SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND SPEAKER BIOS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The US and Midwest Economy in 2017: Implications for Supply Chain Firms
Rick Mattoon, Senior Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

Rick Mattoon

Rick Mattoon is a senior economist and economic advisor in the economic research department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Mr. Mattoon’s primary research focuses on issues that face the Midwest regional economy. He began his career at the Chicago Fed in 1990. In 1997, he left the bank to serve as a policy advisor for economic development, energy and telecommunications to the Governor of Washington. He later served as director of policy and legislation for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. He returned to the bank in 2001.

Mr. Mattoon’s work has appeared in the National Tax Journal, State Tax Notes, Public Choice and Society. He is the co-author of a chapter on state and local governments and the national economy in the Oxford Handbook of State and Local Government Finance. Mr. Mattoon serves on the Board of the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council, the Advisory Committee to the Chicago Workforce Investment Council, the pension committee of the Civic Federation and is a member of the Joint Advisory Board of Economists to the Governor of Virginia. He also serves as a lecturer at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. He received a B.A. from Kenyon College and an M.A. from the University of Chicago.

The Critical Importance of Supply Chains, Personal Success and Challenges for the Next Ten Years
Kevin Smith, President and CEO, Sustainable Supply Chain Consulting

Kevin Smith

Kevin Smith is a career supply chain practitioner and the President and CEO of Sustainable Supply Chain Consulting, headquartered in Windermere, Florida. Sustainable Supply Chain Consulting was founded in 2009 to provide advice and guidance to large scale supply chains and related businesses concerning strategic planning and organizational development.

In December 2008, Mr. Smith retired as Senior Vice President and Corporate Sustainability Officer for CVS Caremark, America’s #1 pharmacy and healthcare services provider. At that time CVS Caremark generated in excess of $90 billion in revenue and dispensed over 1 billion prescriptions per year by mail and in nearly 7,000 stores. As Corporate Sustainability Officer, he was responsible for developing and implementing a program of environmental sustainability for the entire enterprise.

Mr. Smith also served for eight years as Senior Vice President of Supply Chain & Logistics for CVS/pharmacy, the retail arm of CVS Caremark. Kevin’s role at CVS had been to facilitate changes in the overall supply chain and create a highly responsive end-to-end fulfillment process for the drug class of trade. This became increasingly important as CVS/pharmacy expanded rapidly throughout the United States. Mr. Smith is Chairman of the board of directors for the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP), Special Advisor to Supply Chain 50 and contributor to the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA).
TOP TEN KATA LESSONS FROM THE TRENCHES
Dan Vermeesch, Plant Manager and Lean Champion, Micron Manufacturing
Richard (Rick) Fleming, Consultant and Instructor, Grand Rapids Community College

How do you bring the repetition of the scientific method into your organization? How do you empower the workforce to implement small improvements based on data instead of opinion on a daily a basis? Practice KATA! Through practice, the pattern of KATA becomes second nature. The workforce, and your company culture, transforms into a problem-solving machine that accomplishes much more than a traditional continuous improvement program can achieve. This session will share success stories and lessons learned and walk you through a few exercises designed to illustrate how simple the concept of creating scientific thinkers is, but how challenging it may be to integrate KATA into your organization.

Dan Vermeesch
Dan Vermeesch is the Lean Champion and Plant Manager at Micron Manufacturing Company, a small, family-owned precision machined products company. Mr. Vermeesch currently serves as the Chairman of the Management Update Committee for the Precision Machined Products Association (PMPA) and is a member of the Michigan Lean Consortium (MLC) board of directors. Despite all of the above, Mr. Vermeesch learned everything he knows about lean, management and leadership while growing up in the potato fields of the family farm.

Rick Fleming
Rick Fleming uses his 30 years of experience in management roles and the Toyota Kata methodology to help companies create and align leadership systems that support operational and cultural changes needed to support lean thinking, develop accountability and drive a daily continuous improvement philosophy. Mr. Fleming is an instructor/coach for the University of Michigan’s “Toyota Kata” workshop. He collaborates with the Kata community in on-going development of the Improvement Kata and Coaching Kata routines & materials. He also presents and facilitates workshops for AME, MEP and other organizations. Mr. Fleming is co-author of “Lean Sigma Methods and Tools for Service Organizations” (2012, Business Expert Press), a lead instructor for Grand Rapid Community College’s Lean Champion Program and a Shingo Prize Examiner. He assisted Shingo award winners Metalworks (2007 Shingo Prize) and Micron Manufacturing (2008 silver medallion Shingo Prize) with their journeys to operational excellence. He began his lean journey working with Mike Rother and Kiyoshi Suzaki helping companies implement lean production systems through Continuous Improvement User Groups in the Midwest. Since 1989, Mr. Fleming has worked with hundreds of companies on lean enterprise transformation and organizational development around the principles of Operational Excellence. He has worked with a diverse group of clients from small to large organizations that includes manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies, healthcare organizations and food/chemical processors.

