

for **THE RECORD**

YOUR Trade Magazine... published by the National Tooling and Machining Association

BUILDING AMERICA'S WORKFORCE

THE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS DRIVING MANUFACTURING TRAINING

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ENGAGE 2026
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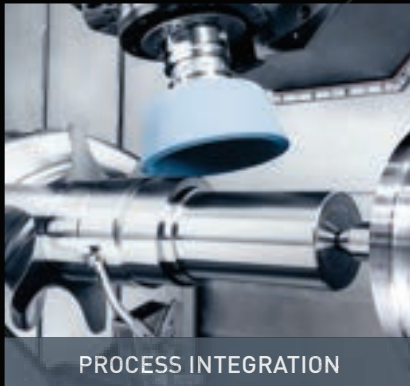
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FROM ROGER

a message from the president



It's hard to believe we are already midway through the year. It feels like yesterday we were looking ahead to a new year and planning how we would navigate it. The real question now is: What have you accomplished? What still needs to be done? And where are you focusing your efforts for the second half of the year?

Too often we chase the new and shiny opportunities in front of us, when in reality our greatest gains often come from focusing on the work we already know needs to be done, implemented or accomplished.

That brings me to this month's focus: Workforce Development and Training.

Over the past six years of my tenure, workforce has consistently remained the number one challenge facing NTMA members. In reality, this challenge is not new, it was one of the driving reasons NTMA was founded back in 1943. Whether you are a new shop or an established shop, a small company or large operation, workforce remains one of the most significant forces shaping the success of our companies and our industry.

The challenge is reinforced daily through industry publications, social media and news stories that highlight, discuss and debate the shortage of skilled workers. The issue is well known

throughout manufacturing, and as with many highly visible challenges, everyone seems eager to become part of the solution.

Unfortunately, many organizations and individuals have entered the workforce and training space with limited understanding of the realities of manufacturing. Institutions, consultants, newly-formed organizations and others often promote solutions without fully understanding the industry's needs. At the same time, valuable grants and investments intended to address manufacturing workforce challenges are frequently directed toward efforts disconnected from the people who live these challenges every day.

The result has become an increasingly crowded and confusing landscape. Even experienced manufacturing professionals can struggle to determine where to invest their time and resources — let alone young people, parents and students trying to understand potential career paths in our industry. Too often, the burden ultimately shifts back to individual manufacturers who are left to solve workforce challenges on their own and at their own expense.

There is a similar lesson in the recent rise of Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC). As the topic gained attention, many self-proclaimed

experts quickly emerged promising straightforward solutions. Those less familiar with the process could easily believe implementation would be simple. However, manufacturers operating within that space understand the reality is far more complex. The same pattern can be seen with workforce development and training.

The expertise within any trade industry resides within that industry itself. Trade associations exist because they understand the specific needs, challenges and realities of their members. Yet too often funding and support structures bypass those industry experts and flow elsewhere. While organizations such as Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEP) can provide value and resources for many businesses, their broader mission naturally differs from the focused expertise that trade associations bring to the industries they serve.

This is not intended to diminish the work of MEPs. If your local MEP provides value, continue utilizing those resources. Many members have benefited greatly from those partnerships. However, not all experiences are the same, and the broader point remains: industry expertise matters.

My call to action is simple: lean into

your manufacturing community and leverage NTMA resources. You do not have to face workforce and training challenges alone.

Many members are still unaware of our newly upgraded NTMA-U, including our Department of Labor-approved apprenticeship program designed to develop individuals with no experience into trained machinists through a blend of classroom and on-the-job learning. Delivered through self-paced, bite-sized instruction designed for today's work environment, it provides exceptional value and practical application at an affordable cost. It was built by our industry, for our industry.

Training does not stop there. NTMA also offers Emerging Leaders programs designed to help develop the next generation of leaders within your organizations. Many of us simply do not have the time or internal resources to provide every element of leadership development ourselves.

For company owners and executives, our industry-specific executive cohorts continue to create opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, collaboration, facility tours and shared

experiences — all centered around one goal: helping each other succeed.

My closing message is this: INVEST in workforce and training — for your people, your company and our industry.

Do not feel compelled to go it alone. NTMA exists to support manufacturers today, tomorrow and into the future. Bringing together and consolidating our efforts as an industry community — whether through purchasing power, advocacy, networking, workforce initiatives or training — makes all of us stronger. Together, we can address the challenges in front of us and build the workforce our industry needs.

INVEST NOW — before the opportunity passes us by.



Roger Atkins, President, NTMA

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Applied Industrial Machining,



headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is a precision CNC machining company founded in 1978. The company manufactures complex machined components for demanding applications across the oil and gas, aerospace, defense and industrial sectors. Applied also operates a precision honing and grinding facility in Tulsa.

With more than 150 machine tools, Applied's capabilities include extensive CNC turning with live tooling, vertical milling and high-speed 4-axis milling, along with in-house finishing processes. The company employs a team of over 160 people and operates in more than 125,000 square feet of manufacturing space. Applied delivers high-quality, repeatable results across a high mix of short-run and production volumes. The company maintains a robust quality program and is certified to ISO, AS9100 and API standards. Known for its responsiveness and problem-solving approach, Applied partners closely with customers to meet the demanding requirements of critical applications.

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Kansas City Chapter

Lenexa Manufacturing Company is a Kansas City-area



precision manufacturer specializing in parts, service and equipment for industrial slicing and packaging machinery used by large-scale bakeries and food processing companies worldwide. With two CNC mills and one CNC lathe, LMC delivers the high-tolerance components and responsive support that keep production lines running at full speed.

LMC is owned and operated by a family with more than a century of baking heritage. President Stephen Bastasch represents the third generation of his family working in and servicing the bakery industry, bringing a deep knowledge of customer needs alongside a lasting commitment to honesty and integrity. That heritage, combined with the team's decades of hands-on industry experience, gives LMC expertise that goes well beyond its founding date.

From prototype parts to repeat production runs, LMC partners closely with customers to ensure every component meets exact specifications. Whether building new equipment or servicing existing lines, the team's mission is simple: make it right.

For quotes and inquiries, reach us at sales@lenexamc.com or visit www.lenexamc.com.

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GE Aerospace

GE Aerospace's Loves Park, Illinois facility has a proud manufacturing legacy dating back to 1894, when the business was founded as the Barber-Coleman Company. With more than a century of industrial expertise, the site became part of GE in 2007 and in 2024, joined the standalone GE Aerospace company. Today, Loves Park specializes in producing air and electromechanical controls for jet engine applications, supporting both commercial aviation and the U.S. Department of Defense with the precision and quality these mission-critical markets require.

At GE Aerospace Loves Park, heritage meets advanced manufacturing capability. The site operates a machine shop with approximately 45 CNC machines, including mills, lathes, EDM and supports a full assembly and repair department. From new production to repair services, the Loves Park team combines skilled craftsmanship, technical expertise and responsive execution to deliver the reliability, precision and performance our customers depend on every day.

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Houston Chapter



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EXPERT INSIGHT

Would you like to see your company on the pages of The Record?

