

PMA Educational Foundation Focuses on Workforce Development

The past year saw the need for workforce development increase among PMA members, and the PMA Educational Foundation (PMAEF) continued to provide training and education products and services to meet those needs. When PMA leaders were asked to identify the major factors by level of importance to their company as part of an environmental scan, three of the top five were related to workforce development. Critical findings included: younger workers will be less attracted to manufacturing for a career, training less skilled workers to become more productive employees will grow in importance, and maintaining a highly skilled workforce will become more difficult due to the aging of some of the industry's most experienced skilled workers.

Continuing to Build Partnerships

To address these issues, PMAEF developed new industry-specific training products and services and continued to promote career awareness to youth. PMAEF's relationship with the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) has grown even stronger in the past 12 months. NAM asked PMAEF to partner on a project it is managing for "Building the Employer Infrastructure." As a result, PMA's Twin Cities District is one of two locally based, nationally supported project sites selected for a grant to implement this project, with the goal of



providing a model that can be followed in other districts for promoting career ladders and workforce development.

Partnering also continued with the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) and its work to develop and implement industry skill standards. Progress continued on the effort to develop a competency-based apprenticeship system for the metalworking industry through a \$1.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The new system is intended to fundamentally change and dramatically improve the way

skilled workers are trained in American manufacturing through the integration of standards-based NIMS credentialing assessments with traditional on-the-job learning. Among the eight apprenticeships being developed, three directly impact the metalforming industry: tool and die maker, stamping press operator and setup technician, and machine service, repair and maintenance. Curriculum guides for these apprenticeships have been developed with the help of industry input and PMAEF staff direction. Most importantly, 11 PMA member companies are piloting these apprenticeships.

The Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) has also experienced success this year, and the foundation played a role in it. Through the MSSC, McGraw Hill – Glencoe Publishing Company released *High-Performance Manufacturing: Portable Production Skills*, a textbook for use in manufacturing technology programs at high schools and technical colleges. It teaches fundamental manufacturing skills for entering and advancing through a career. PMAEF staff authored the book's section on metalforming.

Products and Services for the Metalforming Industry

In addition to working with other like-minded organizations, the foundation continues to develop products and services to provide metalforming companies with training and education tools. PMA's successful seminars are now organized and offered through the educational foundation (see page 6 for more information). Products such as *Metalforming Level I* and *Stamping Levels II and III* curricula, the *Tool and Die Training and Assessment System*, the *Metalworking Skills Assessment*, and the recently-released *Apprenticeship Guides*, in addition to the popular PMA video-based training systems for training of machine operators and set-up technicians, all offer proven training and education resources. In addition, PMAEF's *WorkingSolutions* provides custom consulting services to manufacturers in the areas of structured competency-based training, new-hire selection strategies, job-task and skills analysis, industrial skill



standards and certification programs, apprenticeship design and implementation, test and assessment development, workforce development and reorganization, and pay-for-skills/multi-skill compensation systems.

There is even more planned for 2006, highlighted by a "Best Practices" forum to bring together industry and education resources from PMA's districts later this year. *Supervisor Guides for Implementing Competency-Based Training* will be available for both tool and die and stamping press operation and setup to help companies design their in-plant training and assist with the implementation of the NIMS-based apprenticeships.

Fundraising

Thanks to the generous support of many in the industry, PMAEF continues to fund grants through endowment proceeds and



revenue from fundraising events. The silent auction at METALFORM'05 generated more than \$13,000 in revenue. In 2005, grants for nearly \$15,000 were awarded to support school-based training programs and career awareness. Since 1999, PMAEF has distributed more than \$600,000 in grants to support the industry's workforce development needs. To assist in continuing this mission, the very popular "Night at the Races" fundraiser will be back at METALFORM Nashville in 2006. This event in Louisville in 2004 was both fun and successful. A new membership structure has also been approved to make it easier for companies and individuals to become foundation partners.

For more information about the foundation's activities, contact Dave Sansone, Bruce Broman or Anne Cunningham at 216/901-8800.