

MICHIGAN

MANUFACTURING

TECHNOLOGY

CENTER

A photograph of two men in a workshop setting. The man on the left is wearing a grey hoodie and looking towards the camera. The man on the right is wearing a blue polo shirt, a black baseball cap, and glasses, leaning over a wooden mechanical device. A yellow ball is suspended in the air near the device. The background shows a whiteboard with some faint text.

2026

ANNUAL  
REPORT

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Manufacturing's legacy in Michigan is the result of drive, resilience, and ingenuity.

Our world is ever-changing, and our strength lies in the ability to proactively evolve and reimagine our industry's present and future. 2025 challenged Michigan's 12,000+ small and midsize manufacturers (SMMs) to expand their capabilities, enhance supply chains, leverage technology, and prepare for tomorrow's manufacturing demands. In response, we designed MMTC's custom training, technical assistance, and hands-on consulting services to help manufacturers optimize, upskill, digitize, and create the breadth and stability of operations that underpin legacies.

**“ We meet manufacturers where they are, and whether they are envisioning the future or ready to execute, we're ready to support their journey. ”**

In 2025, MMTC launched new courses and consulting approaches, a comprehensive Learning Management System, and the inaugural Manufacturing Insights Survey to provide even deeper support to our manufacturing community. We are excited to be gathering data points from Michigan manufacturers that will fine-tune our program offerings each year and achieve the maximum value for our clients. Michigan is leading the charge in growing sectors like mobility, electrification, defense manufacturing, and aerospace, and MMTC provides the skills, strategies, and technology support that will empower manufacturers to take advantage of these opportunities. AI and Industry 4.0 are making bigger waves in our industry than ever before, and MMTC is meeting the moment with even more tools, training, and implementation guidance to ensure SMMs have access to these critical technologies.

Michigan's economy, communities, and way of life are tied to manufacturing, and we are proud to play a role in helping this industry innovate and prosper for generations to come.

*Ingrid Tighe*  
**PRESIDENT**



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# ABOUT US

## DRIVING MANUFACTURING SUCCESS WITH THE LATEST STRATEGIES & TECHNOLOGIES

Manufacturing is ever-changing, and, since 1991, MMTC has stayed at the forefront of manufacturing progress, fueling growth and innovation among Michigan's 12,000+ small and midsize manufacturers. MMTC is proud to help manufacturers access revolutionary technologies, forward-thinking business strategies, and best practices to compete and thrive in our modern manufacturing environment. As the Michigan representative of the MEP National Network™, a public-private partnership, MMTC offers affordable, expert-led training and consulting and technology integration assistance to secure the futures of manufacturers across our state.



Scan to Play

## THE MMTC DIFFERENCE

At MMTC, manufacturing is all we do. Our experts have deep and varied experience in the industry, from the shop floor to the top floor. We provide affordable, hands-on support in production facilities, boardrooms, and classrooms to help manufacturers mitigate challenges and achieve greater success. Our independent, 3<sup>rd</sup> party-administered NIST survey gives us unbiased visibility into our economic and operational impact each year.

With customized consulting services and training programs, we develop more effective business leaders, drive product and process innovation, navigate government and industry regulations, promote operational excellence, and fuel business growth and enhanced profitability. MMTC provides the tools manufacturers need to evolve with our industry at every stage of maturity. Our annual Manufacturing Insights Survey also provides key data points to gauge the state of our industry.



### Our Mission

To empower Michigan's manufacturers by providing essential resources, expert knowledge, and collaborative support that fortifies resilience and drives continuous improvement.



### Our Vision

We are the go-to resource for Michigan's manufacturers, ensuring the state's manufacturing is resilient and leads the U.S. in manufacturing innovation.

## Our Values



**INTEGRITY.** Always do the right thing.



**RESPECT.** Treat everyone how you would like to be treated.



**INNOVATION.** Maintain cutting-edge expertise in manufacturing and continuously improve.



**COLLABORATION.** We work together, sharing knowledge, connections, and resources to benefit manufacturers and meet the state's manufacturing needs.



**DRIVE.** Determined to help both our clients and MMTC achieve excellence.

# WHO IS NIST / MEP?

The National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a public-private partnership that supports the growth and competitiveness of small and midsize manufacturers.

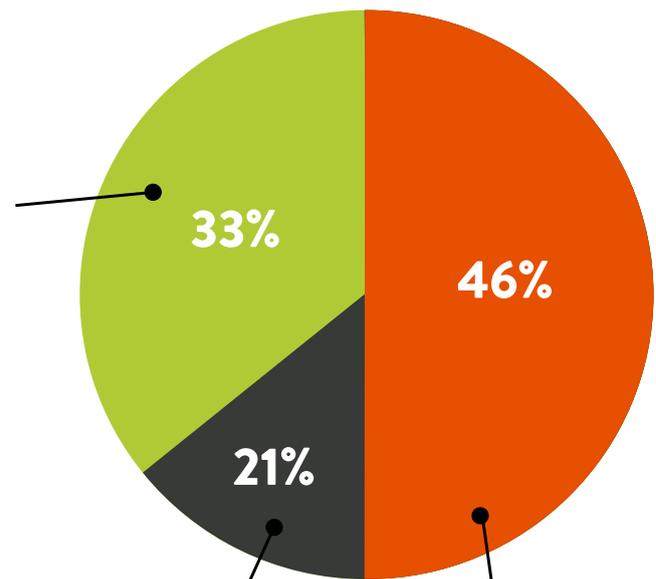
NIST provides funding for MEP centers and experts nationwide. MMTC is the MEP center serving Michigan with direct training, consulting, and technical assistance services to manufacturers, partnerships with statewide economic development and manufacturing organizations, and information and thought leadership to legislators and other stakeholders.

# HOW IS MMTC FUNDED?

# \$13M

MMTC Total Budget

\$4.9M Base Funding



\$3M State Match



\$5.1 M Client Paid Fees



# MMTC LEADERSHIP

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## **INGRID TIGHE, PRESIDENT**

Ingrid Tighe joined MMTC as President in early 2023. She is the official representative of the MEP National Network in Michigan and directs MMTC's statewide network of five offices. In her role, she creates innovation and growth strategies to secure Michigan manufacturing's future and connects with industry clients, economic development partners, and state and federal government stakeholders. Ingrid has substantial experience coordinating and directing large-scale business and community development programs, especially as the prior Director of Economic Development for Oakland County and prior Executive Director of the Birmingham Shopping District. She also served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Signal Corps.

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## **JIM GORMAN, VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGY**

Jim Gorman is MMTC's Vice President of Business Development & Strategy. He develops and implements strategies to cultivate client engagements and oversees the Business Solutions team. Jim has more than 25 years of advanced manufacturing experience, including extensive skills in process and product development, automation, strategic planning, portfolio management, operational efficiency, and innovation.

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## **TINA HURITE, VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS**

Tina Hurite is MMTC's Vice President of Operations. She is responsible for meeting financial targets, developing and adjusting KPIs, and coordinating operational activities throughout MMTC to support business strategy and to align with our clients' needs. Tina has significant experience establishing and implementing strategic plans and managing programs and operations for several automotive suppliers and technology companies. She also served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army.