We want to hear your story.

Our editorial staff is currently scheduling member companies for our regular features:

**WHO WE ARE &
WE MADE THAT.**

If you think your business would be a good fit, please email:

editor@ntma.org

ADVOCACY: CIT ISSUES NARROW INJUNCTION IN SECTION 122 TARIFF CASE



The U.S. Court of International Trade (CIT) on May 7, 2026, ruled that the Trump administration's temporary Section 122 tariffs were unlawful; however, the decision does not immediately halt the tariffs nationwide. The court limited its injunction to the plaintiffs in the case, two private businesses and the state of Washington. The narrow ruling kept in place the 10% tariffs for all other importers while the litigation proceeds.

The following day, on May 8, 2026 the Trump administration appealed the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which has temporarily reinstated the Section 122 tariffs on the three plaintiffs. As an initial step in the appeal, the government must file a procedural submission that outlines the issues on appeal by May 22, 2026. The government's full opening brief is due July 7, 2026.

President Trump announced the Section 122 tariffs hours after the Supreme Court's February 20, 2026, ruling that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) does not authorize broad import tariffs. Following that decision, the administration turned to Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974, which permits the president to impose temporary import surcharges of up to 15% for no more than 150 days in response to "large and serious" U.S. balance-of-payments deficits. The administration implemented a 10% across-the-board tariff in February 2026, arguing that the action was necessary to address trade imbalances and support domestic industries.

In its 2-1 decision, the CIT found that the administration exceeded the authority granted under Section 122. The majority concluded that the government failed to demonstrate the type of balance-of-payments conditions required under the statute and rejected the administration's broader interpretation of its tariff authority. The court emphasized that Section 122 was designed as a limited, temporary mechanism tied specifically to international monetary and payments concerns, rather than a general-purpose tariff tool.

The ruling comes as the administration continues pursuing tariffs and trade restrictions through other authorities, including Section 232 national security investigations involving steel, aluminum, copper, automobiles and downstream products, as well as Section 301 investigations targeting alleged unfair trade practices and industrial overcapacity involving China, the EU, Japan, India, Mexico and other trading partners.



Omar S. Nashashibi is a founding member of Inside Beltway, a bipartisan lobbying and strategic consultant firm based in Washington, D.C. He may be reached at: omar@insidebeltway.com

TECH/AI: EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY AS A MULTIPLIER, NOT A THREAT



America's machining skills gap is no longer a "gap." It's a skills crisis — and treating it like a slow-moving workforce problem is effectively denial.

For two decades we've tried to solve it the same way: more outreach, more training programs, more posters telling young people manufacturing is "cool." Those efforts matter, and we should keep them. But the uncomfortable truth is that demand has outpaced the pipeline.

Retirements continue, fewer people enter the trade and the complexity of modern work keeps rising.

At the same time, reshoring is real. More companies want parts made closer to home, with shorter lead times and tighter quality control. That's a strategic win for U.S. manufacturing, until you hit the bottleneck: you can't reshore capacity you don't have the people to run.

So what does workforce development look like when the workforce isn't arriving fast enough?

It looks like embracing technology as a multiplier, not a threat.

The goal can't just be "train more machinists." It has to be "help every machinist do more."

That means software that reduces programming time, standardized processes that capture tribal knowledge and tools that guide newer talent through the work that used to require a decade of scar tissue to master.

It also means designing roles so that a motivated newcomer can become productive quickly — while experienced people focus on the hard problems where judgment matters most.

Technology won't replace apprenticeship, it should strengthen it. The best shops will pair fundamentals — print reading, workholding, metrology, feeds and speeds — with modern assistive tools that shorten the path from novice to contributor.

If we keep pursuing yesterday's answer to today's crisis, we'll keep getting yesterday's results. Workforce development in 2026 is training plus enablement: build skills, yes — but also build leverage. That's how we meet demand, compete globally and make machining a career where talent can grow faster than the backlog.



Daniel Soderlund has worked for some of the leading companies empowering manufacturers with technology for over two decades. Before joining CloudNC, he worked with ProShop ERP and FARO Technologies. He loves empowering organizations to achieve explosive results with tailored solutions, driving growth and success.

INSURANCE: CAN A BUSINESS AFFORD THE LOSS OF A KEY EMPLOYEE?



If you're like most businesses, there are one or more go-to employees when it comes to the day-to-day operations. They have management skills, technical knowledge, experience or customer relationships upon which owners rely. What would happen if the company were to lose one of them due to a premature death, disability or another employment opportunity?

The first step is to identify them. In general, key employees are individuals whose departure could create genuine setbacks. They may have years of experience with the company or the industry. Perhaps they have specialized skills that require extensive training and knowledge that would be difficult to replace. Is there someone for whom the company doesn't have a backup?

Once the company has identified the people, consider the cost of replacing them. The company will need to advertise to recruit potential replacements. Companies may need to adjust pay or offer a signing bonus to attract candidates with the skills and work experience needed. In addition to the monetary costs associated with hiring and training a replacement, the process will also require time. It's estimated that the cost to replace mid- to high-level employees can range from one-and-a-half to four times their annual salary.¹ Can the business absorb these costs, especially with little notice?

After the company has determined the people and the cost, consider the options for mitigating the risks it could face. Life insurance can help to keep the business running by providing funds to attract, recruit and train a replacement. It can also replace profits and provide time for survivors to make necessary business continuation decisions if the key person is the business owner. While the policy death benefit will provide a lump sum in the event of the insured employee's death, the cash value of a permanent policy can also be accessed through policy loans and withdrawals during the employee's lifetime.

References:Gallup.com. This Fixable Problem Costs U.S. Businesses \$1 Trillion.



Jack West, National Account Executive for Federated Insurance®, is responsible for overseeing Federated's national affinity relationships and securing new association partnerships. An NTMA Exclusive Benefit Partner, Federated has a strong reputation of competitive products with value-added risk management programs and services. More information: www.federatedinsurance.com

ONRAMP:

Who better than your own team to promote manufacturing careers? NTMA's OnRamp program equips them with a simple, effective tool to recruit talent on the spot.

With NTMA's OnRamp program, your HR staff and all of your employees can hand out contact cards to anyone they meet who shows potential.

NTMA provides cards featuring a QR code linking to a video about manufacturing career opportunities and a custom link to your company's website. Interested candidates can reach out directly to learn more about open positions in your shop.

Put your team in the driver's seat.

CARA MOTTOLO, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES, BOSTON CENTERLESS

Boston Centerless is a big supporter of the OnRamp initiative. We had the pleasure of participating in the pilot program, which has had a meaningful impact on both hiring outcomes and our overall talent pipeline.

Since we started handing out the cards at job fairs, during visits from area schools and through our employees, we've seen increased activity on our web site, additional candidate inquiries and greater awareness of our open positions.

The use of the video and introduction to manufacturing is a fantastic way to highlight all the possibilities that come with working at a manufacturing facility. This well-crafted video doesn't focus on just one career path nor any single function. It allows those using the cards to not only see where they might fit into our business, but where family or friends might find their next opportunity.

