



# EAMA RSP Hybrid Meeting

June 14, 2023

9:00 a.m.

## MEETING NOTES

### Welcome

Chairman Jewell called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. He announced four (4) new companies have joined the group since the last meeting: Loos & Company, Performance Compounding, Prysmian Group, & Unicorr Packaging Group.

### Employer Instant Poll

EWIB President/CEO Michael Nogelo said many EAMA RSP members list worker attraction and retention among their biggest challenges. Manufacturers must tap into every source of talent possible to meet their workforce needs, including populations underrepresented in manufacturing (e.g., women, urban residents, and people impacted by the criminal justice system). Mr. Nogelo recently spoke with the CT NAACP about connecting their Million Jobs Campaign to the Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI). The instant poll questions gauge employer interest in second chance hiring as part of the solution to workforce challenges.



Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance – A Connecticut Regional Sector Partnership

## Correspondence/Media

Chairman Jewell shared multiple items of correspondence and/or media coverage that had been received since the last EAMA RSP meeting with the group.

## Steering Committee Report

Mr. Nogelo reported that the group met on May 3 where they discussed ways to grow the RSP's membership & identify the number of employees EAMA RSP manufacturing members employ. An e-mail was sent out regarding two upcoming events (*E/CT Explore Manufacturing Expo on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> at Dodd Stadium, and Manufacture Your Future, Jr on June 28<sup>th</sup> @ QVCC*). An upcoming survey on the Youth MPI from ReadyCT (*covered later in today's agenda*) was covered. The group decided that there was value in holding networking events, which will be planned.

Chairman Jewell invited Jemiel Rose to share about the CT State Colleges & Universities (*CSCU*) \$8M federal National Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship Program (*NAMAP*) training reimbursement grant for on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships & pre-apprenticeship training, incumbent worker training, and related technical instruction. For more information, please contact Jemiel Rose at [hrose@commnet.edu](mailto:hrose@commnet.edu).

Eileen Candels from the CT Center for Advanced Technology (*CCAT*) shared information on State-funded apprenticeship programs that reimburse apprentices' wages.

Chairman Jewell said CONNSTEP has been asking manufacturers to sponsor high school seniors' capstone projects. Interested companies should contact Jack Crane at [jcrane@connstep.org](mailto:jcrane@connstep.org).

## Working Group Updates

- **Business-to-Business** – Charles Daniels reported that the working group would like to discover what RSP member companies believe is hindering their efforts to sell more within Connecticut supply chains. Once the group understands the challenges, it can carry out steps to reduce them. He asked EAMA RSP members to share contact information for their sales or business development staff with either himself ([charles@wepcoplastics.com](mailto:charles@wepcoplastics.com)) or [eama-rsp@ewib.org](mailto:eama-rsp@ewib.org) so the group can learn more about these needs & gaps. Mr. Daniels also shared information about the CT APEX Accelerator DoD matchmaker fair on August 8-9 at the Mystic Marriott.
- **Plastics** – Reid Chamberlin reported that the group has completed development of plastics bridge courses that will teach hands-on, practical concepts & skills in plastics machining at QVCC. The courses will target incumbent materials handlers or machine operators with a minimum of ~6 months experience, or experienced materials handlers or machine operators interested in working in a plastics manufacturing environment. The first cohort will run from September 5 to October 26 two nights per week (*cost of \$540*) and the second cohort will run from October 3 to December 19 for 1 night per week (*cost of \$950*). Ray Coombs reported that several companies have committed to sending workers. Patricia Meyer said the class capacity is 15-20 students.
- **Workforce & Outreach** – Jeff Dickey reported that the group met on June 8 where they agreed that the group's priorities are to help members recruit, engage, and retain workers and discussed group members' best practices for hiring & employee retention. The group will develop a way to share best practices with all EAMA RSP members. The group also learned about upcoming opportunities including EASTCONN's mobile manufacturing lab that is being brought to middle schools throughout the region to help students start thinking about careers in manufacturing, as well as learning about the annual Manufacture Your Future, Jr. event that QVCC will offer on June 28 for up to ~50 students. Manufacturers are encouraged to donate samples of items they produce (*Mobile Mfg. Lab*) and/or "swag" to be handed out to students (*Mfg. Your Future, Jr.*).
  - **Explore Manufacturing Expo** – Linda Riquier informed the group that the event will be held on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> at Dodd Stadium in Norwich for E/CT students in grades 7-12 to connect them with regional manufacturing employers to raise awareness and pique their interest in manufacturing careers. Manufacturing members interested in participating in the event should contact John Murphy at [jmurphy.ympi@gmail.com](mailto:jmurphy.ympi@gmail.com).

## EAMA RSP Responsibilities & Initiatives Updates

- **MPI** – Carol LaBelle reported that the State of Connecticut budget for FY24 & FY25 reinstated the MPI funding. She shared that 76 MPI/YMPI classes have been provided this program year thus far, and that EWIB has 56 classes planned between July – December 2023. Steve LaPointe shared that QVCC won three out of four awards at the inaugural statewide Manufacturing Challenge. Mr. LaPointe added that the QVCC Advanced Manufacturing program has room to enroll many more students.
- **Youth MPI (YMPI)** – David Allard reported that the YMPI had a total of 118 students (*primarily 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade*) enrolled in the program at 10 regional high schools this year. Forty-five (45) students signed up for the evaluation, with 77% of those who've taken the evaluation so far having passed. He noted that three new schools are aiming to offer the program in the next school year: Fitch, New London, and Killingly. He also noted that Elle Goslin will be leaving EWIB effective June 14 to take on the Executive Director position at the Northeast CT Chamber of Commerce.
  - **ReadyCT YMPI Survey** – Malia Sieve from ReadyCT reported that her organization is working with EWIB & EAMA RSP to expand support for YMPI programs & students through a phased approach. Part of this effort is a survey to gather feedback from manufacturers on the YMPI program. The survey will be sent out to EAMA RSP manufacturing members within a few days. She also noted that they would like to convene a focus group of employers to make the YMPI as responsive as possible to industry needs.

## Paid Sick Leave Update

Burt Elliott reported that the legislation mandating employers provide 5-10 paid sick days each year to their employees was not approved during this session.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for August 16, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid format.

## Meeting Survey & Adjournment

Chairman Jewell asked participants to complete a brief online meeting feedback survey.

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.