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## **PETER HUNGERFORD, VICE PRESIDENT MANUFACTURING SERVICES, MMTC-WEST**

Peter brings decades of experience in Michigan manufacturing to help companies thrive. Peter spent 25+ years at ADAC Automotive, a global, tier-one supplier, serving in key roles including Chief Operating Officer, Chief Strategy Officer, and Business Unit Managing Director. Peter is a Certified Management Accountant and holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Grand Valley State University.

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## **KEVIN OLDS, REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR, MMTC-NORTH**

Kevin Olds is a U.S. Navy veteran and experienced manufacturing professional, having served as the Continuous Improvement Manager for Embraer Executive Aircraft and Continuous Improvement/Production Manager for DRS Training and Control Systems. He is skilled in Lean, Six Sigma, Theory of Constraints, and quality management, and facilitated more than 200 Kaizen projects in the U.S. and Brazil.

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# MMTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**ED TERRIS**

Operations Director, Orchid Orthopedic Solutions



**MICHAEL DAVENPORT**

President, Jireh Metal Products, Inc.



**K. VENKATESH PRASAD**

Research Fellow Emeritus, Center for Automotive Research



**HEIDI DEVROY**

CEO, Prosper-Tech Machine & Tool



**MICHAEL J. COAST**

President Emeritus, MMTC



**TOM KELLY**

Executive Director, Automation Alley



**MATT MCCAULEY**

Senior Vice President of Regional Development, MEDC



**RYAN SCHULTZ**

President, M R Products, Inc.



**SRIRAM NARAYANAN**

Professor of Supply Chain Management, Eli Broad College of Business-Michigan State University



# STATEWIDE SUPPORT FOR SMALL AND MIDSIZE MANUFACTURERS

Michigan's small and midsize manufacturers employ more than 410,000. Approximately 51,000 openings for critical manufacturing jobs are expected per year between 2020 and 2030, highlighting the need for comprehensive resources to help manufacturers streamline operations, address skills gaps, recruit and retain talent, and expand capacity to meet demands.

 **12,192**

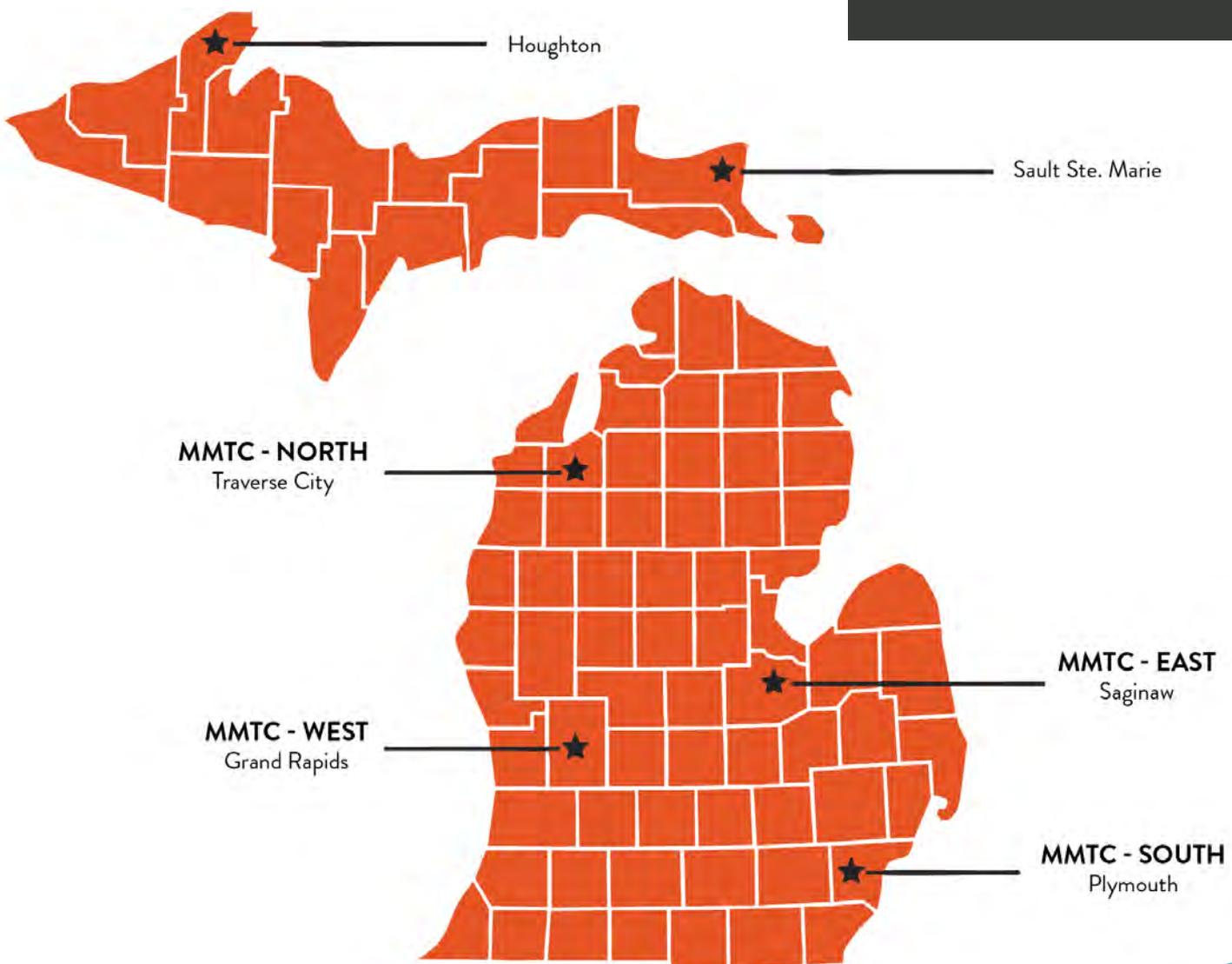
Total # of Small to Midsize Michigan Manufacturers

 **414,366**

Total # of Small to Midsize Michigan Manufacturer Employees

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, County Business

*Five offices across the state ensure MMTC is no more than a few hours from every small or midsize manufacturer in Michigan:*



# UNLOCKING POTENTIAL WITH TRAINING, CONSULTING, & TECHNOLOGY

Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) combines industry expertise and the latest skills and knowledge to help manufacturers improve productivity, create consistent quality, accelerate technology transfer, and infuse innovation throughout their business processes. MMTC incorporates the latest best practices, trends, and technologies into our training and consulting programs, including a special focus on artificial intelligence and transformative Industry 4.0 tools. Our forward-looking approach to training and consulting ensures small and midsize manufacturers across our state are optimized and future-ready.

# INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING TRAINING / COURSES  
4,483

# COMPANIES COMPLETING TRAINING / COURSES  
306

# COMPANIES COMPLETING CONSULTING  
267

Leadership / Culture / Project Management: 161

Skills Development (GD&T, Welding, Blueprint Reading): 112

Operational Excellence (Lean & Six Sigma): 73

Quality Management & Certification: 53

Advanced Technology: 22

Operational Excellence (Lean & Six Sigma): 82

Leadership / Culture / Project Management: 77

Advanced Technology: 49

Quality Management & Certification: 43

Skills Development (GD&T, Welding, Blueprint Reading): 23

## MAKING AN IMPACT IN MICHIGAN\*

**\$29.8M**

in sales growth

**\$25.3M**

in cost savings achieved

**\$449.2M**

retained in manufacturer sales

**\$88.4M**

invested in their operations

**\$25.3M**

in cost savings achieved

**\$132.4M**

in retained sales

\*Source: 2025 NIST Survey

### OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- MMTC completed 182 technology opportunity assessments to promote technology adoption among manufacturers across Michigan.
- Hosted, sponsored, or participated in more than 100 manufacturing events throughout Michigan.
- Promoted CONNEX to link manufacturers and suppliers. In 2025, 654 active companies participated in CONNEX and more than 54% had generated a Capabilities Statement in their profiles to facilitate matchmaking based on industry classification, materials used, and components manufactured.