When we meet with candidates at career fairs, they enjoy the video tour of the inside of a facility. A simple description during an in-person event doesn't have the same impact as offering candidates a glimpse of not only working in a manufacturing facility, but how their work can have a greater impact.

The video highlights the technology, cleanliness and advanced machine shop floors that have replaced the dark, dirty and outdated facilities of the past. When groups visit our facility and receive the cards, the direct link to our careers page has been instrumental in jump starting the application process.

In addition, our employees love having something they can proudly give to friends and family to highlight their career choice while also helping to increase referrals and placements. The cards are easily tucked in a wallet or cell phone and serve as a much better hand-out than perhaps a traditional flyer.

This effort has strengthened our ability to attract talent aligned with our culture and business needs, and it reflects outstanding collaboration across all organizations looking to highlight manufacturing careers. We have easily and rapidly gone through all 600 cards and are eager to receive and hand out more.

As a partner in the effort to build a pipeline of talent and future generations in manufacturing, we enthusiastically support the OnRamp initiative.



THE FIRST 500 CARDS ARE FREE.

Want to try it out at your company?

Contact Jenny Stupica at
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make apprenticeship easy...

LET NTMA BE YOUR SPONSOR OF RECORD

JENNY STUPICA, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, NTMA

For many small and mid-sized manufacturers, the idea of launching a Registered Apprenticeship Program sounds great in theory, but overwhelming in practice. Between the paperwork, compliance requirements and ongoing reporting, it can feel like more work than it's worth.

That's where NTMA comes in.

A SIMPLER WAY TO OFFER APPRENTICESHIPS

NTMA now offers one of the easiest ways for manufacturers to implement a Department of Labor-approved Registered Apprenticeship Program, without taking on the administrative headache.

As your Sponsor of Record with the U.S. Department of Labor, NTMA handles the compliance, reporting and program administration that traditionally create barriers for smaller companies. Instead of navigating government paperwork and program requirements on your own, you can stay focused on what you do best: developing skilled employees on your shop floor.

Your responsibility is simple: track your apprentices' on-the-job training hours and share them with us periodically. We'll take care of the rest. And if tracking OJT hours sounds intimidating, we have options that can help simplify that process, too.

BUILT FOR MANUFACTURING. READY TO USE.

NTMA's Registered Apprenticeship Program is approved in all 50 states and designed specifically for the precision manufacturing industry. The hybrid, three-year Precision Machinist apprenticeship combines structured online coursework with hands-on, on-the-job training so employees can learn while they work.

The flexibility of the program is another major advantage. Apprentices may receive credit for prior learning and experience, reducing unnecessary training time and helping employees progress faster. NTMA will assist with the documentation needed to verify previously mastered skills.

WHAT THE PROGRAM INCLUDES

The program combines 12 online NTMA-U courses (476 contact hours) with 5,920–7,400 hours of structured on-the-job training to ensure apprentices build both technical knowledge and practical experience.

YEAR ONE

- Basic Blueprint
- Basic Math
- Precision Machining Technology I
- Quality Control / SPC / Inspection

YEAR TWO

- Precision Machining Technology II
- Intermediate Blueprint with GD&T
- Applied Math
- Intermediate Applied Math

YEAR THREE

- CNC with Simulator
- Metallurgy
- Advanced Math
- Manufacturing Technology

MORE THAN TRAINING—A STRONGER WORKFORCE PIPELINE

Investing in employee development does more than build technical skills. It also strengthens retention.

When employees see their company investing in their future, it sends a powerful message: they are valued, trusted and seen as part of the company's long-term success. That sense of opportunity can have a major impact on engagement and loyalty.

For manufacturers struggling to attract and retain talent, apprenticeship programs create a structured pathway for workforce development while helping preserve critical shop knowledge for the next generation.

GETTING STARTED IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

If you've considered starting an apprenticeship program but aren't sure where to begin, NTMA can help you every step of the way.

Jenny Stupica, NTMA's Workforce Development Director, works directly with companies to evaluate current training efforts, identify employees who are ready to participate, establish a plan for tracking on-the-job training and connect your team to NTMA-U coursework.

The result is a streamlined, compliant apprenticeship program that saves your company time, minimizes administrative burden and helps you build a stronger workforce for the future.

UNLOCK FREE MONEY FOR YOUR SHOP: THE INSIDE BELTWAY GRANT MATRIX

If you haven't looked at the Inside Beltway monthly grant and tax incentive matrix yet, you could be leaving money on the table.

Every month, Inside Beltway publishes a comprehensive list of grant funding and tax incentive opportunities for manufacturing workforce investment. Yes, it's a substantial spreadsheet — but don't let that intimidate you. Buried in those rows and columns are real dollars that can offset your training costs, fund equipment upgrades and support key projects. For a small to mid-sized tool and die shop, these opportunities can make a meaningful difference to both your workforce and your bottom line.

HERE'S A REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

Ohio's TechCred Program is a perfect illustration of what's available. TechCred reimburses Ohio employers up to \$2,000 per credential when employees complete eligible technology-focused certifications. For tool and die manufacturers, the relevant credential categories are plentiful: Robotics and Automation, Manufacturing Technologies, IoT and Information Technology, among others.

The program runs multiple application cycles per year, with a reimbursement cap of \$30,000 per application window. Do the math: max out every cycle and you're looking at up to \$180,000 back in your pocket annually — money you can reinvest in equipment, use to recruit and train talent or simply protect your margins.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUR SHOP RIGHT NOW

Ohio's TechCred is just one example. The Inside Beltway matrix covers opportunities across multiple states and agencies, and many have comparable programs. Whether you're looking to upskill your machinists on the latest CNC technology, cross-train employees on quality systems or bring younger workers up to speed, there's likely a funding source in the matrix that applies to your situation.

The matrix is released monthly and sent out with the One Voice webinar reminder. Make it a habit to review it — or designate someone on your team to do so. A few hours of review could identify tens of thousands of dollars in available funding your competitors may already be tapping.

NAVY TALENT

WHAT IS THE NAVY TALENT PIPELINE PROGRAM?

As the U.S. Navy modernizes and expands its fleet over the next 30 years, the strength of America's industrial workforce is once again mission-critical. Meeting unprecedented submarine and defense production demands requires more than traditional hiring — it requires a new, employer-driven approach to workforce development.

*Launched in March 2021, the Talent Pipeline Program (TPP) is a nationwide public-private partnership between the U.S. Navy, the Department of Defense and TMG, Inc. The program equips small and medium-sized manufacturers with the tools, coaching and data needed to build demand-driven talent acquisition and retention systems that improve business performance while increasing industrial capacity for the Navy.**

For the past year, Major Tool and Machine has been an active participant in the U.S. Navy Talent Pipeline Program, and the impact on our organization has been both significant and meaningful. As part of the maritime industrial base, we recognize the critical importance of developing a strong, sustainable workforce that can support the defense industry and the manufacturing needs of our nation. This program has helped us accelerate that mission.

