



TCMA VOICE

A newsletter presented by the Treasure Coast Manufacturers Association

FALL 2022

Indian River County Chamber boot camp gives grads a leg up

The **Indian River County Chamber of Commerce** held its third **Manufacturing Boot Camp** session this summer, with 12 students participating, including two Charter High School graduates. And, for the first time, there were three girls who participated in the program.

The program was launched in 2019 with just eight students and has grown steadily each year.

This summer, students toured 12 manufacturing facilities during the weeklong session, including visits to several new partner employers: Pusher Intakes, which makes after-market performance engine parts for diesel trucks; Integrity Metal, a metal roofing manufacturer; and Diamond



Drinks, a company the Chamber helped bring to the county that bottles a variety of fruit juices. The hands-on drilling and riveting offered at Piper Aircraft is always the students' favorite.

Members of the Chamber's Boot Camp Committee also played a crucial role in

the program by providing their expertise in the daily soft-skills sessions. Those sessions covered areas such as career planning, financial literacy, resume writing and interview skills, appropriate dress and grooming, and verbal/nonverbal communications. Plus, Manpower conducted mock interviews at the end of the week for those who were interested.

One of the graduated seniors received two job offers from participating employers and decided on the job with Diamond Drinks. Another senior had his sights set on working at Aluma Tower.

The Chamber is already gearing up for the 2023 Boot Camp session, scheduled for June 5-9.

St. Lucie County expands foreign trade zone to include all of the Treasure Coast

The **International Trade Association** recently announced that St. Lucie County's Foreign Trade Zone No. 218 has been approved by the U.S. Foreign-Trade Zones Board for reorganization under its alternative site framework, allowing for the expedited designation of sites for companies ready to conduct Foreign Trade Zone [FTZ] activities.

The service area for newly reorganized No. 218 has been broadened to encompass all of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee counties, extending significant potential benefits to the Port of Fort Pierce and Treasure Coast International Airport and Business Park.

"Foreign Trade Zone No. 218 will now become a powerful economic development tool for the entire Treasure Coast and in particular, will support the dramatic and continued growth of manufacturing in St. Lucie County," county commission chairman Sean Mitchell said.

"Foreign Trade Zone benefits are key for manufacturers interested in exporting their goods. The expansion of our FTZ will help the Economic Development Council

of St. Lucie County recruit manufacturers who can bring high-wage jobs to the county," added Pete Tesch, St. Lucie Economic Development Council president. "This is particularly good news at a time when supply chain challenges are impacting existing manufacturing businesses and as companies look for alternative locations to the congestion in South Florida."

The FTZ designation provides federal tax relief on merchandise that is shipped through the federally-approved zone. The new designation provides considerably more flexibility for companies looking to benefit from an FTZ.

St. Lucie County's original FTZ designation was approved in October 1996 under Central Florida Foreign Trade Zone Inc. at the St. Lucie County Airport. The FTZ board changed its name in 2012 to the Treasure Coast Foreign Trade Zone Inc. St. Lucie County is now the grantee of the FTZ.

FOREIGN TRADE ZONE BENEFITS

- Relief from inverted tariffs charged to component items or raw materials for a finished product.



- **Duty exemption on reexports** – If the imported merchandise is part of a finished product that is exported back out of the country, no customs duty is ever due.
- **Duty elimination on waste, scrap, yield loss or damages** – There is much less paperwork involved, as no duty reimbursement needs to be requested when damaged goods are imported into the foreign trade zone.
- **Weekly Entry Savings** – The zone user files only one customs entry per week, rather than filing one per shipment.
- **Duty Deferral** – Duty is deferred until imported merchandise is shipped out of the designated Foreign Trade Zone into the U.S. market.

Businesses with questions about Foreign Trade Zone No. 218 can contact St. Lucie County Air and Seaport executive director J. Stanley Payne at paynes@stlucieco.org or call 772.462.1450.

Apprentice programs at A-1 Roof Trusses offer employees path to success

Beginning a path of self-improvement is a big step as it takes people out of their comfort zone and challenges them with new experiences, failures and successes. At 32, Ariel Perez was living on food stamp assistance with his wife and three children when he took a position at **A-1 Roof Trusses** with the help of CareerSource Research Coast.

Not knowing what a truss was, Perez started as a stacker, earning \$12 per hour. His goal was to learn more, earn more and advance himself through the apprenticeship program.

With a few months of experience under his

belt, Perez enrolled in an On-the-Job Training program that advanced him to truss designer, which came with a salary bump adding nearly \$400 per month.

The path to advance broadened for Perez. Following the OJT completion, Perez enrolled in the Industrial Manufacturing Technician Apprenticeship program through CareerSource Research Coast. While in the program, the need of food stamps became a distant memory as his salary jumped to \$17.50 per hour, increasing his salary an additional \$500 per month.

The successful completion of the program brought pride to Perez knowing he can

support his wife and children the way he had always wanted to. Perez was promoted to quality control supervisor, a position that pays \$24 per hour.

