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For more information contact: _____

Manufacturers from seven counties announce formation of Manufacturing Alliance of South Jersey

On February 25, 2020, prior to the state shutdown, 20 South Jersey based manufacturers met with public officials and agencies representing the state, region, county, and local areas to establish the Manufacturing Alliance of South Jersey (MASJ).

“A partnership like this is long overdue,” said Ted Toth, a senior technical advisor to Rosenberger North American in Pennsauken. “Manufacturers from Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, Cape May and Atlantic counties need a unified voice to influence state policies and funding, and to let the South Jersey and surrounding areas know we exist, we’re excited to be here, and we employ.”

The Manufacturing Alliance of South Jersey brings together manufacturers to work collaboratively with chambers of commerce, workforce development boards, local school districts, community colleges, public partners and others. It is an industry-driven organization designed to tackle common issues that impact the sector and support the specific needs identified by manufacturers in southern New Jersey.

“The needs of our industry differ from manufacturers; however, one thing remains equal -- the need to attract a skilled and talented workforce,” says Kristi Moore, community relations specialist at the Paulsboro Refinery. “Manufacturers are constantly competing for qualified candidates. Therefore, we collectively need to do more to educate the public about local career opportunities in manufacturing and to develop a pipeline of skilled workers by educating students who might otherwise leave the state to find a job.”

MASJ is convened by the state Department of Labor and priorities of the group are established by manufacturers. The nascent partnership has outlined three areas on which to focus including increasing awareness of careers in the manufacturing industry, particularly with students to develop a robust talent pipeline; creating business to business relationships to share best practices and resources; and amplifying the unified voice of manufacturers in southern New Jersey to ensure elected officials, statewide organizations like the New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program, and local chambers advocate for supportive policies and programs that benefit all areas of manufacturing in the state and those specific to the South Jersey region.

According to Denise Connor, Vice President, Human Resources at Chelten House Products Inc., “I am equally excited and proud to be a part of an impressive group of professionals aligned on a mission and open to transparently share ideas, best practices, and resources. We all have a common goal to further strengthening the manufacturing industry in our region and I see this collaboration as vital to expanding our presence within the community and inspiring others to see manufacturing as a solid career choice for themselves and their families. I appreciate that the Department of Labor had the vision to see that this partnership and this platform could serve to significantly contribute to the economic vitality of South Jersey.”

With the quickly approaching National Manufacturing Month in October, MASJ agreed it would be an appropriate time to announce its formation and share its goals with the public and any manufacturer interested in joining the group.

Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo of the New Jersey Department of Labor, remarked, “This year has certainly been a challenge for everyone and I applaud these manufacturers for balancing the impact of the pandemic on their own businesses with undertaking the challenges of actively participating in a newly formed partnership. My team is committed to working with manufacturers in southern New Jersey to facilitate their success.”

The state’s seven southern counties are home to approximately 1,500 manufacturing facilities with close to 47,000 job openings throughout the region. Many of the open positions are entry level as well as in management.

To join MASJ or find out more information, go to: www.industrypartnerships.nj.gov; email njip@dol.nj.gov; or call the MASJ project manager, Terrenny Robinson (609) 477-3669.

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