Early in our involvement, we identified gaps in our onboarding and training processes—areas that are essential for setting new employees up for success. In response, we made substantial investments to strengthen our talent acquisition, onboarding and development systems. People are truly our greatest asset, and we are committed to creating an early employee experience that reinforces that they made the right choice in joining Major Tool.

Through the Talent Pipeline Program, we have gained access to a broad suite of tools that directly support recruitment, interviewing, onboarding and retention. These tools have enabled us to hire individuals who not only have the skills needed for manufacturing, but who are strong fits for our culture. This alignment has helped new employees integrate more quickly and confidently into our workforce.

Our leadership team is fully committed to maximizing the value of this program. By leveraging the tools and resources offered, we are not only expanding our workforce but intentionally strengthening a culture of engagement, loyalty



and long-term development.

Companies of all sizes are facing similar challenges — finding and keeping skilled employees in an increasingly competitive manufacturing environment. The Talent Pipeline Program offers practical, scalable solutions for employers regardless of size or complexity.

We're excited to continue expanding our involvement with the program and look forward to building a stronger, more resilient workforce in partnership with the U.S. Navy Talent Pipeline.

*Brandon Lee, Director of Manufacturing
Major Tool and Machine*

PIPELINE

member experience



Acutec's journey with the Talent Pipeline Program has transformed our recruiting, hiring, onboarding and retention programs that have paid dividends to our workforce. The TPP accomplishes this transformation by working with companies to understand challenges the business is facing and laying their current recruiting, hiring, onboarding and retention program into a Value Stream Map (VSM). Acutec's value stream map indicated that our area of opportunity was to increase our retention of employees who make it to their one-year anniversary.



At Acutec, creating tight tolerance flight-critical aerospace components, our Machinist Training Program's one-year retention rate has historically been about 50%. It takes at least that long to see any type of return from the program. Any additional retention in that program is a significant boon to Acutec's bottom line.

In Acutec's first year, the TPP held leadership training for all managers that made it clear that it is the leader's responsibility to ensure the success of employees by open and honest communication, clear expectations and immediately addressing issues with their employees. In a memorable exchange, the trainer from the TPP told our managers, "If you have someone who comes to work without pants on – you are going to tell him to go home and put pants on that same day – why would you not address any other issue with the same type of urgency?"

After the training, the TPP helped Acutec to introduce the "5th metric" scorecard and helped lead a meeting



where all managers report the number of employees that are engaged, disengaged or actively disengaged. If a supervisor indicates that an employee is disengaged, it is the expectation that the supervisor sits with the employee to see how to get them engaged again and report back to the group the action and outcome.

Through this tool and others, Acutec was able to increase its retention from its machinist training program from 50% to 72% — showing a significant ROI from a program, free to Acutec, fully funded by the Navy.

*Austin Rock, Director of Human Resources
Acutec*

* <https://dibtalentpipeline.com/program-history/>



NATIONAL ROBOTICS LEAGUE:

building bots and the workforce

BETTY VRCEK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NRL COLORADO ROBOTICS LEAGUE

Student-built combat robots took center stage as teams from across the country competed in a national robotics championship hosted by the Rocky Mountain Tooling & Machining Association, NRL Colorado Robotics League and Pikes Peak Robotics on May 16- 17, 2026 at Mesa Ridge High School, Colorado Springs.

Teams across the country competed in a high-intensity, double-elimination tournament featuring 15-pound combat robots designed and built by high school students.

The competition marks the culmination of months of work, during which students partner with industry professionals to design, engineer and fabricate their robots. Competing teams had participated in regional competitions before stepping up to the national stage. The program emphasizes hands-on learning in engineering and advanced manufacturing while building critical skills in teamwork, problem-solving and project execution.

“This isn’t just a robotics competition — it’s a real-world engineering experience,” said Kathryn Wollenhaupt, board member of the Rocky Mountain Tooling & Machining Association (RMTMA). “Students are learning how to design, build and adapt under pressure, just like they would in

advanced manufacturing or engineering careers.”

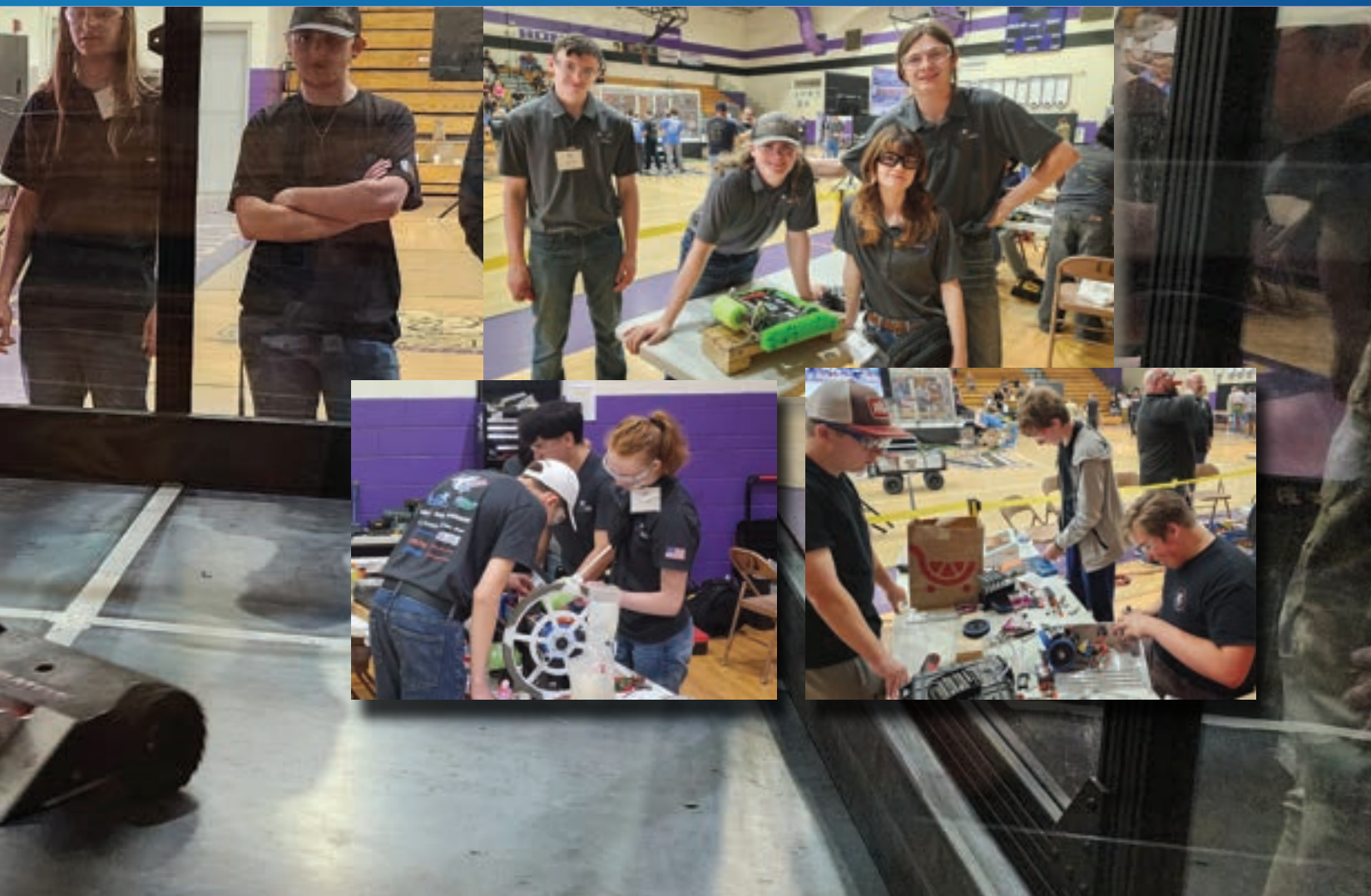
The event is organized by the NRL Colorado Robotics League, based in the Denver metro area and Pikes Peak Robotics in Colorado Springs, bringing together educators, industry partners and community supporters to showcase student talent and innovation on a national stage.

