

ATLANTA BUSINESS CHRONICLE

MADE IN GEORGIA: MANUFACTURING & LOGISTICS

Creating support for Georgia's manufacturers

The Georgia Manufacturing Alliance (GMA) was founded in 2008 by Jason Moss, who envisioned a network that would support Georgia's manufacturing community. At that time, he was a regional sales representative for a software company providing 3D CAD software for manufacturing companies. As he researched groups for the industry, he discovered that most served a very small segment of the overall manufacturing space. Moss knew strategic alliances that could be made if these industry leaders could work together to support the entire manufacturing community.

Originally founded under the name Networking MFG, his organization began with a core group of 15 manufacturers and service providers that saw a need to find local resources for their industry. They wanted to buy, sell and trade locally, but did not have the platform and resources to make the connections. As the organization grew and evolved, the name was changed to the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance to better describe the mission of having Georgia's manufacturing community working together in harmony, in one alliance.

The Georgia Manufacturing Alliance now has six chapters across the state that are facilitated by volunteer chapter directors. The GMA staff and chapter directors work together to identify quality manufacturers, coordinate plant tours, and provide educational workshops in their regions. Each month GMA provides at least five plant tours where others can learn best business practices from their peers. Some tours this year included Kia, Kings Hawaiian, Daniel Defense, Bitzer USA, Olympic Steel, and MTI Baths, and a broad selection of tours are planned for the rest of 2017. GMA also provides educational workshops and networking events each month so the manufacturing industry can share ideas and stay up to date on an ever-evolving industry.

With coverage from Savannah to LaGrange and Gainesville to Macon, GMA serves the entire state. This year, GMA has had over 1,500 attendees participate in 62 events, and they are expected to provide more than 100 events in 2017, making the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance the most active organization in the state directly supporting manufacturers. Their capstone event of the year, the Georgia Manufacturing Summit, will be held Oct. 25 at the Cobb Galleria. This third annual summit focuses on the people, plants and products that help create a more vibrant manufacturing environment in our state.

The focus of the 2017 summit will be "How the Food & Beverage Industry Impacts the Manufacturing Community," and it is expected to attract



Jason Moss is founder of the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance

between 600 and 800 attendees. More than 20 industry leaders, including keynote speakers Rob Dugas, vice president and chief procurement officer of Chick-fil-A, and Debra Shankle, vice president of supply chain for Coca-Cola North America, will share the latest trends to track and their recommendations for a more successful future.

Other resources that have been developed by the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance include:

- ▶ **The "Buy from Georgia Month Proclamation"** – Industry leaders from across the state join GMA members and Governor Deal at the State Capitol to recognize the importance of Georgia-made products.
- ▶ **The Georgia Manufacturing Directory** – A desktop and online listing of GMA members that manufacture and provide services to the manufacturing community.
- ▶ **BuyFromGeorgia.com** – This website highlights over 800 products that are made in Georgia and can be bought on Amazon.
- ▶ **GaManufacturingJobs.com** – This job board helps connect manufacturers with quality employees that are seeking jobs in the manufacturing industry.
- ▶ **GeorgiaManufacturingCalendar.com** – This website was developed to help other industry associations (such as APICS, GAMA & Women in Manufacturing) share their events with manufacturing professionals across the state.

To learn more about the organization, membership, and upcoming events, please call 770-338-0051 or visit its website: <http://www.GeorgiaManufacturingAlliance.com>.

UPCOMING GMA PLANT TOURS AND NETWORKING

- ▶ **Wheelabrator — Sept. 21 — LaGrange**
Wheelabrator is one of the world's leading providers of surface preparation technology, offering a complete range of airblast, wheelblast and mass finishing solutions for the aerospace, automotive, foundry, shipping, construction and medical industries. They not only specialize in the blast process, but can also design and deliver a complete, automated, materials handling solution to include masking, delivery, loading and unloading of the components, and delivery to the next production process.
- ▶ **Hon Co. — Sept. 22 — Cedartown**
Since 1944, The Hon Co. has been a global leader in creating high quality steel and wooden office furniture including brands such as AllSteel, Maxon & Basyx. While touring their 500,000-square-foot facility, attendees will see significant investments in state-of-the-art manufacturing and their vast fulfillment center.
- ▶ **Advanced RP & SimuTech Tour — Sept. 28 — Suwanee**
Advanced RP is home to the Southeast's largest 3D printing Demo Center showcasing Stratasys and Desktop Metal 3D printers. Attendees will walk through the entire 3D printing process from initial concept, to the optimized version, to the finished printed model.
- ▶ **Leggett and Platt — Oct. 5 (National Manufacturing Day) — Monroe**
No charge to attend, open to the public – drop in 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Leggett & Platt is a diversified manufacturer that conceives, designs and produces a broad variety of engineered components and products for customers worldwide, including bed components like box spring, innerspring and fiber comfort layers; recliners with L&P motion mechanisms; and store product display shelving.
- ▶ **Networking events**
Only one industry professional per business category is allowed.
 - NE Coffee & Connections — 1st Tuesday of each month (8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.) in Gainesville
 - Alpharetta Networking Lunch — 1st Tuesday of each month (11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.)
 - Gwinnett Coffee & Connections — 1st Friday of each month (7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.) in Suwanee
 - NW Networking Lunch — 1st Friday of each month (11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.) in Atlanta (Cobb Galleria Area)