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE – SELF-DRIVING FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION
Jeff Potts, Co-Founder, LeanLogistics

Self-driving vehicles are no longer a far-fetched idea. Learn what’s out there now, what’s coming, and what impact driverless trucks may have on the supply chain.

Jeff Potts
Jeff Potts has over 30 years of experience in the logistics & supply chain industry. He is Co-Founder of LeanLogistics and currently serves as Senior Vice President of Business Development. LeanLogistics was founded in 1999 by experienced logistics and transportation veterans with a shared vision of leveraging web-based technologies to optimize supply chain processes. LeanLogistics is a global solutions provider of Software as a Service (SaaS) transportation management system (TMS) applications and supply chain services enabled by the industry’s largest transportation network. Today, LeanLogistics operates its single instance platform in over 50 countries around the world. Each day over a 100,000 users leverage this technology to manage in excess of $10 billion of annual transportation spend across a shipper and carrier community of over 20,000 trading partner organizations. Mr. Potts is also a U.S. patent holder in the LeanLogistics technology. In 2016, LeanLogistics was acquired by Kewill Systems, a Francisco Partners portfolio company. Kewill supports supply chain execution activities for 7,500 companies in more than 100 countries.

EVENT PARTNERS:
Mr. Potts is a member of the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP), and also serves on the Supply Chain Management Advisory Board, Quinlan School of Business, Loyola University Chicago. The Supply and Value Chain Center of the Quinlan School of Business of Loyola University Chicago is dedicated to the development of leading-edge strategies and practical solutions to problems encountered by the business community relative to the management of the end-to-end supply chain. Mr. Potts is a graduate of Michigan State University with a B.A. in Materials and Logistics Management.

**PROCUREMENT: CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS IN THE NEXT DECADE**

Dr. Jaideep Motwani, Professor of Management, Grand Valley State University  
Roy McCammon, President, West Michigan Transportation, LLC

Based on research being conducted at DePaul University and Grand Valley State University, Dr. Motwani and Mr. McCammon will discuss insights as to where procurement is heading in the next generation. The discussion will focus around the variables necessary to create a culture of trust and competitive advantage as supply chain integration, visibility, and transparency become the necessary factors to minimize risk and enable supply chain success. Upcoming trends in distribution channels will be discussed, as well as the dissemination and analysis of popular procurement terms such as blockchain, Fintech and 3-D printing. Lastly, Dr. Motwani and Mr. McCammon will discuss the employment market as it pertains to logistics and supply chain management and whether economic policy may drive a renaissance of near sourcing in procurement.

**Dr. Jaideep Motwani**

Dr. Jaideep Motwani is an award winning and highly accomplished scholar, administrator, and consultant with 25 years of experience in the field of supply chain management and process improvement. What differentiates him from his colleagues and competitors is his dedication to excellence and continuous improvement. After earning his Ph.D. in 1990, Dr. Motwani has been busy publishing 17 books and more than 200 articles in prestigious journals. His most recent books deal with the application of Lean and Six Sigma in the Service Sector. These practitioner books, written in a story format, provide a roadmap for service organizations that are committed to lean transformation. For his commitment to the profession, Dr. Motwani was ranked among the Top 1% Researcher in the field of Technology Management and the recipient of the Michigan Outstanding Educator’s Award granted by the Governor of Michigan.

Dr. Motwani has spoken for, trained and consulted with major manufacturing and service organizations in the United States, India, China, and Europe. He works with professionals in the areas of lean, customer service excellence, supply chain management, performance measurement, leadership, team building, and service operations. Most importantly, Dr. Motwani provides the education, tools, strategies, solutions and best practices to make individuals valuable and corporations flourish. Dr. Motwani is currently the Chair of the Management Department at the Seidman College of Business, Grand Valley State University.