The competition is intended to highlight a growing national need for skilled workers in manufacturing and technical fields. Programs like this help bridge that gap by connecting students with industry and exposing them to career pathways early.

Wollenhaupt said the program also addresses workforce needs nationwide. “There are thousands of open manufacturing and engineering jobs across the country,” she said. “This program helps students see those opportunities and gives them the skills and confidence to pursue them.”

Educators say the impact goes beyond technical skills.

“This program has completely changed how my students see their future,” said one participating educator. “The excitement, the confidence and the pride they gain from building something real — it’s something you can’t replicate in a traditional classroom.”



CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS:

GRAND CHAMPION:

Tech High, *Angular Aggression*, Rohnert Park, California

BRACKET FIRST:

Tech High, *Angular Aggression*, Rohnert Park, California

BRACKET SECOND:

Hempfield Area High, *Grayson*, Hempfield Twp, Pennsylvania

DOCUMENTATION FIRST:

Fort Zumwalt West, *SubZero*, O'Fallon, Missouri

DOCUMENTATION SECOND:

Fort Zumwalt West, *Dino*, O'Fallon, Missouri

BEST ENGINEERED BOT:

Fort Zumwalt West, *SubZero*, O'Fallon, Missouri

SECOND BEST ENGINEERED BOT:

Tech High, *Angular Aggression*, Rohnert Park, California





Since 1983, the Society of Plastics Engineers Mold Technologies Division has recognized a Mold Maker who has made significant contributions to their profession and has supported and advanced the industry. For years, the award was presented to shop owners and more senior mold makers around the world.

This year, the organization broke with the tradition and found a young mold maker that embodies the character of Mold Maker of the Year. That individual is Mr. Christopher MacDonald of Faith Tool and Manufacturing in Willoughby, Ohio, and NTMA-U graduate.

According to the application submitted by Faith Tool and Manufacturing, Chris MacDonald is a young, outstanding, driven mold maker whose advanced machining skills, technical knowledge and precision craftsmanship makes him an exceptional candidate for Mold Maker of the Year.

Chris's path into mold making began at Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, where he focused on machining and developed a strong interest in CNC technology. Early in his training he had the opportunity to compete in SkillsUSA, placing first in northeast Ohio and fourth in the state for CNC milling. Those experiences pushed him to sharpen his technical skills and confirmed that this was the career he wanted to pursue.

NTMA-U GRAD *Wins* INTERNATIONAL HONOR

After graduating, Chris continued his education through NTMA-U, earning first his Journeyman Precision Technician/Machinist certification in 2020 and then his Mold Maker Certificate in 2022.

According to Chris, “These programs have given me the knowledge to apply with hands-on experience in advanced machining, mold fitting, EDM work and problem-solving on real-world tooling challenges. I’ve been able to apply that training directly in my day-to-day work, focusing on precision, efficiency and producing consistent, high-quality results. Being named the 2026 Mold Maker of the Year by SPE Mold Technologies is an honor that reflects that continued effort and growth.”

“He approaches each job with the mindset of a mold maker who understands how every tenth of an inch matters. His setups consistently produce accurate, repeatable and high quality results, reducing scrap, improving cycle times and elevating

the performance of the entire shop,” Marty MacDonald, the operations director at Faith Tool & Machine said.

As the Mold Maker of the Year, Chris was awarded a \$1,000 stipend sponsored by HASCO America to be shared with the training center or school of his choice. His company, Faith Tool, matched that stipend and Chris chose to match it as well, for a total contribution to Cuyahoga Valley Career Center of \$3,000.

“What I enjoy most about this industry is the level of detail and thought that goes into every job. It’s work that challenges you to keep improving and to take pride in doing things the right way,” Chris said. Now he’s helping others reach their goals. “In my current role as CNC Department Manager, I also value being able to support my team, share knowledge and help newer employees grow. For me, mold making is a career where you can see the impact of your effort every day, and that’s what keeps me motivated.”





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IMTS2026

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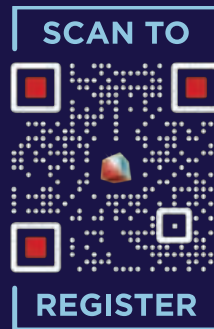
SIX DAYS TO TRANSFORM YOUR APPROACH

When the Long Way Leads to the Shortcut

“Even if you are not in the industry, going to **IMTS** exposes you to a **new frontier of crazy machinery, connections, and opportunities**. Just walking that show could totally change your career path.”

Roadtripping parents-to-be Jeff and Crystal knew the importance of planning - and being flexible. They brought an open mind to **IMTS - The International Manufacturing Technology Show** and found new technologies, great people - and new ways to do business.

Transform your approach at IMTS on Sept. 14-19, 2026, in Chicago.



Use code **NTMA26** at registration for an exclusive NTMA member discount.

CHAPTER CHECK-IN

ST. LOUIS AND KANSAS CITY HOST JOINT SUMMIT

SHELLI McINTOSH, CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, ST. LOUIS NTMA

Nearly 100 members of the Kansas City and St. Louis NTMA chapters joined together for the annual joint chapter summit April 16-17, 2026 in St. Louis, Missouri. Sessions included AI in Manufacturing presented by Delcie Bean, How EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) Can Help your Shop with Ashley Hunsaker, and Lean Manufacturing hosted by University of Kentucky, True Lean.

Attendees toured two member shops in St. Louis: Chelar Tool and Die and Davlan Engineering. Guests also toured Southwest Illinois College's Advanced Manufacturing Academy.

Members socialized during dinner and a casino night and participated in a Future Workforce Forum with three successful business leaders and five precision machining students. The panel answered questions about hiring process and what the leaders look for in new hires. Students explained what is most important to them when job hunting and how they learn best. It was great to see both perspectives and learn from both sides of the panel. This was a highly rated session.

The event was a great success allowing members from across the state to connect and learning from each other.



Regional Connections

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA NTMA SAYS GOODBYE TO LONG-TIME SUPPORTER

KAITY VAN AMERSFORT CHAPTER EXECUTIVE, SFBA NTMA



It is with profound sadness that we share the news of the sudden passing in April of Glenn Van Noy, a long-time contributor and dear friend to our organization. Glenn's unwavering dedication, expertise and generosity of spirit have left an indelible mark on the SFBA NTMA community and all who had the privilege to know and work alongside him.

