



# The Manufacturing Institute

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▶ 2023 Annual Report



## ➤ A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Even as the Manufacturing Institute continued its long-term efforts in 2023 to close the skills gap and grow our industry's workforce, the MI took on an increasingly ambitious portfolio. Through this, we are working even more closely with companies of all sizes and other stakeholders—not just to provide the solutions, but to be involved in their implementation and ensure they succeed.

The MI sits at the center of the manufacturing workforce ecosystem, and the manufacturers, education institutions, economic development organizations and communities we work with are vital partners in that ecosystem. Through our work in 2023, and thanks to corporate and philanthropic support, we were able to dig deeper to build the foundation for ongoing workforce development activities that will benefit manufacturers—and their communities—for years to come.

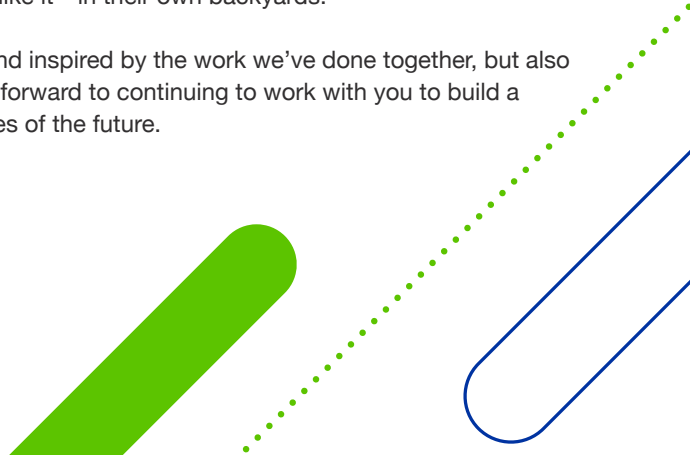
Our suite of offerings and programs continues to scale. Some of the most exciting milestones in 2023 included the pilot launch of the new Manufacturing Readiness Project—a model designed to help manufacturers understand the core manufacturing skills learned by people in military occupations and provide veterans and transitioning servicemembers with the tools to describe those skills. Supported by Walmart and in partnership with several leading organizations, this project will help further expand the reach of the MI's **Heroes MAKE America initiative** and ensure a wider population of transitioning military and veterans connect with manufacturing careers. We saw a record number of nominations for Honorees and Emerging Leaders in the Women MAKE Awards, a key element of the **Women MAKE America initiative**, and through the WMA's 35x30 mentorship program, we reached hundreds of young women and helped provide them the network they need to succeed in manufacturing. The Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (**FAME**) USA continues to grow, reaching more than 40 chapters in 16 states and with an alumni base of more than 1,200 students. FAME truly is the new American model of skills training for manufacturers.

Throughout 2023, the MI convened more than 260 events to share and provide learnings and insights for employers and an array of other partners. One noteworthy example was our national **MFG Day 2023** kickoff event held at River Parishes Community College in Louisiana. There, along with more than 500 students, we celebrated manufacturing careers in the shadow of the three-story-tall Process Equipment Trainer Plant, a full-sized working production unit that MI partner and supporter BASF donated to the college, where it provides students with real-world experience in operation and maintenance. This is just one example of how the strong partnerships between the MI, manufacturers, educators and local institutions enhance our impact—regardless of whether it's in specific communities or at the national level.

You will continue to hear about the MI's solutions focus throughout the year ahead. That's because the **MI Solutions Center** has proven itself to be a trusted resource for manufacturers and communities. Whether it's convening industry leaders, educators and business associations for the second annual **Workforce Summit**, or providing groundbreaking research and data, all stakeholders in the workforce ecosystem can access our findings easily. Given that workforce needs and economic conditions diverge in different parts of the country, we are growing our capability to provide tailored solutions for companies and regions. Even as we drive workforce policy priorities in Washington, D.C., the MI is also honing our focus to individual shop floors and the regions in which they operate, finding the best talent and unleashing strategies to upskill more like it—in their own backyards.

The MI moves into 2024 with a highly engaged team that not only is excited and inspired by the work we've done together, but also better positioned because of it. Thank you for supporting the MI, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to build a resilient manufacturing workforce prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

**Carolyn Lee**  
President and Executive Director  
The Manufacturing Institute



## Manufacturing Solutions to Workforce Readiness

The Manufacturing Institute, the 501(c)3 workforce development and education affiliate of the NAM, is delivering new solutions to help manufacturers build, diversify and strengthen their workforce, while offering the latest insights and practices on common workforce challenges. The MI is an indispensable source for knowledge and initiatives that are building the workforce of today and tomorrow, ensuring manufacturers remain competitive.

### ► Training Global-Best Talent

The Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME USA, founded by Toyota and transitioned to the MI in 2019) continues to provide global-best workforce development through strong technical training, integration of manufacturing core competencies, intensive professional practices and intentional hands-on experience.

#### 2023 Highlights:

- Growing the FAME network from 9 states to a 16 state footprint.
- Doubling the number of participating employers to 450.
- 1,200 students enrolled.



Simply put, FAME has become the new American model of skills training for manufacturers. FAME also hosted a national conference for employers, college instructors and other workforce partners from across the country, featuring two days of information sharing and network building.



**I honestly believe that this program could change the way this country trains manufacturing maintenance technicians for years to come.** – Steven Cross, Utilities Reliability GT Team Leader, Engineering Site Maintenance, Logan Aluminum

### ► Sharing What Works

The MI is bringing hundreds of employers, training providers and community partners together to develop and implement workforce development strategies. Notably, the MI partnered with companies, business associations and economic development groups in Alabama, California, Ohio and Texas to devise and implement comprehensive strategies for creating a world-class manufacturing workforce.