“Now I am in a position to encourage and train others at A-1 Trusses and assist them to take a similar path that was successful for me,” Perez said.

As the apprenticeship program can serve as model for financial stability, it also provides for responsibility, leadership and, most importantly, dignity. Perez can hold his head high knowing he made the most of himself by challenging his mind and stepping out of his comfort zone.

Summit seeks solutions to skilled worker shortage in Florida

A shortage of workers, especially skilled workers, is one of the biggest issues affecting the manufacturing sector in Florida. As a result, FloridaMakes, along with its other host partners, Associated Industries of Florida, Enterprise Florida, CareerSource Florida and the Florida Chamber of Commerce, has announced the **2022 MakeMore Manufacturing Summit** scheduled for Oct. 12 and 13 that will focus on solutions to produce more talent in manufacturing.

According to a 2021 report published by the National Association of Manufacturers, authored by Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute, “The manufacturing skills

gap in the U.S. could result in 2.1 million unfilled jobs by 2030.”

This is especially true in Florida, where some manufacturers are having trouble keeping production lines open. The Treasure Coast region is home to approximately 600 manufacturers.

Since 2018, the summit has been celebrated as an annual platform to share best practices and exchange ideas about how our state resources are addressing the impact of market dynamics, economic trends and policies, and new technologies available for the manufacturing sector.

The organizations supporting the 2022

Summit include AbleTrust, Advanced Manufacturing International, Coastal Cloud, Cyber Security Solutions, Florida Department of Education, Florida Small Business Development Center Network, Florida TaxWatch, Kaufman Rossin, National Institute of Standards & Technology [NIST], North Florida Economic Development Partnership, TriNet, Veryable, Withum and many others.

Celebrate Manufacturing Month this October by joining thought leaders and stakeholders from all segments of Florida’s manufacturing sector at the MakeMore Manufacturing Summit. Visit www.Florida-MakeMore.com to learn more and register.



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A-1 Industries of Florida announces leadership appointments

A-1 Industries of Florida Inc., a leading manufacturer of pre-engineered wood trusses, recently announced that Robert Chance has joined A-1 as its new vice president of human resources and Michael Fagan has been named director of marketing.

With more than 30 years of human resources experience, Chance most recently held the role of global vice president human resources at Troy Corp.

"The addition of Bob to our team will help us implement the strategies our organization needs to continue to grow and remain successful," said John R. Herring, A-1's president and CEO. "Our people have always been our greatest asset and Bob's mastery of people and cultural development will be an advantage as we continue our vision to be a 100-year company."

Jan S. Beck, A-1's executive vice president and CFO added, "I have known Bob for eight years and am excited to welcome him to our team. A-1 is enjoying tremendous growth in both the Fort Pierce and Bainbridge locations and Bob's proven track record as a senior Human Resources executive with extensive experience in labor, talent management and employment law, along with his strong values, align perfectly with our mission, vision and core values."

Chance received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Texas Tech University. He and his wife, Tricia, are in the process of relocating to Port St. Lucie.

Bringing an abundance of marketing experience to A-1, Fagan has held various roles, including corporate marketing communications manager, marketing coordinator, events manager and videographer during his 25-year tenure at Alpine, an ITW company.

"We are very excited about Michael joining our team," said Beck. "His diverse experience in marketing communications and strategies will be an asset in expanding A-1's position in the market."

Herring who has known Fagan since he joined Alpine 28 years ago is also pleased with the addition.

"I certainly know the value he brings to the A-1 Team. I am excited to continue to build our team and expand our brand."

Added Mike Ruede, the company's executive vice president and COO, "Having Michael join our team is another testimony of how A-1 attracts top talent and is truly a career center for the 'best of the best.'"

Fagan received his associate degree in specialized business, major computer business administration and management from Prospect Hall College. He and his family reside in Plantation.

About A-1

A-1 Industries of Florida Inc., founded in 1977, is headquartered in Fort Pierce. With more than 300 employees, it is a leading manufacturer of pre-engineered wood trusses and EZWALL wall panels.



Robert Chance,
vice president
of human resources

As a well-known innovator with progressive leadership in the industry, its services include design, manufacture, inventory management and supply for the construction industry in the Southeast United States and the Caribbean. A-1 continues to be on the forefront of an assortment of new and improved services for the construction industry.

A-1 Industries of Georgia, LLC, a sister company, is located on 80 acres in Bainbridge, Georgia. This innovative new facility is involved in multiple manufacturing processes, using the latest cutting-edge computer technologies. It operates in a totally computerized manufacturing environment, utilizing CNC machines, real time scheduling programs and floor management systems creating efficiencies unmatched in the United States.

A-1 has multiple employment opportunities in Florida and Georgia for candidates looking to be part of the company's continued growth and who share in A-1's core values – "Own it, Passionate, Honesty and Respect."