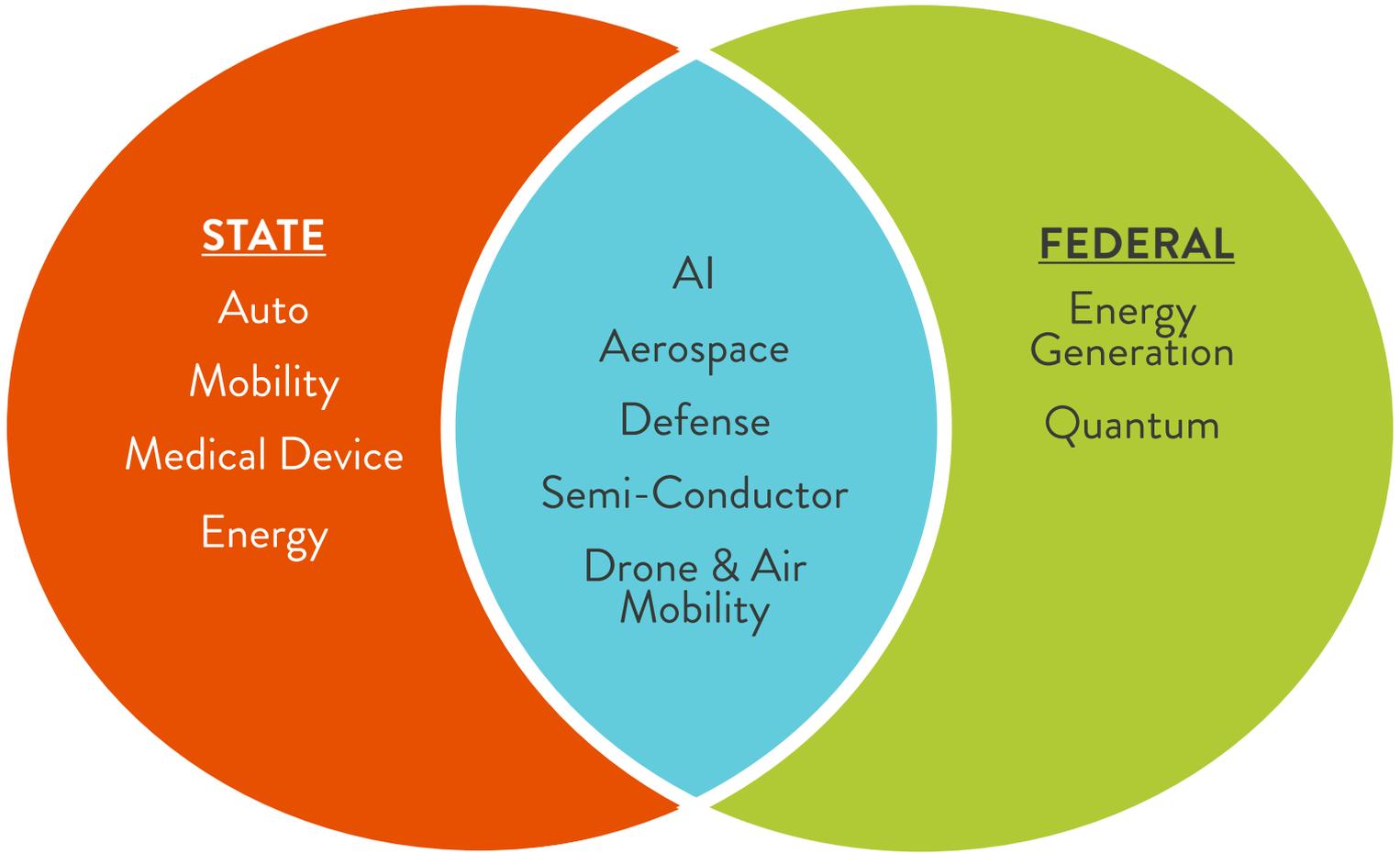
*MMTC also conducted the first Manufacturing Insights Survey to gain voluntary feedback and data from small and midsize manufacturers across Michigan. These insights will help stakeholders and industry leaders invest in and advocate for our industry in 2026.*



**SCAN HERE**

# OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

MMTC’s programs are structured to strengthen both Michigan’s and the nation’s manufacturing ecosystems.



Michigan is a leader in creating manufacturing jobs and attracting new and expanding industries, from automotive to mobility to defense. The percentage of Michiganders working in “production” occupations like automotive is nearly double the amount of workers in the rest of the United States, making Michigan 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for volume of production-related occupations. Additionally, Michigan has the 5<sup>th</sup> largest advanced manufacturing workforce in the country, employing more than 65,000 workers.

## GROWING MICHIGAN’S INFLUENCE AND INNOVATION IN MANUFACTURING

MMTC supports and engages with several diverse manufacturing initiatives, including:



**DEFENSE**



**SPACE**



**DRONE AND AIR MOBILITY**



**AEROSPACE**

# MICHIGAN MANUFACTURING— EMPOWERING GROWTH AT EVERY STAGE



Michigan continues to be a model for domestic manufacturing growth and innovation, with sectors from automotive and mobility to defense and aerospace generating new opportunities and jobs. Michigan employs roughly 600,000 workers in the manufacturing industry, ranking it 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for total manufacturing employment. Investment in electric vehicle manufacturing and defense manufacturing have helped the industry grow its employment by .5% and its contributions to Michigan’s Gross State Product by .2% even amid uncertain markets.

MMTC is working to fuel industry expansion and enhancement and position Michigan as the national leader in advanced manufacturing. We have tailored our service model to support the unique needs of businesses at every stage, from startup to maturity. Here is how MMTC can help:

	Startup/Early Stage	Growing/Scaling	Established/Transforming	Established/Reinventing
 <b>Training &amp; Certification</b>	Essential safety, compliance, and foundational skills	Skill building for supervisors, operators, and quality roles	Advanced training for quality, continuous improvement, leadership, and technology	New technology skills, reskilling, future-skills training
 <b>Consulting &amp; Implementation</b>	Basic quality setup, early lean practices	Lean deployment, quality systems, automation readiness, initial I4.0	Process optimization, AI pilots, strategic planning	Full modernization, new business models, technology transformation
 <b>Advanced Manufacturing Program</b>	Introductory automation and analytics	Robotics, data analytics for scaling operations	Full Industry 4.0 foundations, advanced robotics	Workforce reinvention for high-tech operations
 <b>Bridge to Production</b>	Primary target, prototype to production support	Transition to stable production, supplier identification	Occasional applicability for new product launches	Rare, unless exploring new market innovations
 <b>User Groups &amp; Events</b>	Exposure to peers & technologies	Networking, applied learning	Best practice sharing, community learning	Innovation Expos, future market sourcing
 <b>Supply Chain Services</b>	Supplier identification to enter market	Supplier development, resilience planning	Risk assessment, diversification, reshoring	Network redesign, future market sourcing
 <b>Learning Management System</b>	Basic training, delivery, and tracking	Scaling training for growing workforce	Enterprise-wide strategic learning	Upskilling for reinvention and digital transformation

# WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

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“ The implementation of the cobot has been a huge success for Coventry Industries. We had our first “lights out” run of the cobot, which added an additional 14 hours of production to the day. We will continue to look at implementing new technology at the company to facilitate growth and increase our capacity.

