

Long-Time Member, Fairchild, Examines PMPA Benefits from Local to International Levels

Diversified Production

Fairchild Auto-Mated Parts Inc., founded in 1944, crafts precision machined parts for North American companies. Fairchild has become an integral part of many industry-leading manufacturers' supply chains by partnering with its customers to find new ways to improve part performance, increase product life and decrease costs.

"Our engineering staff helps our customers with their product designs, product improvement and new product development," says Jake Thompson, president of Fairchild Auto-Mated Parts. "Our staff even assists with product testing, which has led to Fairchild developing more complete assemblies for our customers."

Fairchild serves customers in a variety of markets including defense, aerospace, HVAC, musical instruments and precision testing equipment. The company is able to serve a wide range of markets largely due to diversified capabilities. Fairchild offers custom CNC screw-machine parts, complex Swiss CNC turning services, CNC turning and milling services, as well as mechanical contract assembly utilizing both conventional screw machines along with state-of-the-art, multiple-axis CNC turning equipment.

Evolving Membership Benefits

Fairchild joined PMPA in 1946, two years after its founding, and has maintained its membership ever since.

"PMPA is a dynamic association and we continue to have a long and productive relationship with them. The benefits of membership and the depth of the association's resources helps our business continually evolve," Mr. Thompson explains. "It's difficult to identify just one area where Fairchild finds the most benefit from membership."

Mr. Thompson highlighted networking opportunities on the local and regional levels, shows, meetings, listserves and technical resources as membership benefits that Fairchild regularly takes advantage of.

"Networking with other members, which includes the listserves and attendance at national meetings and technical shows certainly rank among the highest on our list of benefits," Mr. Thompson says. "In addition, as



a technical resource, the staff at PMPA has proven to be extremely helpful, in a timely way, in providing answers. They come up with solutions to what would otherwise be complicated issues, whether they are regulatory, competitive or global in nature. We find that if there is a situation we need to dig deeper into, someone at PMPA has already done that research to get us started on finding the right answers."

One of the more recent membership benefits to Fairchild that Mr. Thompson identified is the global picture of the industry the PMPA provides through its international relationships.

"More recently, PMPA has offered us a very clear window to the global precision machining scene," Mr. Thompson says. "The opportunity to see the European and Asian markets in our industry gives us a better awareness and understanding of the interplay of our business at Fairchild with our customers who serve global markets."

Mr. Thompson traveled with a group of PMPA members and administrators to a meeting of the European counterpart of PMPA in Switzerland in September of 2012.

"We toured watch-making factories, Swiss machine tool builders, trade schools and other contract manufacturers in Switzerland. It was an incredibly valuable experience, that without our PMPA membership, we would not have

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Finding Skilled Talent: One Size Doesn't Fit All

Training the Next Generation

A number of companies have found that private-public partnerships are an effective way to create not just one or two trained individuals, but rather a system for workforce development that benefits their shops and sustains the community.

G.W. Lisk, a PMPA member company in Clifton Springs, N.Y., created a partnership with Finger Lakes Community College targeting middle-skills careers, those positions that required more than a high school education plus on-the-job training, but less than a four-year degree. The G.W. Lisk/FLCC Machining Sciences Curriculum Partnership provides a six-month, 500-hour program covering safety, measurements, manual and CNC machining, robotics and automation, math, print reading and GD&T and statistical process control. Partnering with the local community college or educational institution allows all involved to operate at their highest and best capability, helping assure that the new employees have what they need to deal with the straight, vertical learning curve that they face.

The public-private partnership model has also been employed by PMPA member company Bracalente Manufacturing Group in Trumbauersville, Penn. They partnered with Lehigh Valley Technical Institute to implement an entry-level precision machinist training program modeled after the Right Skills Now program, developed by Darlene Miller of PMPA Member Company Permac Industries. The goal of the Right Skills Now model is to provide qualified candidates with a classroom and hands-on immersion experience that gives them the essential skills needed to safely add value on the job.

Credentials Manage Risk

Darlene Miller, creator of the Right Skills Now program and PMPA first vice president, initially saw the program as a pilot, to demonstrate that employers and local community colleges could work together to create a

pipeline for talent and show that the pipeline could continue to deliver additional coursework and skills as initial graduates sought to upgrade their skills and careers. Because Right Skills Now based its skills training on the NIMS/NAM workforce credential program, there is another benefit for the program graduates: they have nationally recognized skills with the NIMS/NAM credentials and certifications, reducing the risk of hiring for employers. It also gives the trainee assurance of employability by having a recognized credential.

Resources to Sustain Your Workforce Efforts

One size doesn't fit all in our day-to-day world; there is no reason to think that it is a viable concept for us when trying to address our skilled workforce problem. The wide range of demographic and economic forces that are shaping our workforce today will not be handled with any one particular solution. But PMPA member shops continue to demonstrate (and share) that they can acquire the skills and talent they need through their own efforts, public-private partnerships and even nationally recognized programs such as Right Skills Now, in conjunction with community resources.

PMPA's mission is to provide resources to advance and sustain our members. Helping all of us recognize that workforce development is our most important challenge is not the only thing that PMPA does to advance our members' ability to respond to this challenge.

We have created a career database that helps find programs and funding for training and career development.

Link: <http://pmpa.org/docs/reference/training-database.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

For more info and links regarding a career in precision machining: <http://pmpa.org/careers/overview>

Career Opportunities Fact Sheet: <http://pmpa.org/docs/reference/fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Right Skills Now: <http://rightskillsnow.org/>

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been able to do," Mr. Thompson summarizes. "Our 67-year association with PMPA has been an enjoyable, productive and rewarding experience."

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