To help manufacturing employers recruit and retain talent in a challenging labor market, the MI developed a white paper on workplace flexibility, highlighting actionable recommendations stemming from the MI's Flexibility Working Group. The MI also released new original content and research, with the support of Colonial Life, FORVIS, GM and Cognizant, to add to the ongoing research projects in partnership with firms including PwC, EY and Deloitte. To disseminate these findings, we brought together workforce leaders for nearly 300 learning and engagement events and published tailored research reports, toolkits and case studies.



## ➤ Convening for Workforce Solutions

The MI's Solutions Center leverages the MI's expertise, world-class analysis and research and the expansive reach of our network of partners. We provide manufacturers the solutions to attract, train and retain the talent to remain competitive and power the growth of manufacturing in the U.S. The key elements of the MI's Solutions Center include the annual Workforce Summit and issue-focused workshops in its Solutions Series. More than 275 manufacturing operations, talent and retention experts, thought leaders and educators convened at the MI's second annual Workforce Summit in Atlanta, where they pioneered solutions to our industry's workforce development challenges, with a focus on people, skills and processes.

## ➤ Closing the Gender Gap

The MI hosted its largest ever Women MAKE Awards gala, honoring women who have demonstrated excellence and leadership in their careers across all levels of the manufacturing industry.

- In fall 2023, the MI received a record-breaking 758 nominations for the 2024 Women MAKE Awards.
- After just two years, the MI's 35x30 campaign to increase the percentage of women in manufacturing from 29% to 35% by 2030 is nearly halfway to its goal of connecting more than 1,000 female mentors with would be manufacturing team members enrolled in four-year universities, community colleges, high schools and middle schools. Mentorships are now underway, with support from leading funders, including Dow, GM, Arconic Foundation and The Goodyear Foundation, among others.



## ➤ Guiding Military to Manufacturing

Heroes MAKE America is scaling its reach into the military and veteran community by hosting in-person and virtual career fairs, which have had more than 4,600 individual registrations and reached an audience of more than 84,000 through social media.

- Job-seeker participation has quadrupled for the virtual career fairs, which have connected military and veteran community members with national and regional manufacturing and supply chain companies successfully.



**The program gave me something to focus on. Transitioning after serving in the military for 25 years was scary. I had no idea what I was going to do. The HMA program opened so many doors. ... There are just so many cool things that manufacturers do. When I was on the plant tours with HMA, I realized that I really like this type of environment. It was something new and different.** – James Goppert, Human Resources Business Partner, WestRock

- The Heroes MAKE America SkillBridge training program had a record 335 graduates in 2023, for a program total of 1,292 graduates and more than 6,000 certifications earned.
- Through the Manufacturing Readiness Project, the MI is now making it even easier for military veterans to find excellent civilian careers—and for manufacturers to build an outstanding and talented workforce. This initiative, supported by Walmart, will enhance Heroes MAKE America’s work by providing an avenue for veterans and transitioning personnel to highlight their military experience and enter the MI’s military-to-manufacturing pathway.
- This project is one of the first of its kind to combine the use of the newest labor market technology tools—most notably digital badges—to help workers find employment.

## ➤ Advocating Effective Workforce Policies

As the leading voice on workforce development and education policy, the MI convened policy committee meetings and engaged manufacturers in small-group feedback sessions to identify policy priorities and recommendations to address manufacturers’ workforce needs. Our recommendations included Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act reauthorization improvements and Pell Grant expansion to cover shorter courses of skills training. The House Education and the Workforce Committee passed many of these recommendations in December 2023 and included them in bipartisan legislation awaiting action by the full House.

## ➤ MFG Day

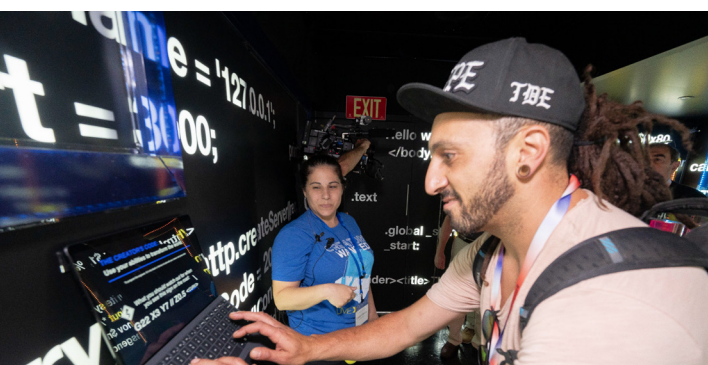
The MI and the NAM organized another successful MFG Day, coordinating with manufacturers across the country to open shop floors and showcase to students, parents, teachers, elected officials and community leaders the realities of a modern manufacturing career. Starting with the first Friday in October and continuing throughout Manufacturing Month, manufacturers hosted more than 600 MFG Day registered events across 46 states and in Puerto Rico throughout Manufacturing Month, including a flagship kickoff event co-hosted with BASF and River Parishes Community College in Gonzales, Louisiana. President Biden proclaimed Oct. 6 to be National Manufacturing Day, while 21 states issued similar proclamations, along with recognition from members of Congress.



# CREATORS WANTED

The NAM and the MI’s Creators Wanted Tour wrapped up its 20-stop, cross-country trip, surpassing all expectations and shifting industry perceptions across the board:

- Nationwide positive parent perceptions about modern manufacturing careers jumped from 27% to 40%, according to the MI and Deloitte
- 160 million+ digital impressions
- 1.5 million+ email sign-ups by students and career mentors
- 3,000+ students and 3,800+ career mentors through the immersive experience
- 84% of tour participants report a significantly improved view of manufacturing careers
- 400,000+ training and job opportunities listed on CreatorsWanted.org





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