**Mike Coventry | President, Coventry Industries**



“ SCHERDEL appreciates the support with grants, training, connections to community and business resources, and all the other services MMTC has provided to us through the years. A talented workforce is imperative to successful operations and meeting customer demands. MMTC has been an outstanding business partner and support to our regional economy.

**Sander Schoof | CEO, Scherdel**



“ Being able to conceive of, design, and build custom switches quickly using 3D printing allows us to tap into the creativity of staff, more fully utilize their talents, and helps us retain them when orders are slow.

**Martin Paul | Owner, World Magnetics**

# OUR CONSULTING AND TRAINING SERVICES

## MMTC PROVIDES EXPERT-LED TRAINING AND CONSULTING ON TOPICS INCLUDING:

### INDUSTRY 4.0

- ▶ Leveraging AI for Competitive Advantage
- ▶ Industry 4.0 Mentoring
- ▶ Advanced Manufacturing Technologies
- ▶ Enhanced Operations Management
- ▶ Human Machine Interaction & Digital Process Control
- ▶ Info. System, Technology, & Vendor Selection Assistance
- ▶ Introduction to Additive Manufacturing
- ▶ Introduction to Collaborative Robotics
- ▶ On-Site Technology Trial & Training
- ▶ Opportunity Assessments
- ▶ Tech Demos, Training & Project Management
- ▶ Robotic/Automation System Specification & Simulation

### QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- ▶ QMS Mentoring
- ▶ 8D & AS13000 8D Problem Solving
- ▶ AIAG-VDA Process FMEA for Practitioners
- ▶ Best Labeling Practices
- ▶ Core Tools: APQP, Control Plan, PPAP & FMEA, Measurement Systems Analysis, & Statistical Process Control
- ▶ Internal Auditor (AS9100D, IATF 16949:2016, ISO 9001:2015, ISO 13485:2016, ISO 14001)
- ▶ Layered Process Audit
- ▶ MedAccred Assistance Program
- ▶ Organizational Transition & Implementation (AS9100D, IATF 16949:2016, ISO 9001:2015, ISO 13485:2016, ISO 14001:2015)
- ▶ Problem Solving, Root Cause Analysis & Reporting

### CYBERSECURITY

- ▶ Cybersecurity Mentoring
- ▶ Improving Information Security Through Risk Management
- ▶ Information Security Assessment,
- ▶ NIST 800-171 Compliance

### LEAN MANUFACTURING

- ▶ Cellular Manufacturing & Plant Floor Layout
- ▶ Continuous Improvement (5S, A3 Problem Solving, Error Proofing, Mistake-Proofing, Kaizen, Setup Time Reduction, SMED/QCO, Standard Work, Total Productive Maintenance Applications, Value Stream Mapping & Deployment)
- ▶ Lean Applications Workforce Training
- ▶ Lean Manufacturing & Office Mentoring
- ▶ Lean Simulation
- ▶ Production Preparation Process

### SIX SIGMA

- ▶ Six Sigma Mentoring
- ▶ Advanced Problem Solving: Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt
- ▶ Design of Experiments
- ▶ Lean Six Sigma Green Belt
- ▶ MiniTab Training
- ▶ Six Sigma Black Belt
- ▶ Six Sigma Green Belt

### SUPPLY CHAIN

- ▶ Practical Approach to Project Management
- ▶ Supply Chain Risk Management

## MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS ANALYSIS, & STATISTICAL PROCESS CONTROL

- ▶ Internal Auditor (AS9100D, IATF 16949:2016, ISO 9001:2015, ISO 13485:2016, ISO 14001)
- ▶ Layered Process Audit
- ▶ MedAccred Assistance Program
- ▶ Organizational Transition & Implementation (AS9100D, IATF 16949:2016, ISO 9001:2015, ISO 13485:2016, ISO 14001:2015)
- ▶ Problem Solving, Root Cause Analysis & Reporting

## MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- ▶ Market Intelligence Mentoring (New product launches, Accessing adjacent markets, Competitor analysis, VOC)
- ▶ Assess Market(s) for New Products
- ▶ List, Prioritize & Pre-Qualify Prospects
- ▶ Narrow 10 Markets to 3 Based on Criteria

## LEADERSHIP / WORKFORCE / CULTURE

- ▶ Leadership Mentoring (Communication, Adaptability, Accountability, Empathy, Change Management, Problem Solving, Influence, Relationship Building, Emotional Intelligence, Critical Thinking)
- ▶ Building Better Teams
- ▶ Business Transition Strategies
- ▶ Emerging Leaders in Manufacturing Certification
- ▶ Finance for the Non-Financial Manager
- ▶ Frontline Leader
- ▶ Intro. & Advanced Spreadsheet Management Training
- ▶ Leading Successful Change
- ▶ Manufacturing Skills Development
- ▶ Project Management Training & Mentoring
- ▶ Small Business Operations Planning
- ▶ Succession Planning
- ▶ Supervisor Skills Training

## ENVIRONMENTAL

- ▶ Building a Successful ISO 14001:2015 Program
- ▶ ISO 14001:2015 Internal Auditor
- ▶ ISO 14001:2015 Mentoring, Management & Org. Transition

## COSTING

- ▶ Activity-Based Costing Application & Implementation
- ▶ Cost Mentoring, Identification & Management
- ▶ Finance for the Non-Financial Manager

## BLUEPRINT READING / GD&T / WELDING

- ▶ Blueprint Reading
- ▶ GD&T Fundamentals & Advanced Training
- ▶ GD&T Tolerance Stacks Analysis
- ▶ Welding Skills Enhancement
- ▶ Battle Tested Safety Tools
- ▶ Lockout / Tagout Safety Training
- ▶ Health & Safety Management

## SAFETY

- ▶ Battle Tested Safety Tools
- ▶ Lockout / Tagout Safety Training
- ▶ Health & Safety Management

## GROWTH SERVICES

- ▶ CRM Development & Customer Cultivation
- ▶ Organizational Branding
- ▶ Strategic Planning
- ▶ Website Development & Optimization

## FOOD PROCESSING

- ▶ 5S/Visual Management
- ▶ BRC/SQF QMS Mentoring
- ▶ FMEA for Food Processors
- ▶ Foreign Supplier Verification Program
- ▶ GMP Mentoring
- ▶ Improvement Planning & Process Mapping
- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI)
- ▶ Risk Management in Food Processing
- ▶ Total Productive Maintenance/Quick Changeover

# INNOVATION EXPOS

In 2025, MMTC hosted hundreds of companies for Innovation Expos that featured networking, technology demonstrations, panel discussions, and consultations with our experts. As a majority of small and midsize manufacturers have experimented with advanced technology, MMTC has evolved our events to highlight integration strategies, emerging technologies, and crucial actions to prepare for successful technology adoption or expansion.