Over the years, Glenn played a pivotal role in advancing our mission, supporting members and fostering a spirit of collaboration

and excellence. His commitment to the betterment of our industry and the kindness he extended to colleagues and friends alike, will be deeply missed.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Glenn's family, friends and everyone whose lives he touched. As we mourn this loss together, let us also remember and celebrate the many contributions Glenn made to our association and the positive impact he had on us all.

We will share information about memorial services or ways to honor Glenn's memory as it becomes available.



ROCK RIVER VALLEY TOOLING & MACHINING ASSOCIATION GRADUATES 2026 APPRENTICES

TAYLOR HOHN, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, DIGITAL HIVE MIND

The Rock River Valley Tooling & Machining Association (RRVTMA) hosted its 2026 Apprentice Graduation on Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at the Illinois Bank & Trust Pavilion at Aldeen Golf Course in Rockford. The evening included a social hour, dinner and formal recognition of 12 graduates with Rock Valley College. RRVTMA is committed to advancing manufacturing through education, apprenticeship and workforce development.

Graduating apprentices will earn journeyman credentials in their respective programs, representing years of hands-on training, technical education and on-the-job experience in high-demand manufacturing careers.



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 **IMTS**
JOB SHOPS
WORKSHOP

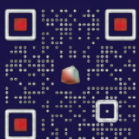
SEPTEMBER 15, 2026
MCCORMICK PLACE, CHICAGO

INNOVATION

BUILT FOR THE SHOP FLOOR

Practical Solutions For Job Shops at IMTS 2026

This half-day workshop brings job shop professionals together for dynamic sessions, designed for manufacturing job shops, exploring automation, AI, and the future of manufacturing. Attendees will dive into practical, shop-ready technologies, share common challenges, and engage in candid discussions with peers and industry thought leaders.



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BENEFIT PARTNER

THOMAS:

How Thomas Helps Businesses Connect With High-Intent Industrial Buyers

Establishing a meaningful online presence is no longer optional for industrial businesses; it is a critical requirement for survival and growth. Modern buyers begin their research online, making digital visibility the key to capturing high-quality leads. To compete effectively, industrial manufacturers and suppliers should implement a three-part strategy focusing on social media, search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ENGAGEMENT

Social media is a vital B2B tool that allows businesses to showcase technical expertise and engage directly with decision-makers. For industrial audiences, different platforms serve specific strategic purposes:

- **LinkedIn:** The primary B2B networking hub, ideal for sharing thought leadership and connecting with procurement professionals.
- **Instagram:** A visual medium for humanizing operations through factory tours and product demonstrations.
- **YouTube:** A powerful educational platform for detailed technical tutorials and in-depth product capabilities.

Social media offers many opportunities to engage potential customers in ways that drive them back to your website. To convert followers into leads, content must be value-driven and scannable. Ensure you're tracking where traffic comes from so you can fine-tune your messaging and continue to utilize strategies that work well.

SEO FOR ORGANIC VISIBILITY

SEO enables your business to capture organic traffic from prospects actively searching for specific industrial solutions. Successful SEO begins with comprehensive keyword research to identify the exact terms engineers and buyers use during their search process.

A robust SEO strategy requires both technical optimization and high-quality content. By optimizing meta descriptions, title tags and image alt text, you can ensure search engines accurately index your pages, making them visible to the right people at the right time.

To ensure your SEO strategy is delivering results, it is imperative to track key performance indicators (KPIs). Use tools like Google Analytics to regularly monitor:

- Website traffic
- Keyword rankings
- Lead conversions

This data provides actionable insights into your strategy's effectiveness, allowing you to refine your approach, capitalize on high-performing content and maintain a competitive edge in the digital marketplace.

PPC FOR IMMEDIATE IMPACT AND TARGETED GROWTH

While SEO builds long-term organic growth, PPC advertising offers an immediate solution for driving high-intent traffic. Because PPC operates on a performance-based model; you only pay when someone actually clicks on your ad, ensuring that your marketing budget is

spent on real engagement.

The platform's built-in flexibility allows you to adjust your budget dynamically in response to factors such as:

- Market conditions
- Seasonal demands
- Campaign outcomes

Whether you aim to ramp up visibility during trade show preparation or align spend with a product launch, PPC empowers you to achieve your goals with precision and efficiency. When you partner with Thomas, your representative will help you define your target audience, customize your budget and gain actionable insights into buyers sourcing on Thomas.

PARTNER WITH THOMAS TO ACCELERATE GROWTH

Thomas helps industrial businesses attract high-quality traffic and ensure that every marketing dollar counts. With a network of more than 1.5 million active, qualified buyers, Thomas provides the platform you need to showcase your capabilities, certifications and contact details to make it easy for the right buyers to find you.

Ready to grow your business? Learn more about Thomas advertising programs and start reaching the right buyers today. As an NTMA member, you are eligible to receive a free 30-second video with your advertising program to highlight your products and services with content from your website.

Explore Thomas advertising programs and claim this exclusive offer.



Here to Help



NTMA SERVICE AWARDS 2026 NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

The Service Awards are given out each year at the Manufacturing Engage Conference. We need your help finding the best candidates for these awards.

Award categories are:

MEMBER AWARDS

HONOR AWARD

For continuing meritorious service and dedication to the Industry and/or Association by an NTMA Regular Member. Traditionally rendered for longevity of service and/or dedication, as opposed to a single act of service in a short-time Industry or Association position.

L.A. SOMMER MEMORIAL AWARD

For outstanding and continuing service of the highest magnitude by an NTMA Regular Member. Emphasis is placed on service to the Association, both of the highest order over a period of time, demonstrating excellence in a particular role in NTMA, rather than as a participant in a single event.

WILLIAM E. HARDMAN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TRAINING

For a company or individual of Regular, National Associate, or Education member status of NTMA that has consistently demonstrated strong support and active participation in “structured training” for the precision custom manufacturing industry.

NON-MEMBER AWARD

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

For outstanding service to the Industry and/or Association by a Non-NTMA Regular Member Company Representative.

ELIGIBILITY RULES & REQUIREMENTS

1. If honoree has previously received the LA Sommer Award, he/she is not eligible to receive the Honor Award or William E. Hardman Award.
2. If honoree has previously received the Honor Award and/or the William E. Hardman Award, he/she is eligible to receive the LA Sommer Award.
3. All Award nominees must be currently active in their company and/or industry, or active in the Association as a Past Service Member.
4. If no candidates are nominated for any of these awards, the particular award in question will not be presented in that given year.
5. Nominators cannot nominate the same person for multiple awards, but can nominate multiple persons for multiple awards.

Help us recognize deserving individuals and/or companies that have supported and advanced the industry and the Association.

**Submit your nomination(s) by Monday, August 31st, 2026.
Scan the code or contact Linda Warner at lwarn@ntma.org
for a nomination form.**



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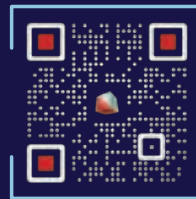
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Lee Marzilli
LEE MARZILLI
CEO | MARZILLI MACHINE CO.

