

Armstrong County Manufacturing Consortium

Minutes

7/06/06

The July 6th meeting of the Armstrong County Manufacturing Consortium was brought to order by President Vickie DeThomas at 7:30 am. The meeting was hosted by Nature's Blend Wood Products in Ford City, PA.

Present:

Members

Douglas Bartosh - Unimach Manufacturing
Andy Chomas – Caracal, Inc.
Vickie DeThomas - OmniTech Partners
Jeff Fullerton – DRS Infrared Solutions
Joe Goldcamp – Nature's Blend
Bernie Marrese – Fuzion Tech. – Armstrong Precision Mfg.
Joanne Petras – Fuzion Tech. – Kittanning Brick Div.
Denise Rosenberger – Dielectric Solutions
Chuck Slagle - CES Design
Alex Stockmal – Mid Atlantic District Labs

Resource Partners

Carl Bemben, Tri-County WIB
David English – Armstrong Educational Trust
Jane Gardner – Indiana University of PA
Marie-Dillon Griffith – PA CareerLink
Pat Hollinger – Penn State, New Kensington
Rich Muth – Indiana University of PA - Northpointe
Brian Ploski – CareerTrack
Mea Scholl – Integrated Quality Systems, Inc.

Guest Speaker – Andrew Ebel and Phil Burger, Prepaid Legal Services

Minutes

Prior meeting minutes were approved.

Resource Partner Update

All resource partners were given the opportunity to inform the group of current happening at their sites.

David English, AET – The AET fall booklet is in production. It is distributed to 39,000 postal residents. The Armstrong Manufacturing Consortium is listed in the booklet. He also mentioned that we should begin preparation for Armtech. We will need to have all the materials ready and volunteers for the booth. We can use the AET Booth from last year, if we would like.

Carl Bemben – WIB - He has ordered a Tri-County Manufacturing Consortium booth that could be used at Armtech, along with other marketing materials. Carl also wanted to make sure that all members were tracking their in-kind contributions. The information should be submitted to Carl by the 10th of the month.

Marie Dillon-Griffith – CareerLink - The building project is moving ahead; they are waiting for the lease to be signed. Vickie DeThomas had an email of wage information for Armstrong County that she will distribute.

Pat Hollinger – Penn State - The Certificate in Management Program is progressing well. She also questioned if companies outside the tri-county area could join the APMC. It was decided after a brief discussion that other counties are welcome to join.

Jane Gardner – IUP - There is a CJT meeting this month; it will then be determined if the grant will be awarded. This is the last week for WEDNet . WEDNet and CJT can be in the same year. She also stated it could be applied for two years in a row and three of the last five years.

Rich Muth – IUP - The Electro-Optics Summer Camp is at the end of the month. It is open to all high school juniors and seniors in the Science Program at no cost.

Brian Ploski – CareerTrack – He is the Youth Case Manager for CareerTrack. He has a program where he would like to have some of the members speak to a group of youths for one half hour. He wants to promote awareness of what a position with a manufacturing company would include; as well as, the education that would be required. The volunteers are Andy Chomas, Jeff Fullerton, Alex Stockmal, Joe Goldcamp and Denise Rosenberger. The program will be the week of July 17th.

Updates

Carl Bemben – The Capacity Building Grant and the Tri-County Grant funds have been utilized. We have purchased folders, displays, portfolios, and pens. We are putting together a great presentation for use when approaching potential members. Vickie stated that Indiana and Butler have their websites in service and the funds have been spent.

Vickie DeThomas – The Tri-County Incumbent Grant Classes are underway; the Lean Manufacturing is getting mixed reviews while the Management has been receiving positive feedback. The Human Resource Class Instruction has been changed from Butler Community College to Indiana University of PA. The curriculum from Butler did not meet the demands of the group; an extension was requested due to the change in educational providers. If an extension is not received the Human Resource Class may have to be postponed and we may have to apply for another grant.

Vickie advised the group that the Penn State Electro-Optics Center brought in a PA Manufacturing Ombudsman, Mr. Tom Palisin. He will be a strong advocate for manufacturing within the state. He distributed Business Assistance Booklets. They will be available next month's meeting.

Vickie stated that Commissioner Kirkpatrick put together a group to study the feasibility of a Workforce Summit. They are looking at the best direction to go. She will provide updates in the near future.

She also spoke to Highmark on different insurance programs to save money. She asked the group if they wanted her to ask the representative to establish a meeting so they can review their services and programs. Andy Chomos questioned if they would quote the Consortium; if so they it could be worthwhile. Vickie will keep the conversation open with the Himark representatives until it is determined what the group would like to do.

Bernie Marrese - He has been contacted by a company called Convergence. They offer small training programs on DVD; they have training on Lock-out Tag-out, Safety, etc. Vickie asked if they could customize the training. Pat Hollinger stated she also has a local company that can provide the same product/service. Chuck Slagle stated that it would be nice if the Consortium could purchase the product and have a library for the members to use. Joe Goldcamp preferred using a local company if it was possible. Pat Hollinger was going to check with the company in Tarentum to determine if they could assist the group. Marie Dillon-Griffith stated that we could possibly work that into our grant. Bernie stated that if the representative is in the area, he will ask him to speak to the group.

Bernie also mentioned that Fuzion Technologies was interested in a safety program for their new Safety Director. The program has to provide a certification. He asked the resource partners if they could develop something for the group if there were other members that were interested. Those interested included Dielectric and Omnitech Partners. Jane Garder stated that IUP has a program in August ran by Dr. Ferguson if anyone would like to attend; she will also report back as to whether IUP can develop a special certification program for the group.

Guest Speaker – Prepaid Legal Services representative's Andrew Ebel and Phil Burger spoke to the group on the services that the company can provide. The benefit of legal insurance is at no cost to the company; legal insurance is the fastest growing benefit in the country. Prepaid Legal Services has a team of attorneys provided to those enrolled. The response time is approximately 4 hours.

The employees have fees deducted from their pay. The plan cannot be used against the employer. If anyone has interest in this benefit for their company, please contact either of the representatives.

New Business

Bernie Marrese and Vickie DeThomas will meet with the Manufacturing, Healthcare, IT Consortia's and the CareerLink to discuss legal matters of the group. They need to determine the best way to provide protection to the group should a legal problem arise.

Bernie also stated that we need to start strategic planning. We need to develop of one year plan with the details of what we expect from the Consortium. I

Denise Rosenberger stated that Dielectric is sending their Customer Service personnel to sales training, the cost is \$9000 for one year of training. If anyone is interested, please contact Denise.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 am. A tour of Nature's Blend followed the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on August 3, 2006 at 7:30 am at the Armstrong Education Trust Office.