MMTC's Innovation Expos bring manufacturing leaders, government representatives and policymakers, economic development, technology, and industry partners, and educators and students together to strengthen our industry and prepare for an even more successful future. Together, we recognize the importance of Michigan's manufacturing legacy and work to find transformative solutions.

**492**  
companies attending  
Showcases in 2025

**789**  
individuals attending  
Showcases in 2025



# OUR PARTNERS

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## THE MEP NATIONAL NETWORK™

The MEP National Network™ public-private partnership delivers comprehensive solutions to small and midsize U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing the domestic manufacturing industry. MMTC represents the MEP National Network™ in Michigan.



## MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MMTC works in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to drive GDP and job growth and create thriving and sustainable communities.



## MICHIGAN MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (MMA)

MMA serves Michigan manufacturers through legislative advocacy, workforce development, education, training, and networking.



## AUTOMATION ALLEY

Automation Alley is a non-profit organization that connects industry, government, and academia to promote innovation and economic growth in Michigan.



## MICHAUTO

MICHAuto is the state's only automotive, mobility, and technology cluster association committed to promoting, retaining, and growing Michigan's automotive industry.



## CENTER FOR AUTOMOTIVE RESEARCH (CAR)

CAR's mission is to inform and advise, through independent research, education, and dialogue, enabling a more viable and sustainable automotive ecosystem.



## DETROIT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP (DRP)

The Detroit Regional Partnership offers confidential, no-cost assistance to domestic and international companies interested in investing in the 11-county Detroit region.



## THE RIGHT PLACE

MMTC's western office serving Greater Grand Rapids manufacturers and driving economic growth and development among all sectors in the region.

# COBOT TECHNOLOGY DRIVES DIVERSIFICATION & EXPANSION

**Tritegrity Machine** is a family-owned machining and fabrication company specializing in high-precision machining for the robotic, OEM replacement, oil and gas extraction, electronic, mold component, and automotive industries.

**Challenge:** Tritegrity Machine contacted Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center for assistance in leveraging technology solutions to diversify its client base and grow the business.

**Solution:** MMTC conducted an Industry 4.0 Technology Opportunity Assessment and recommended implementing a machine-tending cobotic work cell for high-volume, low-mix parts to enable skilled staff to focus on high-value, low-volume, and high-mix parts. Tritegrity applied for

a Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Industry 4.0 Technology Implementation Grant, and with help from the Manufacturing Growth Alliance (MGA), received \$25,000 in matching funds. MMTC's assessment team also identified opportunities to improve financial tracking and I.T. security by working with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

As a result, Tritegrity Machine experienced:



“While expansion into new markets is still a work in progress, the process to acquire and deploy the new cobot was easier than I expected with the help of partners like the MMTC, MEDC, MGA and SBDC.”  
Neil Balduc, Owner

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**101**  
Manufacturing Companies



**8,370**  
Employees

## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT LEADS TO NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Lowell, Michigan-based [Orb Aerospace](#) pioneers solutions and advances technologies in aerospace design and manufacturing with its team of 16.

**Challenge:** Orb Aerospace required technology implementation and financial guidance to modernize facilities and equipment, explore new product development, and stay competitive in the sector.

**Solution:** An Industry 4.0 Technology Assessment with Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) produced a detailed analysis of operational needs and opportunities, including a recommendation for a 3D printer. Orb Aerospace secured a Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Technology Adoption grant to procure the technology. Integrating a 3D printer allowed Orb Aerospace to prototype parts in-house, decrease delays associated with outsourcing and unsuitable parts, and create new prototype drones adhering to strict confidentiality contracts.

As a result, Orb Aerospace experienced:



“Orb is the first company to design, build, and manufacture aircraft in Michigan since WWII. We’re excited to join local, state, and federal partners, such as MMTC and The Right Place, to build on the foundation of Michigan automotive and reindustrialize Michigan aerospace manufacturing.”

Brian Davis,  
Chief Operating Officer

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN’S 2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**79**  
Manufacturing Companies



**9,474**  
Employees

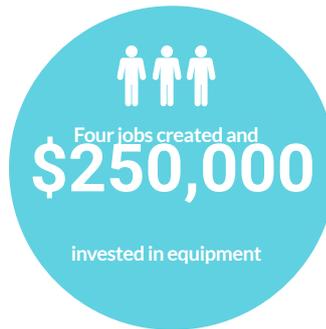
# TRAINING & USER GROUPS UNLOCK GROWTH POTENTIAL

**Jireh Metal Products** provides quality metal stamping, fabrication, and assembly services to the furniture, hardware, and automotive sectors. Founded in 1983 as a family-owned business, the company is now a minority-owned, tier-one supplier with 85 employed across facilities in Grandville and Walker, Michigan.

**Challenge:** Jireh Metal sought to maintain their competitive edge by harnessing talent, leveraging technology, and strengthening processes to match industry best practices and increasing customer demands.

**Solution:** Since 2017, Jireh Metal Products has consulted with MMTC-West and The Right Place’s Manufacturers Council to combine peer learning with targeted skills development.

As a result, Jireh Metal experienced:



The GD&T training has elevated our team — empowering frontline leaders, improving customer confidence, and helping us grow stronger as an organization.



Steve Hughes, Director of Finance

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN’S 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**145**  
Manufacturing Companies



**16,149**  
Employees

## INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST EFFICIENCY & QUALITY

Opened in July 2014, [Final Gravity Brewing Company](#) is a microbrewery located in Decatur, Michigan that employs six. Father and son team Kevin and Michael Christensen own and operate the brewery and a restaurant.

**Challenge:** Originally a self-distribution brewery, Final Gravity expanded their business through a third-party distributor, increasing the demand for products and production efficiency.

**Solution:** Final Gravity worked with Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) to streamline the production process and fulfill new orders. MMTC conducted a Technology Opportunity Assessment, which identified that Final Gravity would benefit most from automating its manual

bottling process. The hand-operated bottling machine required two employees to manually fill and cap the beverage, producing roughly 11 cans per minute. With MMTC's guidance and an Industry 4.0 Technology Implementation Grant, Final Gravity purchased and installed a new automatic bottler which increased production to 20 cans per minute and extended shelf life with rinsing functionality. Final Gravity also improved inventory management and quality control with a distribution date printing machine.

**As a result, Final Gravity Brewing experienced:**



“ From the malt, hops, equipment, and even the soda we serve in our restaurant, we try to purchase from other Michigan companies as much as we can. Working with MMTC was a great experience and their commitment to making sure Michigan manufacturers succeed is critical to the future of our state. ”

Kevin Christenson, Co-Owner

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



93  
Manufacturing Companies



10,767  
Employees

## ENHANCING CAPABILITIES, CAPACITY, & LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Established in 1965, [Owens Products](#) employs 40 people and specializes in fiberglass part production and molding, metal fabrication, and thermoplastic production.

**Challenge:** Owens Products sought to strengthen its financial performance, retain operational knowledge during attrition, and ensure long-term sustainability during a transitory period. Leadership wanted to assess true costs, improve pricing accuracy, refine profit margins, and move from a business-to-consumer to business-to-business model.

**Solution:** Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) worked with Owens on: Cost mentoring to update costing models, accurately capture overhead,

and establish more precise pricing structures. Strategic Hoshin planning to develop a five-year plan focused on growth, workplace culture, and operational efficiency. Equipment upgrades, including a new thermoforming machine, to expand production capabilities and capacity, and facility expansions to add dedicated areas for curing, gluing, and fiberglass work. Together, these changes improved internal processes, enhanced production efficiency, and positioned Owens Products for sustainable growth.