SIX DAYS TO TRANSFORM YOUR SHOP



SCAN TO REGISTER

Where the Numbers Add Up to a Better Shop

“At IMTS, you can bounce ideas off other shop owners to learn what they know and what you might not know. You learn what else is offered that can help you.”

Between supporting her staff and ensuring operational efficiency, CEO and self-professed “numbers girl” Lee Marzilli is always improving her shop. At **IMTS - The International Manufacturing Trade Show**, she explores new solutions that can further enhance Marzilli Machine - and achieve the impossible.

Transform Your Shop at IMTS on Sept. 14-19, 2026, in Chicago.

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OKUMA AMERICA CORPORATION RECEIVES AWARDS FOR TRAINING PROGRAM AT ROWAN-CABARRUS COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Leadership at Okuma America Corporation, a global manufacturer of CNC machine tools and automation systems, is pleased to share that its Okuma Machine Tool Academy program, in partnership with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC), has been recognized with multiple awards.

The American Association of Community Colleges bestowed the company with the 2026 Outstanding College/Corporate Partnership Award, which recognizes collaborative excellence between a business and a U.S. community college. Okuma was also recognized by the North Carolina Community College System with their 2026 Innovative Leadership Award, which honors a business that demonstrates innovative approaches in partnership with North Carolina community colleges.

The partnership between Okuma and RCCC began in 2021 with the establishment of the Okuma Machine Tool Academy (OMTA) at the college's Advanced Technology Center on the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis, North Carolina. OMTA bridges traditional education and modern manufacturing with high-level technical training through a variety of courses, such as electrical maintenance, mechanical maintenance, programming and operation on CNC machine tools. OMTA houses several Okuma CNC machine tools for hands-on instruction, including a GENOS M460V-5AX (five-axis vertical machining center), GENOS L3000-e

MYW (horizontal lathe) MA-4000H (horizontal machining center), and MULTUS B400II (multitasking lathe).

“We were honored to receive these prestigious awards, and equally honored to have an opportunity to work with the Rowan Cabarrus Community College team to offer continuing education programs to workforce members within the manufacturing industry,” shared Natalie Rogers, training program manager at Okuma. “Partnering with Rowan Cabarrus has enabled Okuma to elevate its classroom and hands-on training programs, allowing attendees to level up their skills, maximize impacts for their businesses and advance the manufacturing industry. We couldn’t be more pleased with the partnership.”

Since its founding, more than 800 students have attended an OMTA course. These students represent world-class companies from all over the United States and the world, including SpaceX, Harley Davidson and more, positioning North Carolina as a leader in global industrial innovation.

For more information and a list of upcoming courses, please visit the OMTA webpage.



YOUR INSIGHTS CAN FOCUS U.S. INDUSTRIAL POLICY

HARRY MOSER, PRESIDENT, RESHORING INITIATIVE® RESHORING INITIATIVE®



Most industrial policy decisions are made by people guessing what you need. This is your chance to stop being the ‘end-user’ and start being the ‘architect.’

You’ll probably spend 10 minutes today clearing out emails that don’t even matter. So please, take 10 minutes to do something REALLY important like helping to influence U.S. manufacturing policy. Your insight is crucial — please take the 2026 Reshoring Survey today, and grab a seat at the table.

HELP SHAPE WHAT COMES NEXT — USE YOUR VOICE

The Reshoring Initiative®, in collaboration with Regions Recruiting®, is asking for your input in our 2026 Reshoring Survey. U.S. manufacturing policy is being decided now — and it will directly affect your costs, supply chain and competitiveness. We’re pivoting our strategy based on your feedback.

In this fast-changing environment, your voice can help shape what comes next. This 10-minute survey questions how trade conditions, global risks and federal policies are affecting your reshoring and foreign direct investment (FDI) decisions.

Your company’s experience matters — whether you plan to reshore or not. Our goal is to collect data to get an accurate picture of our industry at this pivotal time in U.S. manufacturing history. Your responses go directly into the data used by policymakers and economic developers working to strengthen U.S. manufacturing. If you want better policy outcomes, this is one of the most direct ways to influence them.

2025 vs. 2026 SURVEY FOCUS

Our 2025 survey explored the likely impact of contemplated 2025 policy changes. The survey also revealed the strategic imperatives necessary for U.S. reindustrialization including:

- Level the cost playing field
- Develop or grow a larger, skilled workforce
- Apply total cost of ownership (TCO) principles
- Prepare for geopolitical risk

The 2026 survey focuses more on the impact of actual policy changes including taxes, tariffs and the resulting uncertainty, the need for a robust skilled workforce and training system and the expected impact of AI. This year’s survey assesses the rationalizations behind reshoring decisions in addition to the impacts of the 2025 federal policy changes.

Data provided will be analyzed by the Reshoring Initiative® and Regions Recruiting® to produce industry-wide reports and strategic recommendations aimed at strengthening the US manufacturing sector. The findings will be shared with industry leaders as well as the Trump administration to help shape policies that will benefit manufacturing and the country.

WE ARE COLLABORATING WITH REGIONS RECRUITING

Regions Recruiting, the Reshoring Initiative’s survey partner, specializes in lean manufacturing and distribution leadership placements and serves as a strategic talent partner to SMEs and Fortune 1000s across the Southeastern U.S.

CALLING ALL OEMS AND CONTRACT MANUFACTURERS

The nationwide 2026 Reshoring Survey will remain open to respondents through July 15, 2026. Please pull up a chair and participate in the 2026 Reshoring Survey. Your response will help influence national policy.

Are you thinking about reshoring? Visit: <https://reshorenow.org/resources/> to access the full list of Reshoring Resources offered by the Reshoring Initiative. For help, contact me at 847-867-1144 or email me at harry.moser@reshorenow.org.

Have you reshored a metal component or product? Apply for the National Metalworking Reshoring Award. The 2026 winner will be honored at IMTS 2026.



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- Lubrication: 11%
- Machining: 11%
- Power Tools: 7%
- Safety: 10%
- Safety Footwear: 17%
- Welding: 11%

The Committed NTMA/Associations & Grainger MRO Agreement

SAVE ON 900,000+ ITEMS ACROSS 24 PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Deeper Category Discounts

- Abrasives: 18%
- Adhesives, Sealants and Tape: 15%
- Cleaning: Consumables 15%
- Cleaning: Other 15%
- Electrical: 10%
- Electronics, Appliances and Batteries: 10%
- Fleet and Vehicle Maintenance: 10%
- Furniture, Hospitality and Food Service: 10%
- Hand Tools: 10%
- Hardware: 11%
- Hydraulics: 10%
- Lighting: 15%
- Lubrication: 18%
- Machining: 18%
- Material Handling: 10%
- Plumbing Other: 10%
- Plumbing Pipe Valves Fittings: 10%
- Pneumatics: 10%
- Power Tools: 10%
- Power Transmission: 15%
- Safety: 10%
- Safety Footwear: 17%
- Welding: 11%

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Please reach out to your Grainger Representative or NTMA/Association Contact.

