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How Do We Inspire and Prepare the Next Generation of Advanced Manufacturing Workers?

I receive daily news feeds from multiple manufacturing magazines and they all say the same thing – there is a shortage of skilled workers in manufacturing that is approaching a catastrophic point. At the current rate, in 10 years three million jobs in advanced manufacturing will go unfilled because there won't be workers with the appropriate skills to fill them. Prominent Technology Publications like *STEMConnector* talk about the need for diversity in STEM jobs. *Manufacturing Economy Daily* highlights the struggles to get teachers for STEM programs and the need to provide more funding for scholarships for teachers. There is much buzz about the problem; we now need to quickly expend more energy on addressing how we can inspire and properly prepare the next generation of Advanced Manufacturing workers.

We must ask ourselves – does the younger generation that is about to enter the workforce understand what Advanced Manufacturing even is? And what it pays? I would venture a guess that most of the students graduating high school today do not. If they don't know, who can blame them for not pursuing a great paying career in Advanced Manufacturing?

So we essentially have a marketing problem.

A sampling of the proactive actions that MACNY is taking to address this marketing problem include the following:

Internet Marketing

Given that most young people these days get their information from the internet, MACNY is working on improving how we market to them via that vehicle as well.

This past Fall we rolled out our new website. The new website includes updated skilled workforce and Partners for Education & Business (PEB) pages. The new pages highlight ways to build career pathways to Advanced Manufacturing. www.macny.org/skilled-workforce

Innovation Challenge for Middle School and High School Students

Partners for Education and Business (PEB) supported the SRC sponsored Innovation Challenge which gave middle school students and high school students the opportunity to participate in a multi-school challenge to invent a product that would change or improve their lives. The winning teams from each school gave a shark tank type live pitch to determine the winner in CNY.

At the high school level MACNY and PEB work to support local Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and serve on committees that support the development of new and relevant curriculums. We also actively participate in the Pathways in Technology Early College High School program (P-TECH) with the Syracuse City School District and Auburn Enlarged City School District. By participating in P-TECH, students are able to complete high school and their Associate's degree in Mechanical or Electrical Technology concurrently over a six year period. Many MACNY members volunteer to be career coaches for P-TECH. Students learn the most by hearing stories about their coach's career and the many diverse opportunities that manufacturing provides in our own community. If you haven't signed up to be a career coach yet, contact mmcbennett@macny.org for more information.

Enterprise America

PEB is a partner in the Enterprise America program which provides an opportunity for middle school students to see the inner workings of an entire community, including a manufacturing facility.

Please take a minute to check out our progress towards the efforts of spreading the word about Advanced Manufacturing in Central New York and the many ways you can become involved in helping us.

What ideas do you have to help market Advanced Manufacturing to young people? Please send your ideas to me at mponge@macny.org.