**Roy McCammon**

Roy McCammon is President of West Michigan Transport and Supply Chain Financial Solutions. Together, the companies provide their customers with a total logistics solution and serve several Fortune 500 companies. Mr. McCammon is also co-owner of Holland Cakery and Sweets, an upscale bakery located in Holland, Michigan. Mr. McCammon operates a consulting practice in which he offers a wide range of assistance from start-ups to executive coaching. He provides leadership direction as a board member for several West Michigan organizations. In addition, he teaches part-time at Grand Valley State University’s Seidman College of Business as well as in the process of working on his Doctorate in Business Administration at DePaul University - Charles H. Kellstadt Graduate School of Business in Chicago, Illinois. He also actively supports various local charities and believes that supporting your local community is a vital part of owning and operating a business.
INNOVATION DRIVES SUPPLY CHAIN PERFORMANCE
Roy Anderson, Executive Vice President Procurement Services, GoProcure

High performing teams do not follow what you do, they follow why you do it. Leaders that are passionate about why they drive innovation into reality, outperform. Building others’ success creates collaboration and partnership, where creative thinking can flourish. Procurement teams that know why suppliers matter in driving innovation can consistently outperform their peers. Procurement professionals who drive innovation can mitigate risk, create new business solutions, improve profitability and have a more significant career. This session will focus on key behaviors necessary for success: (1) embrace change, rather than fear the challenges associated with it; (2) create partnerships inside and outside of the organization; (3) eliminate the resource-sucking mortal enemy called transactional work; (4) challenge your team to reward suppliers that outperform; and (5) mitigate risk with a digital supply chain.

Roy Anderson
Roy Anderson is the former Chief Procurement Officer for State Street Bank and Vice President of Global Procurement for MetLife. Prior to joining MetLife, he worked as the director of purchasing at John Hancock Financial Services, director of purchasing operations for Fidelity Investments and as purchasing manager in commercial and military manufacturing facilities for Textron Corp. and Raytheon Company. He has built data driven, high performing global sourcing teams in the US, India, Korea and Mexico. Mr. Anderson has thirty years of experience in sourcing and procurement delivering solid results in categories such as legal, contingent worker, marketing, print, IT, facilities, professional services and travel. He has been successful at implementing supplier risk management, performance, diversity, and governance programs. During his corporate career, he has championed several e-procurement, change management and green initiatives. Mr. Anderson holds a B.S. and an MBA from Babson College of Wellesley, Massachusetts.

WHAT CEOs WANT FROM PURCHASING
Jeoff Burris, Founder and Principal, Advanced Purchasing Dynamics

Early in 2016, Advanced Purchasing Dynamics surveyed and interviewed CEOs, Presidents, General Managers and other C-Suite executives to obtain their views on purchasing and the supply chain. The results were surprising in that 58% of the leaders believed that purchasing was not delivering bottom line value and 52% believed that purchasing was not aligned with the demands that customers were placing on their businesses.

The results were so interesting that APD will repeat the survey in January and February 2017 to gain further understanding and see if there are any trends developing. In this session, Jeoff Burris will present the results of the 2017 survey and provide insights on what purchasing leaders can do to provide value for their companies.

Jeoff Burris
Jeoff Burris is the Founder and Principal of Advanced Purchasing Dynamics (APD), a leading provider of purchasing services and software to the manufacturing industry. Mr. Burris has thirty years of specialized experience in the automotive industry working globally for companies such as Ford, Magna and Simpson Industries across a diversity of roles from Buyer to Chief Procurement Officer. He is a purchasing expert who possesses the knowledge and experience necessary to transform underperforming purchasing organizations into world-class leaders. Mr. Burris founded APD in 2004, and today helps clients make investment in their purchasing capabilities into a competitive advantage. He is a recognized industry leader, and frequently speaks to executives at industry events on the role of Purchasing, and how companies can maximize their purchasing ROI. Mr. Burris lives in Plymouth, Michigan with his wife, Cheryl, and their four children.
VALUE CHAIN MANAGEMENT: THE NEXT EVOLUTION IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

David J. Frayer, Ph.D., Director, Executive Development Programs, The Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan State University

For decades, organizations have been driving integrated supply chain strategies to improve business performance and create value for customers and shareholders. Unfortunately, many organizations have been unable to realize the full promise of supply chain integration. Why? The scope of supply chain management is often too narrow and fails to realize critical contributions possible in the broader context of the organization and society. Value chain management captures these contributions and positions supply chain professionals as central to achieving sustainable, competitive advantage for our organizations and our communities. This discussion will provide ideas and examples from research being conducted at Michigan State University and help individuals think about the potential for value chain management in their own organizations.

David J. Frayer, Ph.D.