*Category discounts are subject to the following terms: Discounts applied to Contract Reference Price. You must sign in to Grainger.com® to see your Contract Reference Price. Category discounts will not apply to: (a) sourced products; (b) items in any other discount programs; (c) promotional, lot and commodity items; or (d) special pricing programs offered for certain Catalog Products from time to time. If, after applying the category discount above, the price of an individual Catalog Product is below Grainger's cost, Grainger reserves the right to reduce the category discount for that Catalog Product. If at any time a Catalog Product is discontinued for any reason, such Catalog Product will be removed from the category discount program. Grainger reserves the right to determine the appropriate category for a particular Catalog Product.

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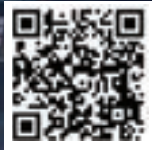


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- 6. Over 300 hundred Field Sales Representatives**
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WHERE MANUFACTURING MOMENTUM BECOMES OPPORTUNITY IMTS 2026

MICHELLE EDMONSON, VICE PRESIDENT — EXHIBITIONS AT AMT

THE ASSOCIATION FOR MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY, WHICH OWNS AND PRODUCES IMTS - THE INTERNATIONAL MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY SHOW

U.S. manufacturing is gaining momentum, driven by investment, innovation and a renewed focus on domestic capability. The numbers tell part of the story, but the real takeaway is this: the pace of change is accelerating, and the opportunity to compete and win is growing alongside it.

Last year closed with the highest monthly manufacturing technology orders on record, and that momentum is carrying into the IMTS 2026 show year. IMTS — The International Manufacturing Technology Show — sits at the center of that growth, particularly across aerospace, defense, medical, semiconductor, data centers and energy markets.

Policy is reinforcing this growth. The reinstatement of 100% bonus depreciation and the expansion of Section 179 expensing to \$2.5 million

are accelerating investment decisions and reshoring strategies.

But U.S. manufacturing strength goes beyond metrics. It underpins national security, strengthens supply chains and fuels innovation. It creates meaningful careers where people take pride in their work, and it delivers breakthroughs that define what's possible. From Artemis II to the rapid expansion of satellite infrastructure, American manufacturing continues to push boundaries at a global scale.

And that's where IMTS comes in. When the manufacturing community comes together, progress accelerates. IMTS 2026, taking place September 14–19 at McCormick Place in Chicago, represents that moment. As the Western Hemisphere's largest manufacturing technology event, IMTS will bring together more than 1,800 exhibitors across 1.2 million

square feet, with more than 100,000 attendees expected. It is where technology, expertise and opportunity converge.

Mike Bauer, founder of Marathon Precision, captures this advantage well: "You can't go anywhere else and see as much technology as you can at IMTS. For the week of the show, IMTS is the largest, most advanced shop in the world. If you buy technology before anybody else and get good at it, chances are you can win new business." IMTS is designed to help you do exactly that.

Start with the show's exhibitors spanning 10 technology sectors, where you can quickly identify solutions aligned to your business priorities. This year's show will highlight multitasking CNC, additive manufacturing, automation, software, digital metrology and AI-driven solutions.



Partner News



IMTS – The International Manufacturing Technology Show takes place September 14–19 at McCormick Place in Chicago, Ill.

BEYOND THE SHOW FLOOR, IMTS 2026 WILL FEATURE:

- The IMTS Industrial AI Arena.
- Unmanned aerospace vehicles from KRATOS in the IMTS Manufacturing Showcase, brought to you by GIE Media.
- A featured part competition in the IMTS Shops Zone, brought to you by Gardner Business Media.
- Insight and daily meetups in the IMTS Machinist Hub, brought to you by Practical Machinist.
- The Smartforce Student Summit with hands-on experiences of cutting-edge manufacturing tech for students.

What ultimately sets IMTS apart isn't just the scale of technology — it's the people behind it. Exhibitors and visitors can identify bottlenecks, solve problems and implement solutions that drive measurable results. If the industry's momentum is building, IMTS is where you harness it.

Start your journey by registering today at [IMTS.com/](https://www.imts.com/) Register. Use code NTMA26 for a special NTMA member discount.

2026 ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING REPORT

Powered by AMT, this report outlines how AM can deliver value into your manufacturing operation.

For your copy, please visit:

[IMTS.com/AMReport](https://www.imts.com/AMReport)

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NTMA 6S Excellence Award

PURPOSE:

To improve the perception of American manufacturing by promoting and recognizing excellence in member shop organization and efficiency.

HOW IT WORKS:

NTMA companies apply for the award by submitting a self-assessment based on criteria that demonstrate best-in-class practice in the six S's:

1. Safety
2. Sort
3. Set in Order
4. Shine
5. Standardize
6. Sustain

Certificates are awarded every year for the first five years based on self-assessments submitted. Once the recipients receive five certificates, they are also presented with a trophy.

SUBMISSIONS:

For an application and forms, please contact Linda Warner at lwerner@ntma.org or 216-264-2824.

Please submit your application by Tuesday, September 15th, 2026, to be considered.

Completed applications should be sent to 6Saward@ntma.org



This year each company qualifying for the NTMA 6S Excellence Award will be entered into a drawing to win custom Kaizen Shadow Foam from Kaiser Manufacturing, valued at \$1,500.

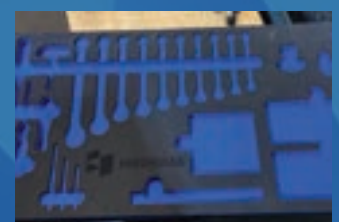
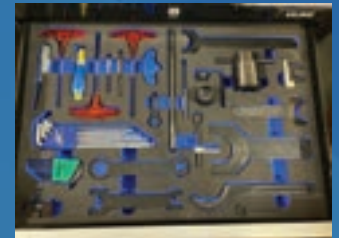
Kaizen Shadow Foam® is the perfect enhancement to any 6S program. It creates an intuitive, visual workspace, keeps track of tools and gauges, and ensures every item is properly stored. By reducing the time operators spend searching for tools, it streamlines workflows and minimizes equipment replacement costs for companies.

The two-color foam is professional-grade tool storage material. It is very durable, will not absorb moisture, oils or solvents, and can be cleaned. It will last for years even in tough industrial environments.

One winner will be selected at random from qualifying companies at the Engage Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, November 10-13, 2026. The winner will receive:

1. Free Photo Scan It kit including scanning mat, precision targets and instructions for capturing tool layouts.
2. Minimum \$1,500 in custom, two-color Kaizen Shadow Foam (approximately 10 drawers, depending on size). Choice of charcoal over red, blue or yellow foam.
3. Laser engraving of company logo and/or pocket labels as needed.
4. Copies of all tool layout CAD files at the end of the project.

Terms: Project must be completed by February 28, 2027. Recipient is responsible for all shipping costs for the finished product from Kaiser Manufacturing. Recipient agrees Kaiser Manufacturing is authorized to photograph finished Shadow Foam, excluding any proprietary parts, and use images and company name for marketing purposes.



NTMA

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