

NEW Manufacturing Alliance

Board of Directors Meeting

April 3, 2024

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Teams

Minutes

Attendees: Jan Allman, Brandon Beard, Jeff Berg, Ron Buchinger, Steve Cahoon, Tad Campana, Brian Conrad, Josh Delforge, Nicole Malson, Rick Recktenwald, Michael Schulze, Mark Weber, Barb LaMue and Ann Franz.

Topic 1: Special guest Missy Hughes, WEDC

Due to being ill, Missy Hughes was unable to join the meeting. The taskforce discussed opportunities to especially help small to medium size manufacturing companies on their digital transformation journey including on how to incorporate AI into their businesses. There are companies, especially larger companies that are utilizing AI into their processes. Jan shared that Fincantieri Marine Group is utilizing AI in exoskeleton equipment to reduce injuries and AI in welding. There are machine builders that are needing to add AI in the machines they build to help with predictive maintenance. Tad shared he is using an AI tool for writing contracts. Mark Weber shared that one issue companies are facing are related to so many different operating systems (CRM, Learning Management Systems, HRIS) that do not work together.

The Board believes the state could impact the greatest number of manufacturers by creating a program to educate manufacturers in digital transformation and using AI to onboard/upskill employees. As the aging workforce continues to retire in record numbers, getting employees onboarded and upskilled is a greater need. AI can be used to onboard/upskill more quickly than ever before. Companies being able to take binders full of information and SOP's and utilize AI/Industry 4.0 tools will significantly shorten the training needed for employees. In addition, educating companies on how to use Industry 4.0 tools with real world case studies of what other manufacturers used in process improvement, predictive maintenance and digital transformation.

Topic 2: Taskforce updates

Safety – 48 people on the newly formed taskforce. The first 3 meetings have gone well with strong attendance.

K-12 – The taskforce has designed a new award program recognizing youth apprenticeship students. There will be two different awards, one for graduating high school seniors that just finished an YA program and given at the June Quarterly Membership meeting. The second award will be given to a student that completed a YA program as a 11th grader and is working for the company as a senior in high school. The winners will be recognized at the Excellence Awards. There will be 2 winners for each award. Each winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Lastly, the taskforce is working on a new soft skills video featuring Communication skills. It will debut at the Get Real Premiere on October 1. The companies being featured are Alliance Laundry Systems, Green Bay Packaging, La Force, Nicolet Plastics and Packer Fastener. Last year's 'How to be Successful in the Workplace' video has had 1,000s of students watch the video. A teacher from Clintonville reached out to NEWMA and shared that they felt the video was so good that they had every high school student watch it during one of their homeroom periods.

STEM – The Mind Trekkers STEM event held on February 15 & 16 was a great success with over 2,300 middle school students. The taskforce is working on a summer event for tech ed teachers featuring Pizza, Beer & Cheese. Tech Ed teachers will tour AK Crust, Sargento Foods and Badger State Brewery on June 19th. At the brewery, there will be a discussion on how to get more students interested in industrial maintenance careers. Board members are encouraged to attend at 3 p.m. at Badger State Brewery.

Communications – The taskforce wanted to recognize the 2024 All Stars earlier in the year, instead of waiting for the October Excellence Awards dinner. We partnered with the Green Bay Blizzard and had the All Stars go onto the field to be recognized at the March 16th game. Unfortunately, Alex Zacarias who has filmed the All Stars over the past 16 years is

no longer available. He has a new job, we are exploring other video production companies. The taskforce is also going to host a focus group discussion with college interns.

Industry 4.0 – The 2024 Industry 4.0 survey is completed with 73 companies participating in the study. On May 30th faculty from throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan will be invited to hear the results, along with going on a plant tour. Board members are encouraged to host the faculty in the morning and then attend the 1 p.m. report out at Lambeau Field's Johnsonville Tailgate building.

Talent – the agenda has been created by the taskforce for the upcoming Future of Work: Mental Health in the Workplace Summit being held at FVTC on May 1 from 8 a.m. – noon.

Fond du Lac & Marinette – The Fond du Lac taskforce will be going on 2 high school tech department tours on April 9th at Central Wisconsin Christian and Waupun High School. The Marinette taskforce is focused on childcare shortage/issues in the county. Last year, we filmed 'What is Made' and 'Careers in' Fond du Lac and Marinette Counties. In fall of 2024, we will debut videos featuring Shawano and Oconto counties.

NCMMA – The 10th annual SeaPerch competition was held on February 17th with 20 teams competing from throughout the region. The first place team was from Aldo Leopold school and second place was from Washington Island. Both teams will be going to the national competition.

Topic 3: June 6 Quarterly Membership meeting

The next quarterly membership meeting will take place on June 6th at Lambeau Field as part of the New North Summit. The session will be held on the 4th floor from 1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. with networking immediately after the program.

Agenda:

- Short video celebrating our 18th anniversary – the organization formed on June 6, 2006.
- 2024 NEWMA events and programs
- 2024 Industry 4.0 study results
- 2024 YA Award winners and their companies
- Sponsor – UKG: How to be a great place to work

All Board members are encouraged to attend.

Topic 4: Machining & Industrial Maintenance career recruitment

The STEM taskforce will be working on a recruitment video to encourage more students to go into machining and industrial maintenance careers. The goal would be to have this video completed in the fall. An inquired if there was interest in working on a grant project to upskill operators to be machinist and production works to be industrial maintenance mechanics? The training could fund member employees to learn these new skills by attending classes 1 day a week or 1 day every other week for a semester or two. The Board also suggested upskilling machine operators to have more mechanical aptitude and problem-solving skills to lessen the need for industrial maintenance mechanics to fix the problem that are often an easy fix. NEWMA had a training program developed that Brandon Beard led that was very successful. Ann will bring some members together to discuss further.

Topic 5: Associate members

There were 4 Associate member applications:

- Market Masters
- Rising Tides Analytics
- Shift Visuals
- UKG

Motion made by Jan and second form Brandon. Unanimously approved. NEWMA has 19 new members for 2024.

Topic 6: Upcoming NEWMA events and programs

- **April 10th: Taps + Tours Business after Hours at Appleton International Airport from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.** Register for this free event at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/newma-taps-tours-business-after-hours-tickets-861531242137?aff=oddtcreator>
- **April 25th: Brown County 12th grade Job fair at NWTC**
- **May 1st: Future of Work: Mental Health in the Workplace at FVTC from 8 a.m. – noon.** Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/AnnFranz/future-of-work-2024>.
- **May 30th: Industry 4.0 Tours & Dialogue at Lambeau Field, Johnsonville Tailgate building at 1:15 p.m. – 3 p.m.**
- **June 5th: President’s Cup Scholarship Golf Scramble at Blackwolf Run**
- **June 6th: NEWMA Quarterly Membership meeting at Lambeau Field, 4th floor from 1:15 p.m. – 3 p.m.**
- **June 19th: Pizza, Beer & Cheese Tours & Dialogue for Tech Ed Teachers**

At the May 23rd New North Board meeting will include a conversation with President Rothman, with the UW System. The discussion will be focused on the new Wisconsin Biohealth Tech Hub designation which includes a focus on medical device manufacturers. If Board members are interested in attending, please contact Barb. The meeting with the president is from 2 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Topic 6: Next steps and meeting on July 24 from 8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. at Voith

Ron shared that NWTC contacted him about revising the agreement NEWMA has with the college. He along with Mark Kaiser will be meeting with the college on May 2, 2024.