David J. Frayer, Ph.D. is Director of Executive Development Programs in The Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University, where he leads a group responsible for design, development and delivery of executive and professional education programs and two executive education and corporate learning facilities (The James B. Henry Center for Executive Development in Lansing, Michigan and the Management Education Center in Troy, Michigan). In addition to these responsibilities, he also co-directs the annual Purchasing and Supply Chain Management Executive Seminar (June 4-9, 2017). Prior to assuming these responsibilities, Dr. Frayer was involved in The Global Procurement and Supply Chain Benchmarking Initiative, a third-party procurement and supply chain benchmarking effort involving over 200 companies worldwide. He received his Ph.D. in marketing, logistics and international business at Michigan State University and previously received his B.A. and M.B.A. in marketing from Michigan State University. Prior to returning to Michigan State University for his Ph.D., Dr. Frayer was part of a product development staff group at Ameritech Publishing, Inc. (Troy, Michigan). Dr. Frayer is a member of the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, the Supply Chain Management Council of West Michigan and received the 2009 Outstanding Achievement Award for the advancement of the supply chain management profession in West Michigan.
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL IMPORT/EXPORT COMPLIANCE PROGRAM
Sonja Johnson, Executive Director, Van Andel Global Trade Center and Seidman College of Business, Grand Valley State University

This session will raise important facts you need to know to avoid import/export compliance issues from impacting your operation and bottom line. Customs and the Bureau of Industry and Security are putting an increased focus on business import and export operations to enforce international compliance in both directions of the supply chain. This session will explore best practices for import and export operations to limit exposure from not meeting compliance. Key topics covered include CBP informed compliance, what it is and how to include it in your operations, how the Customs Mod Act impacts your importer process, what you should do to optimize your operations for import/export compliance and meet reasonable care requirements, conduct export screening, best practices for recordkeeping to meet compliance obligations and potential fines and penalties not meeting import/export compliance.

Sonja Johnson
Sonja Johnson is a licensed U.S. Customs Broker, who specializes in global supply chain, U.S. Customs compliance issues, and foreign-trade-zones. Her past work includes supporting international trade operations, global sales/customer service, supply chain with responsibilities for developing and overseeing global customs compliance programs. Ms. Johnson has extensive experience in global trade and is an international consultant and trainer on a variety of subjects such as C-TPAT, EXIM, NAFTA, FTZ, export and import compliance and International Traffic and Arms Regulations (ITAR). She has planned and/or led trade missions to facilitate business expansion of Michigan businesses to Mumbai, India; Guangzhou Province in Southern China; and most recently to Sao Paulo, Brazil. She is responsible for setting the strategic direction, annual budget, and oversees all federal and state grants as well as daily operations for VAGTC; which offers innovative international programs and training services, import export consulting, and international research to assist Michigan businesses with their global growth.

Ms. Johnson is a premier networker and collaborator in the international business community and supports local & national news media which often seek her expertise on global trade issues, including The New York Times, Journal of Commerce, Business Review, Grand Rapids Press, Inbound Logistics Magazine and WOOD Radio. She is a recipient of the Grand Rapids Business Journal award of top leaders in West Michigan forty and under and was featured as one of the area’s most influential women by Grand Rapids Magazine

OCEAN TRANSPORTATION – GLOBALIZATION, MARKET FORCES, AND THE EVER-CHANGING OPERATING ENVIRONMENT OF THE WORLD’S OCEAN TRANSPORTATION SEGMENT
Mike Barba, Director of Ocean Imports, Americas, Expeditors International of Washington, Inc.

In today’s global marketplace, ocean transportation is a critical step in the extended supply chains of companies around the world. However, the industry has been plagued with overcapacity, fierce competition, and carrier financial performance related issues causing many concerns for shippers and ancillary industries. The recent bankruptcy of one of the top carriers in the world has shaken the industry to its core and created many questions about its future outlook. In this session, you will see an overview of current global market conditions along with the market levers that affect both carrier behavior, and ultimately, the global supply chain. We will also discuss the current and future operating environments, supply and demand outlooks, financial performance of the carrier segment, and finally, take a look at outside factors that can, in certain cases, make markets act irrationally.

Mike Barba
Mike Barba is Director of Ocean Imports, Americas, Expeditors International of Washington, Inc. – a global logistics company headquartered in Seattle, Washington. As a Fortune 500 and S&P 500 company, they employ 15,300 trained professionals in a worldwide network of over 330 locations across six continents. Over his thirty-six year career, Mr. Barba has held various management positions on both the liner and third-party logistics side working in terminal operations, sales, and marketing. He received a B.A. from St. Michael’s College, Winooski, Vermont. He has four children, two grandchildren, and currently reside in Seattle, Washington with his wife, Karen.

