

PRESS RELEASE

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Northwest Wisconsin Participates in National Manufacturing Day Initiative

Menomonie, WI, Oct. 11, 2012 – More than 200 manufacturers across the nation opened their doors to the community last week to celebrate Manufacturing Day and will continue to do so throughout the month of October. Wisconsin manufacturers including Johnson Electric Coil and Nexen Group participated to help expand knowledge and improve public perception of manufacturing careers and manufacturing's value to the local and U.S. economy.

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the Manufacturing Institute, along with the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association, International and the U.S. Commerce Department's Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership, were co-producers of the event. Locally, the Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC), based at University of Wisconsin – Stout sponsored and promoted the initiative.

Johnson Electric Coil in Antigo, Wis. took advantage of the opportunity to showcase their business and the outstanding results of the continuous improvement activities they have implemented with the assistance of the NWMOC. Company officials said these initiatives have not only resulted in positive impacts on their bottom line but have created enhanced work experiences and benefits for their employees.

“NWMOC’s work here has completely transformed the culture.” said President Bill Bockes. “It has created a secure environment for our employees including safety, finance and self-fulfillment.”

Operations Manager, Julie Berndt said: “It is so fun and rewarding to work in manufacturing. The decision making and team building components combined with the sense of accomplishment are amazing.

“It is gratifying to contribute to the important work of manufacturing which is critical to the economy in our community and our country” she said. “Anyone who thinks they can’t make a career in manufacturing is so wrong.”

Nexen Group in Webster, Wis. hosted a focused event targeted to educate school counselors in their region about the high-skill, high-pay jobs available in manufacturing. The full-day workshop and tour included a variety of presenters and table discussions addressing the skills gap and perspectives on education and manufacturing careers. The program, developed in collaboration with Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, will be offered in similar format in Baldwin with OEM Fabricators serving as the tour host and contributing to the content for the workshop.

REB, Inc. and Midwest Stainless Technologies, both of Menomonie, hosted the local student and senior Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) chapters. Attendees celebrated Manufacturing Day in Wisconsin-style with a tailgate complete with burgers, brats, beans and participants dressed in their favorite NFL/Big 10 gear. Following the grilling social, tours of both REB, Inc. and Midwest Stainless Technologies were provided.

To learn more about Manufacturing Day, visit www.mfgday.com or call the NWMOC at 866.880.2262.

The NWMOC, also under the Discovery Center umbrella at UW-Stout, is a partner in the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). The NWMOC and their NIST MEP affiliates work with small and mid-sized U.S. manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money. Last year, through third-party independent surveying, clients reported over \$13.9 million in impacts and 123 jobs created or saved as a result of NWMOC services. The NWMOC provides these services to manufacturers in 33 counties in northern and western Wisconsin to help them compete in a global economy.

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NORTHWEST WISCONSIN MANUFACTURING OUTREACH CENTER

A resource of the Discovery Center at UW-Stout

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