

**NEW Manufacturing Alliance**

**Communications Task Force**

March 18, 2026

Titletown Manufacturing

8:30 a.m.

*Minutes*

**ATTENDEES:** Aaron Baer-BPM, Brad Cebulski-BConnected, Cassie Diedrick-Titletown Mfg., Ann Franz-NEWMA, Taylor Vande Vyver-U.S. Lubricants, Nate Vandergrift-The Lawton Standard Co.

**Topic 1: Plan 2026 All Stars & Future All Stars Awards – May 6, 2026**

Today's meeting is to finalize the details for the May 6 event, which is also being planned by the K-12 taskforce. The Awards dinner will be held at the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers stadium. The event is recognizing the 2026 All Stars and Future All Stars YA winners. Plus we will be inviting companies and their nominees that didn't win attend, both 2026 All Star applicants and 2026 Future All Star YA nominees.

Event starts at 5 p.m. with fun interactive events featuring engagement with the 2026 All Stars.

Ideas from February's Communications taskforce meeting for the programming before the dinner:

- Name that tool with winners getting a tool.
- Have a measuring contest with calipers.
- Virtual weld competition.
- Foundry in a box activity and/or paper making activity.
- For the food manufacturers that have a winner, a table of their product to taste.

Other ideas from previous meeting:

1. Have the All Star companies give logo swag to the YA winners.
2. Create a custom jersey to give to the YA winners.
3. On the tables, have a handout on what the companies make that have a winner or a tables around the room with products that are made by the companies that have employees being recognized at the night's event.

Ideas from Timber Rattlers:

Special behind the scenes of the ballpark for the YA Award winners and parents starting at 4 p.m.

Giant Jenga – play against an All Star, beat the All Star and get a logo swag gift

Connect 4 - play against an All Star, beat the All Star and get a logo swag gift

Corn Hole - play against an All Star, beat the All Star and get a logo swag gift

Popcorn machine during social hour - \$175

Picture of each All Star being on the big screen on the field

Food: Lemonade bar with flavor pumps and Brisket

Additional ideas from the K-12 taskforce:

Poster of the YA winners like a rookie baseball card.

Mentors of the student give the introduction to the YA winners.

Dinner starts at 6 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. then Awards program.

For the Awards presentation, have a portion of the All Stars video shown as an introduction for each winner. Have the YA Awarded first then 2026 All Stars

Other ideas from today's meeting:

- Have video and photos on the big screen on the field.
- Create posters aka Rookie Trading Cards of the YA winners
- BPM will work on a banner for the event that can be used for future Awards dinners.

## **Topic 2: Plan 20<sup>th</sup> NEWMA anniversary celebration – June 17, 2026**

Great North Commons was secured which has both the indoor and outdoor feel the taskforce wanted for the event. It was suggested hosting the event from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. I'm proposing 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (possible until 4 p.m. for those that want to stay). The program would be approximately 90 minutes long and then go into a networking reception.

Goals of the event:

1. Celebrate the **collective impact of the membership**
2. Surface **what members value most**
3. Co-create the **next 10–20 years of priorities**

**Potential title: 20 Years of Impact — Shaping the Future of Manufacturing in Northeast Wisconsin**

**Agenda:**

1. **Welcome & Opening Video**
  - 3–4 minute video montage
    - early days (2006)
    - key programs
    - member testimonials
  - Welcome from Executive Director

**Suggested framing:** The NEW Manufacturing Alliance was built by manufacturers and partners who believed we could solve the workforce challenge together.

### **2. “20 Years in 10 Minutes”**

**Goal:** Celebrate achievements without a long speech.

Sections:

1. The Beginning (2006)
2. Building the Pipeline
3. Programs that Changed Perceptions
4. Industry Collaboration
5. Preparing for Industry 4.0

Ask the question in a poll: If the NEW Manufacturing Alliance did not exist tomorrow, what would the region lose?"

Highlight milestones such as:

- growth from 12 members to 400+
- scholarship investments
- All Stars recognition
- partnerships with education
- Manufacturing First Expo involvement

### **3. What has mattered most? --Format: Table discussion + live polling**

**Questions**

1. What NEWMA program or initiative has had the greatest impact on your company or organization?
2. Which activity has been most valuable for the region's workforce pipeline?
3. What should NEVER change about the Alliance?

### **4. Member Story Panel – have 3-5 panelist on different topics:**

- hiring interns or youth apprentices
- classroom partnerships
- All Star stories
- industry collaboration

## 5. Next section: “Designing the Next 20 Years”

### Example Themes

1. Future Workforce
2. Technology & Industry 4.0
3. Manufacturing Image & Awareness
4. Education Partnerships
5. Regional Collaboration
6. Talent Attraction

### Questions for Each Table

1. What will manufacturing talent needs look like in 2031?
2. What major workforce problem should NEWMA solve next?
3. What program should exist that does NOT exist today?
4. Who should NEWMA partner with that we aren't partnering with today?
5. If resources were unlimited, what bold initiative should NEWMA launch?

## 6. Closing – cocktail reception

The taskforce will be working on the 20 year anniversary magazine with MaryBeth Matzek. Sponsors will be featured in the publication. One suggestion was having each spotlight share how their business has changed from 20 years ago, maybe more employees, more revenue, etc.

Sponsorship levels for the event:

\$2,000 sponsor with proceeds for event & social media campaign for industrial maintenance/machining careers

\$1,000 sponsor for the Scholarship Fund

\$300 sponsor for the industrial maintenance/machining

Aaron shared that BPM will work on the 20 year logo.

### Topic 3: Taps + Tours Business after Hours & NEW Manufacturing Insights Podcast

Ann asked for ideas for possible venues for the year's Taps + Tours Business after Hours, plus ideas for podcast guests. Podcast guests could be someone from FTI regarding their national work on data centers and FVTC's Venture Center. BayTec Games is another potential guest.

### Topic 4: Upcoming NEWMA Events

March 21: All Stars recognized at Green Bay Blizzard game

April 2026: Timber Rattler Tuesday night Bang for Your Buck and Racetrack sponsorships – a few more sponsorships available for the Timber Rattlers

April 14: Future of Work – Employee Retention Summit at FVTC - <https://form.jotform.com/260487065830157>.

May 6: 2026 All Star & Future All Star YA Awards dinner at the Timber Rattlers

June 17: NEWMA 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary membership meeting

### Topic 5: Set agenda and next meeting on April 21 at 8:30 a.m. via Teams