufacturing-leaders-seek-solutions-shortage-skilled-workers-first-imx-summit

Links:
[1] http://www.imxevent.com/
[2] http://www.sme.org/index.html
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