As a result, Owens Products experienced:



“With MMTC’s guidance, we’ve enhanced operations, boosted efficiency, and fostered a workplace culture that drives sustainable growth and supports our team’s success.”

Spencer Kirtley, Vice President

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN’S 5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



106 Manufacturing Companies



8,660 Employees

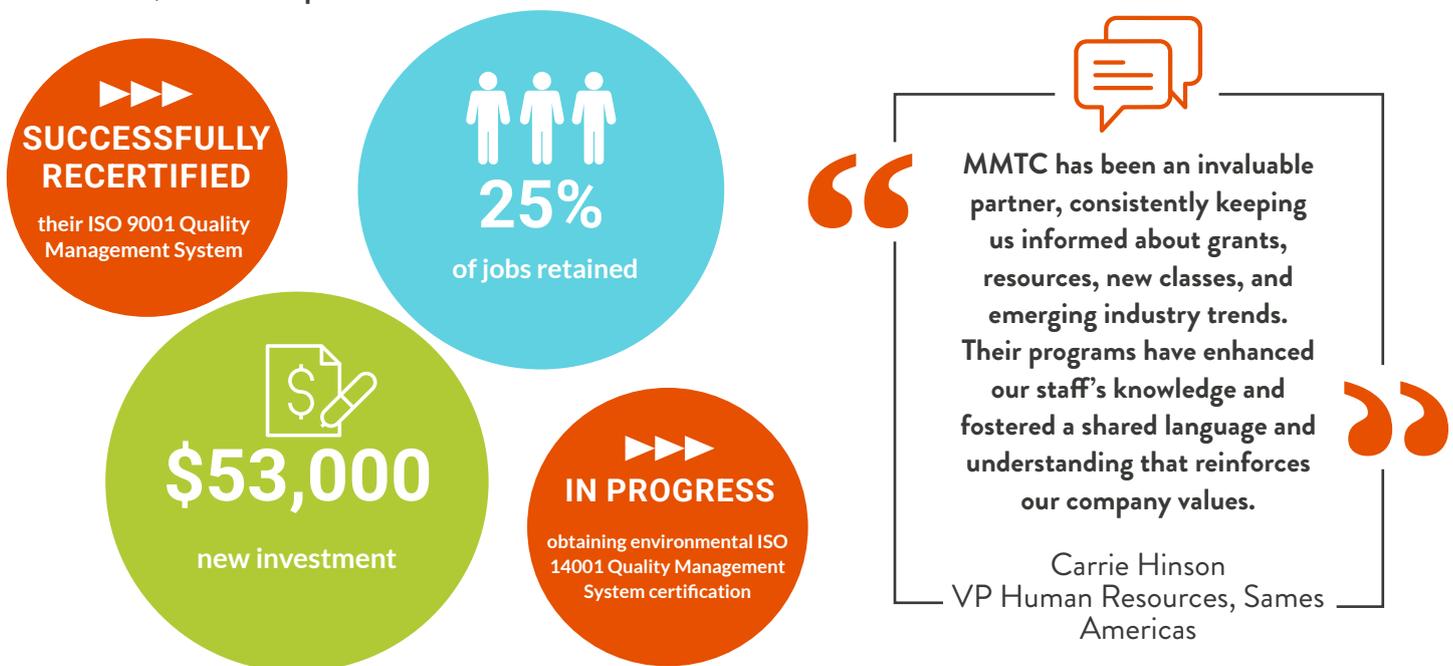
# BUILDING SKILLS & SUSTAINING EXCELLENCE

For 100+ years, **Sames** has delivered advanced liquid and powder application solutions. Sames is a global company and employs 75 people at its Plymouth, Michigan site.

**Challenge:** Committed to continuous improvement, Sames sought to upskill operations and leadership staff to support ISO 9001 recertification.

**Solution:** Sames obtained Going PRO Talent funding and partnered with the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) to design and deliver customized training programs for nearly 60 employees organization-wide. Courses included Supervisor Skills, Project Management, Lean and Six Sigma, quality training, and ISO auditor. These training pathways supported Sames' managerial competencies, data collection, waste reduction, process efficiency, and recertification and quality management needs.

As a result, **SAMES** experienced:



FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 6<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**73**  
Manufacturing Companies



**8,020**  
Employees

## MODERNIZING PROCESSES TO PROMOTE SAFETY & EFFICIENCY

Founded in 1949 and headquartered in Lansing, Michigan with a staff of 180, [Air Lift Company](#) began with a single patent on a rubber air spring inserted into a car's factory coil spring. The company now manufactures a full line of advanced suspension systems for passenger vehicles, trucks, RVs, and commercial fleets.

**Challenge:** Air Lift Company identified an opportunity to streamline a process where employees manually removed fabric from the Air Lift 1000 bag after sealing—creating strain and increasing the risk of injury. Air Lift sought a safer, more efficient process that maintained high-quality output.

**Solution:** MMTC conducted a Technology Opportunity Assessment at Air Lift's facility, which confirmed that the process for cleaning the sealed connection area of the Air Lift 1000 bag slowed production. MMTC identified automation opportunities, provided a detailed integration plan, and introduced Air Lift to the MEDC Industry 4.0 Technology Implementation grant.

Using this grant, Air Lift custom-designed, built, and tested an automated grinding system that eliminated manual work. The upgraded process now operates with consistent precision, improves production efficiency, and reduces employee injury.

As a result, Air Lift Company experienced:



  
“ We knew what we wanted to achieve but weren't sure how to get started. MMTC's clear communication and guidance made all the difference. Their expertise and support helped us navigate the process and access opportunities that are truly making an impact on our business. ”  
Yolanda Shriber, Training Coordinator

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 7<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**62**  
Manufacturing Companies



**6,001**  
Employees

## DRIVING GROWTH WITH A REFINED DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

**SwiftWall** is a nationwide leader in innovative temporary wall solutions for events, offices, and construction projects. Headquartered in Midland, Michigan with a staff of 25, the company manufactures modular wall systems that allow customers to Create, Transform, and Divide Any Space with unmatched simplicity and quality.

**Challenge:** SwiftWall sought to strengthen its marketing strategy with data, and increase qualified sales leads while maintaining its sales close rate, average opportunity value, and annual digital marketing budget to drive company growth.

**Solution:** SwiftWall and Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) worked to improve lead-generation processes, including sending an employee to Six Sigma Black Belt Training to identify, measure, and optimize marketing and sales workflows. The company also conducted a comprehensive review of its digital marketing strategy and made updates to the website to improve user experience, streamline contact forms functionality, and optimize compatibility with Google and Microsoft Bing.



“MMTC’s local, in-person training made a significant impact on our company. The team was always available for guidance, and the program was progressive, flexible with my schedule, and directly applicable to my work. It was an excellent experience and highly valuable for our growth.”

Leah Lindauer, Certified Six Sigma Black Belt, Process Leader

As a result, Swiftwall experienced:

Increased web contact form submissions by **300%**

Website Traffic Increased **131%**

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN’S 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**72** Manufacturing Companies



**7,077** Employees

## BUILDING A SAFER, STRONGER MANUFACTURING OPERATION

**AES Michigan** specializes in using thermoplastic injection molding to produce custom and complex plastic components and assemblies for the automotive industry. Headquartered in Canada, the company's U.S. facility in Capac, Michigan employs 65.