EVENT PARTNERS:
MANAGING A GLOBAL SUPPLY BASE – PANEL DISCUSSION
Larry Muzyk, Global Director of Procurement, Amway
Derek Ludwig, Vice President of Global Supply Chain, Steelcase
Abby Lilly, Vice President Supply Chain, Eaton Aerospace

In today’s global business environment, leading companies engage supply partners from around the world to take advantage of regionally specific knowledge, skill sets, raw materials, inventory positioning, economies of scale, and cost structures, among other reasons. Managing the diverse cultural, legal and language differences, time zone challenges, extensive travel, and trade differentiations in a multi-country supply base can be perplexing and costly without employing well-structured strategies for the management of the complexity and distances. This panel will discuss their experiences, engaged strategies, policies, and best practices for managing suppliers in a vast and global supply network. Whether your company manages one or one thousand suppliers internationally, this session will be a great opportunity to hear from some of Michigan’s leading companies on the topic.

Larry Muzyk
Larry Muzyk has been with Amway Corporation for the past seven years as their Global Director of Procurement & Portfolio Operations. Prior to Amway, Mr. Muzyk managed a successful career in operations and general management at several service industry organizations. He is a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt leader who skillfully blends an extensive global supply chain leadership background with a focus on operational excellence and cross-functional performance. His ability to define and execute strategies to reduce cost while bringing products to market have been key aspects of his success. Mr. Muzyk is a graduate of Adrian College and is also a member of the Retail Operations Advisory Board at Goodwill Industries.

Derek Ludwig
Derek Ludwig is the Vice President of Global Procurement for Steelcase, Inc. In this role, he is responsible for all Steelcase sourcing activities globally. He started with Steelcase in 2000 and has held several roles both inside and outside of the procurement and supply chain functions with the company. For a brief period of time, Mr. Ludwig left Steelcase to become Vice President of Supply Chain for Spectrum Health. He has served in a number of board and speaking engagements, including as president of the Supply Chain Management Advisory Board for Grand Valley State University. Mr. Ludwig is a graduate of Michigan State University, graduating with a BA in Marketing followed by an MBA with an emphasis in Supply Chain Management and Finance. He currently lives just outside of Grand Rapids, Michigan with his wife and two children.

Abby Lilly
Abby Lilly is the Vice President of Supply Chain for Eaton Aerospace. In this position, she has overall purchasing responsibility for 21 plants around the world. She has over 20 years of experience in the aerospace industry. She has held positions of increasing responsibility in supply chain management, customer management and program management throughout her career. Prior to Eaton Aerospace, Ms. Lilly was the Vice President of Supply Chain for GKN Aerospace North America. In this position, she had purchasing responsibility for 14 plants in North America. She also was a member of the management team that performed the due diligence on the Volvo Aerospace acquisition. Prior to GKN, she held a number of leadership positions with Rolls-Royce North America including: Regional Purchasing Executive (2008-2010), Vice President, Savannah Operations (2005-2007), and Program Manager, Third Party Logistics Implementation (2003-2005). Ms. Lilly holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance/Business Administration from Butler University, a Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Engineering from Purdue University and a Master’s in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee.

EVENT PARTNERS:
THE EMERGENCE OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN LEADER
Steven A Melnyk, Ph.D., Professor of Supply Chain Management, Michigan State University

Supply chains are transforming from tactical to strategic. This new supply chain, requires a supply chain leader with skills and orientations not currently found in many supply chain managers. This session will focus on what we need to make that change complete, and the steps to get there. Specifically, we will focus on the 11 traits that differentiate the supply chain leader of the tomorrow from the supply chain manager of today. We also explore the challenges of how to develop such leaders.

Steven A. Melnyk
Steven A. Melnyk, Ph.D. is Professor of Operations and Supply Chain Management (Ph.D. – The Ivey School, University of Western Ontario, 1981) in the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. He has co-authored 17 books on operations and supply chain management. His research interests include supply chain and design, metrics/system measurement, responsiveness supply chains, supply chain design, sustainability, and strategic supply chain management. Dr. Melnyk is an active researcher whose articles have appeared in over 90 international and national refereed journals. Dr. Melnyk sits on the editorial review board for Production and Inventory Management, the Journal of Business Logistics, the International Journal of Production Research. Dr. Melnyk is known for his ability to bridge the gap between the academic and practitioner worlds. He has spoken extensively nationally and internationally at meetings of such organizations as ISM, APICS, Supply Chain Council (both Europe and North America), SAPICS, InterLog, General Services Administration, National Defense Industry Association, Decisions Sciences Institute, Production and Operations Management Society, Supply Chain Management Association, and North American Research Symposium. Finally, Dr. Melnyk was a member of the APICS 2016 Board of Directors and a member of the APICS leadership team (2015).