New partnership offers extensive opportunities for members

I am really excited about the future of the **TCMA**. Our recent partnership with the Florida Small Business Development Center at Indian River State College under the leadership of its regional director, Tom Kindred, has provided extensive opportunities for TCMA members and the manufacturers in the Treasure Coast area.

We have held two plant tours in recent months. We will be rolling out more plant tours where manufacturers can come together, network and further develop best practices. We will be hosting quarterly events discussing Human Capital, Access to Capital, Global Supply Chain and Logistics, Operational Efficiencies, Sales/Marketing and Export strategies, and Government Procurement. Stay tuned to our TCMA online calendar as we roll out these dates.

We are also excited to be working with IRSC as it opens the state-of-the-art Advanced Manufacturing Learning Center in Fort Pierce in March.

Florida has recently surpassed Germany in its gross domestic product. This growth shows the power of our manufacturing community and the strength of the Florida economy. The Treasure Coast is quickly emerging into a manufacturing powerhouse. While there is much global economic and political uncertainty, there is also a tremendous amount of opportunity.

The recent and unprecedented increase in costs of worldwide freight has created a demand for more goods to be made in Florida. While we are focused on helping existing manufacturers continue to grow, we also want to welcome new partners to our area. The TCMA is thrilled to be playing an active role in our community as we continue to grow, thrive and partner together in the opportunities ahead.



Duane Reiff,
TCMA executive director



Michael Fagan,
director of marketing

TREASURE COAST MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION 2022 MEMBERS

A-1 Industries of Florida, Inc.
 Advanced Machine & Tool, Inc.
 Aluma Tower
 Apple Machine & Supply Co.
 D&D Welding & Fabrication LLC
 Derecktor Shipyards
 EB Airfoils, LLC
 Expert Shutter Services
 Fasco Epoxies, Inc.
 Fastsigns Vero Beach
 Florida Architectural Precast, Inc.
 Girard Equipment
 Helena Agri Enterprises
 Hi-Tide Boat Lifts
 HOG Technologies
 Hot Pie, Inc.

Indian River Select/Freshco
 Islamorada Beer Company
 Lawn Chair USA
 Lenco Marine Solutions, LLC
 Maverick Boat Group, Inc.
 Nylacarb Corporation
 OCULUS Surgical
 Orchid Island Juice Company
 Paradigm Precision, Inc.
 Phoenix Metal Products, Inc.
 Piper Aircraft
 Pursuit Boats
 Real Stone & Granite
 Ross Mixing Inc.
 Southern Sewer Equipment Sales
 Southeast Elevator Inc.

St. Lucie Battery & Tire
 The Porch Factory
 TNT Custom Boatworks LLC
 Triumph Aerospace Structures
 Unique Tool & Die, LLC

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Boys and Girls Club
 of St. Lucie County
 Business Development Board
 of Martin County
 CareerSource Research Coast
 Carr, Riggs & Ingram
 CBIZ
 Clear SEM Solutions
 Dean, Mead, Minton & Moore

Economic Development
 Council of St. Lucie County
 Express Employment Professionals
 HBK CPA's & Consultants
 Indian River County Chamber
 of Commerce
 Indian River State College
 Manpower
 Marine Bank & Trust Company
 Plastridge Insurance
 Seacoast Bank
 SouthState Bank
 Spherion
 TD Bank
 UBU Brands

Robotic welding increases Southeast Elevator production

Tom Finch from **Southeast Elevator** recently visited the Capital Robotics Training Facility in Atlanta for certification to operate the Fusion Arc 300 robotic welding cell. While there, he was also trained in safety, programming, welding, troubleshooting and maintenance. He is already putting his new skills to good use. Southeast Elevator is seeing the benefits of robotic automation with welding processes where the weld required is repetitive. It is improving the speed and quality of the welding process as well as increasing production rates, efficiency and consistency.



TCMA Board of Directors

- Jerry Jacques**, Advanced Machine & Tool, TCMA president
- Bill Wilcox**, Phoenix Metal Products, TCMA vice president
- Pete Tesch**, EDC of St. Lucie County, TCMA secretary
- Brian Bauer**, CareerSource Research Coast
- Helene Caseltine**, Greater Treasure Coast Partnership
- Jack Chadam**, CBIZ
- Lee Dobbins**, Dean, Mead, Minton & Moore
- Mike England**, Express Employment Professionals
- Tim Fischer**, Southeast Elevator
- Mike Gordon**, Piper Aircraft
- Tom Kindred**, Florida SBDC @ IRSC
- Bradd Lexer**, Indian River Select/Freshco
- Brooks Price**, Phoenix Metal Products
- Chad Rockefeller**, Expert Shutter Services
- Jarrod Trefelner**, SouthState Bank

EXPANDING YOUR BUSINESS?

Contact the economic development organization serving your county

Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Division

www.indianrivered.com

Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County

www.youredc.com

Business Development Board of Martin County

www.bdbmc.org



TREASURE COAST
 MANUFACTURERS
 ASSOCIATION