**Challenge:** AES Michigan is committed to delivering the highest levels of quality and efficiency. To support their continued growth and long-term stability, they sought to implement a comprehensive, facility-wide safety system, plus train their operators in GD&T and blueprint reading to boost product quality and production efficiency.

**Solution:** MMTC worked with AES Michigan to install and maintain an Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS), which would continually improve, establish and document occupational health and safety management system requirements, optimize the safety system, and achieve annual cost savings. MMTC also developed a training plan to improve operators' ability to interpret engineering drawings and improve inter-team communication, reduce errors, and expand the company's capacity for complex work.



Partnering with MMTC has been a transformative experience for AES Michigan. As a company committed to the highest levels of quality, safety, and efficiency, we needed a partner who could help elevate our operations in meaningful and measurable ways.



Tom Gucciardi, Plant Manager

As a result, AES Michigan experienced:



FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 9<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



82  
Manufacturing  
Companies



6,797  
Employees

## LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO DRIVE GROWTH & EFFICIENCY

Founded in 1978, [Northern Industrial Manufacturing](#) employs 48 in Harrison Township and is a leading Tier 1, 2, and 3 automotive supplier of precision-engineered automotive components.

**Challenge:** Northern Industrial’s deburring department required manual labor to move large volumes of components between machines, creating bottlenecks that increased lead times and labor needs and impacted handling efficiency. Northern Industrial was approaching recertification of its ISO 14001 Environmental Management Program.

**Solution:** MMTC conducted an Industry 4.0 Technology Assessment and recommended a continuous part flow system and an automated deburring process. This advancement significantly reduced lead times and direct labor, enhanced safety, and facilitated increased production. MMTC also performed a conformance assessment of Northern Industrial’s ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) to ensure the program upheld top quality standards and maintained environmental compliance.

As a result, Northern Industrial Manufacturing experienced:



FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN’S 10<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



**89** Manufacturing Companies



**9,063** Employees



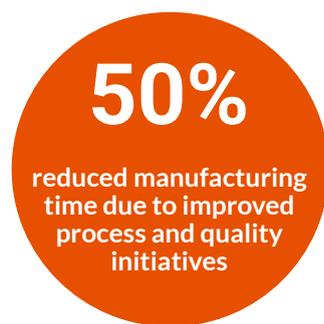
## SOFTWARE IMPLEMENTATION DRIVES EFFICIENCY AND PREPARES FOR FUTURE GROWTH

**Total Door Systems** is the global leader in fully integrated door systems that provide unparalleled security and unmatched reliability with nearly infinite design options. For nearly 50 years, Total Door has engineered, manufactured and assembled door systems at their award-winning Waterford, Michigan, plant, where they employ 46.

**Challenge:** In an industry where precision and quality are paramount, Total Door Systems faced hurdles that were limiting their operational efficiency. Paper-based work instructions led to confusion and inefficiencies, and fragmented data collection prevented a comprehensive analysis of production and quality trends. Total Door Systems sought to streamline processes and enhance data visibility.

**Solution:** Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) first performed a Technology Opportunity Assessment to identify technologies that would provide maximum improvements and ROI. MMTC recommended Tulip software to enable workflow digitization, automated data collection, and real-time insights, and MMTC's team also provided onsite technology mentoring. Tulip helped Total Door digitize work instructions, incorporate video and interactive components to improve retention, enhance quality inspection processes with digital documentation and imagery, and optimize maintenance by upgrading record-keeping processes to give a comprehensive picture of equipment health and performance.

As a result, Total Door Systems experienced:



“The integration of Tulip has become about more than just our digital work instructions. We have found multiple opportunities to improve our efficiency and our precision. We will be feeling the impact of our work for years to come.”

Jeanne Kitchen, Chief Operating Officer

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 11<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:



65  
Manufacturing Companies



4,890  
Employees

# LEVERAGING ACTIVITY-BASED COSTING TO SUPPORT EFFICIENCY AND EXPANSION

**JC Gibbons Manufacturing Inc.** provides custom Swiss, CNC and Screw Machining services to customers in the U.S. and Canada from their 22,000 square foot machine shop in Livonia with 24 employees. JC Gibbons serves the automotive, defense, plumbing, aerospace, HVAC, oil and gas, and energy industries.

**Challenge:** JC Gibbons has partnered with MMTC for years to implement an Activity-Based Costing (ABC) model to better understand their costing processes. With recent equipment investments that improved throughput, operational efficiency, and on-time delivery, the company needed to update its ABC model.

**Solution:** MMTC provided a costing specialist to work onsite at JC Gibbons for three days and

review operation changes with the team, then analyze depreciation schedules, maintenance accounts, machine utilization, quoting templates, and performance metrics. This process identified non-profitable work cells and potential resolutions, plus created a framework for ongoing evaluation and improvement. JC Gibbons improved quoting accuracy, reduced costing errors, and learned how to apply the ABC model to business decisions.

**As a result, JC Gibbons experienced:**



“MMTC has been an incredible partner for over two decades, helping us pinpoint profit centers, evaluate performance, and make data-driven decisions that have made us a stronger, more competitive business. They continue to be an invaluable resource for Michigan manufacturers looking to grow and succeed.”

Jeff Gibbons, President

**FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS  
IN MICHIGAN'S 12<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT,  
MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:**



**34**  
Manufacturing  
Companies



**2,344**  
Employees

## COMMITTED TO DRIVING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

**Oakwood Group** is a trusted leader in grille and audio cover design and the parent company of Oakwood Energy Management, creator of SafetyPlastic® high-performance impact absorber that protects vehicle occupants. Founded in 1945, Oakwood Group employs 900 at facilities in Dearborn and Taylor.

**Challenge:** Facing rapid growth, Oakwood Group needed to scale operations and meet evolving customer demands with limited capital investment—including increasing output by 186 sets per day for a primary customer.

**Solution:** Oakwood Group and Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) addressed capacity challenges with Going PRO Talent Fund-approved training. An Oakwood Group Program Engineer participated in MMTC's Six Sigma Black Belt

Certification and led a project focused on optimizing the work cell for the company's speaker grill assembly. The project identified excessive downtime on the fixture as a key risk. Process mapping, structured brainstorming, design of experiments, and strategic sampling helped improve cycle time from 144 seconds to 120 seconds (increasing from 25-30 parts per hour).