CREATING A CLIMATE FOR CULTURALLY INTELLIGENT INNOVATION
Kristin Ekkens, Manager, Diversity + Inclusion, Spectrum Health

From attracting and retaining top talent to managing a changing diverse workforce to developing new strategies that reach fast growing diverse markets, business leaders are continually innovating. How can diversity and inclusion fuel this innovation? This interactive session explores what it means to be a culturally intelligent leader and why that is important in supply chain management. The session also explores strategies for creating a climate of culturally intelligent innovation.

Kristin Ekkens
Kristin Ekkens is a cultural strategist, consultant, and global speaker. Her passion and area of expertise is helping organizations drive culturally intelligent innovation. She brings a unique perspective to global leadership and talent management. Mrs. Ekkens is manager of Inclusion & Diversity at Spectrum Health. In this role she leads system-wide efforts to attract and retain diverse talent and increase cultural intelligence of all providers and employees. Her career experience also includes TEDx speaker (2014), founder/CEO of C3 Consulting LLC, a consultancy focused on developing culturally intelligent individuals, teams, and organizations, corporate intercultural trainer, executive director of a national workforce development organization, and workplace language and literacy program director.

Mrs. Ekkens has been recognized as a “cultural entrepreneur” and has won numerous awards and international recognition including: (1) Building Bridges Award in April 2016 by the West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; (2) 40 under forty Business Leader in 2015 by the Grand Rapids Business Journal; (3) international exposure in a 2008 broadcast of ABC World News Tonight with Charles Gibson; and (4) recognition in 2011 as a best practice by Singapore Workforce Development Agency.

Ms. Ekkens’ international experience includes living in Spain, Mexico and Costa Rica, and traveling extensively throughout the United States, United Kingdom, Western Europe, and New Zealand.
DeWys Manufacturing is a lean manufacturer offering customers a full spectrum of metal fabrication services. Jon DeWys, CEO, and Laura Elsner, Workforce Development Manager, will share their techniques for attracting and retaining team members in the highly competitive manufacturing environment. They will also discuss the importance of the DeWys University training model created to develop the team members necessary for organizational growth. By utilizing in-house trainers, DeWys Manufacturing has successfully created career opportunities and career pathing for all team members. Mr. DeWys and Ms Elsner will also discuss the community involvement they are so passionate about. From working with high schools, colleges and regional organizations, they will express the importance of community activism in the STEM fields and commitment to creating a culture of excitement around STEM related careers. They will prove that even small/medium size manufacturers can play a big role in changing the perception of manufacturing.

Jon DeWys
Jon DeWys is CEO of DeWys Manufacturing, a contract manufacturer of precision sheet metal components, weldments, machining, powder coating, and assembly. The company serves an array of markets including office furniture, medical, power generation, industrial, and electronics. Mr. DeWys is also the founder of DeWys University, created out of the need to train and equip both current and new team member’s skills in a growing environment. Mr. DeWys and his company are very intentional in the community collaborating with young adults, parents, and schools in promoting manufacturing as a very rewarding career. While recently serving as public school board member, he became increasingly more aware of the needs and challenges of the education system. After his tenure, he became a member of Talent 2025, where he is actively involved in a working group to better understand the complexities of our K-12 model in and outside of the classroom. He continues to work very close with several school districts in the area in fostering innovative partnerships between employers and students.

Laura Elsner
Laura Elsner is the Workforce Development Manager for DeWys Manufacturing, Inc. She is active in the local high schools and colleges in bringing awareness to the manufacturing opportunities available to the students. She has taken up the challenge of proving that manufacturing isn’t the dirty, dead end jobs of the past. Along with that, she is active in all forms of recruiting to find candidates to be a part of the DeWys team. Ms. Elsner was also instrumental in establishing DeWys University. She believes in the need for continuous education of the current and future DeWys Mfg. workforce to keep their skill set in-line with the innovative technology transforming the manufacturing workplace. This approach has helped to bridge the skills gap for DeWys Manufacturing.