**As a result, Oakwood Group experienced:**



“ This project represented a significant milestone in my career and delivered a lasting impact on Oakwood Group by implementing processes and frameworks that supported company growth. The collaboration between Oakwood Group's commitment to employee development and MMTC's expert guidance made this initiative both highly effective and professionally rewarding. ”

John Filiatraut,  
Program Engineer

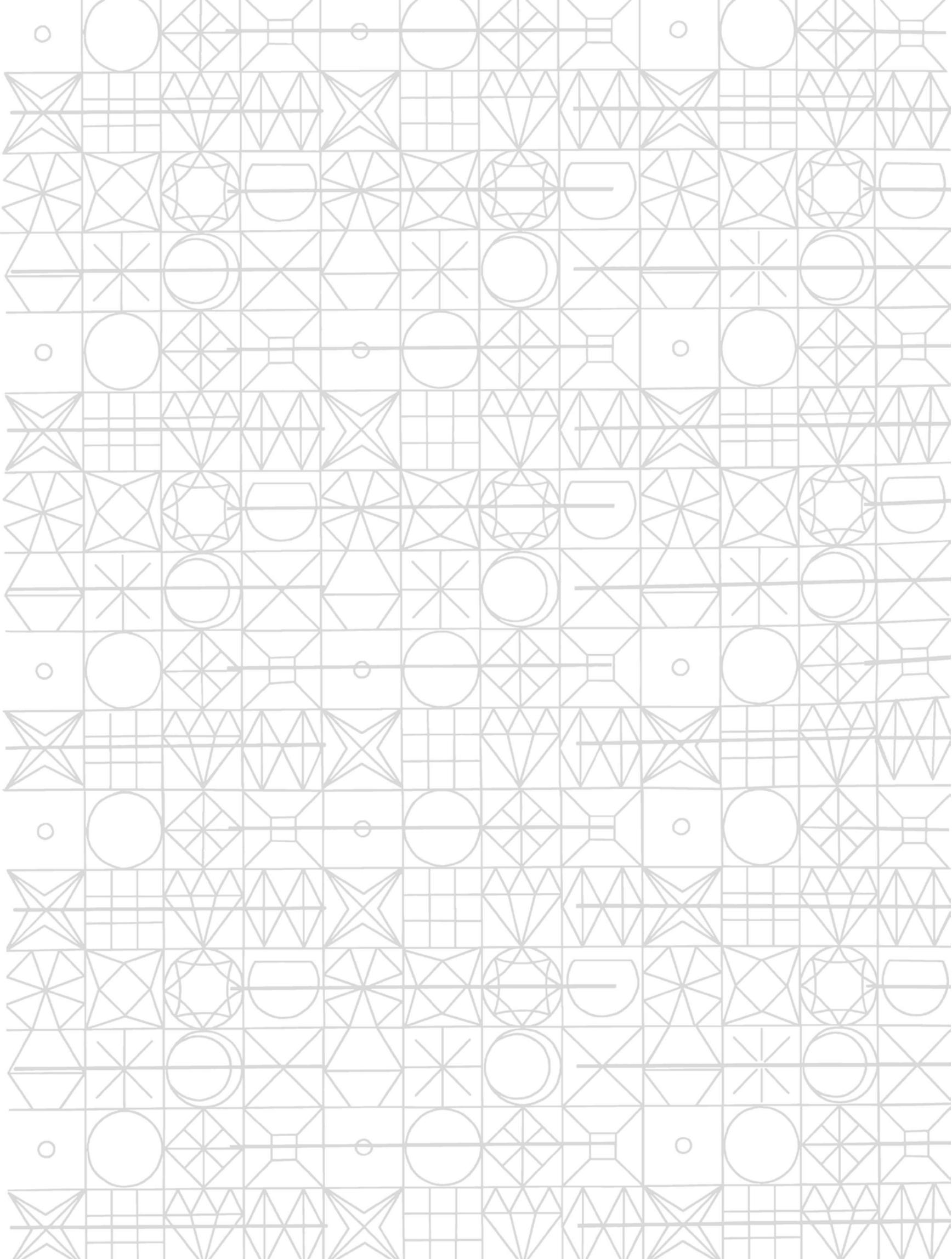
**FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MICHIGAN'S 13<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, MMTC HAS WORKED WITH:**



**52**  
Manufacturing Companies



**4,939**  
Employees

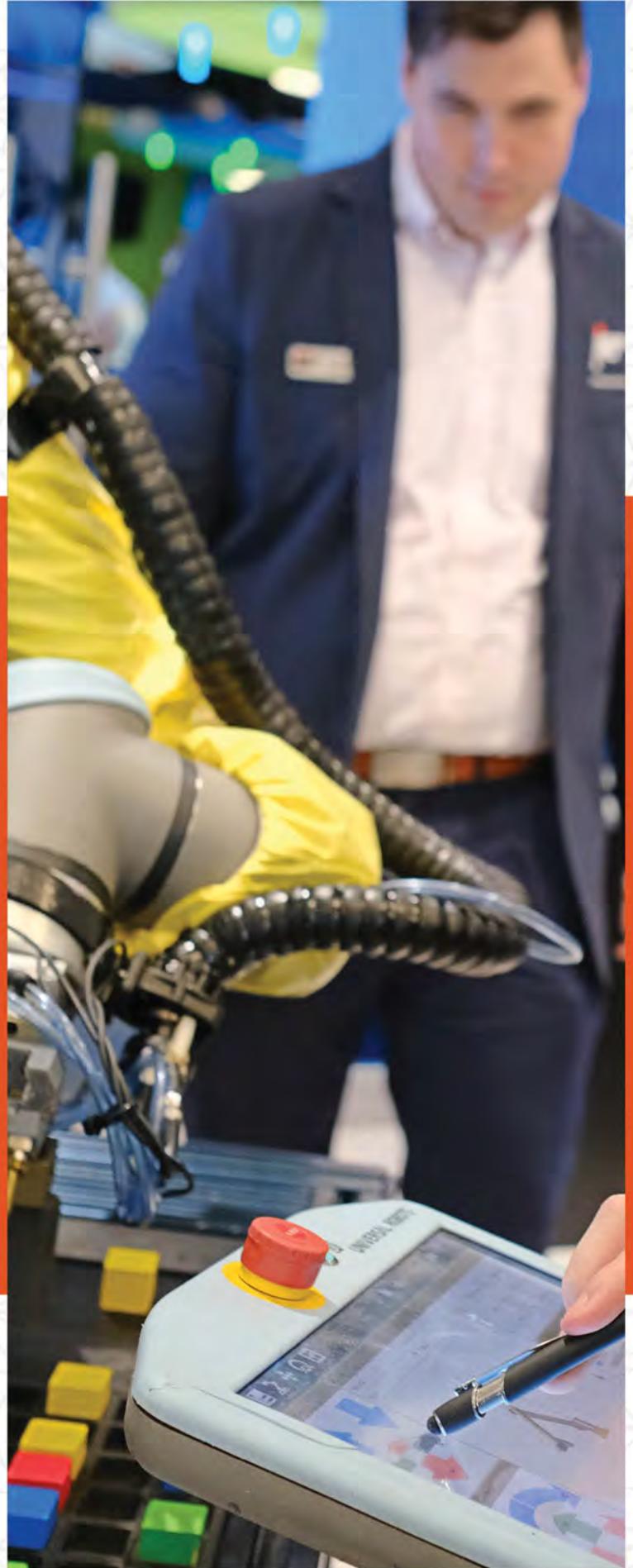


## BUILDING RESILIENCE & DRIVING INNOVATION IN MANUFACTURING

Michigan's small and midsize manufacturers are the cornerstone of our industry. At MMTC, our purpose is helping them compete, thrive, and grow within an ever-changing business environment. From improving operations with artificial intelligence and Industry 4.0 technologies to supporting expansion into in-demand sectors like defense, aerospace, and mobility, MMTC is making critical skills, knowledge, and connections accessible to Michigan manufacturers of any size. Together, we can ensure Michigan remains a leader in manufacturing excellence and innovation for generations to come.

*Thank you for your support over the past year, and we look forward to continuing this important work together in the future.*

 [THE-CENTER.ORG](https://www.the-center.org)



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