

For Immediate Release
March 25, 2014

Local Economic Development Corp. and Manufacturing Consortium to Host 2014 Ontario Productivity Benchmarking Road Tour

Tuesday, March 25, 2014 - Productivity Alberta and GO Productivity in collaboration with the **National Research Council-Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP)**, **Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC)**, **WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation** and **Interactive Manufacturing Innovation Network (iMiN)** have brought together a delegation of **Alberta(13), Saskatchewan (3) and Manitoba (1)** manufacturing companies to Ontario on a Benchmarking Mission.

Our Western Manufacturing friends are looking to benchmark ideas for implementing lean manufacturing principles and systems! The objective of the mission is to visit stand-out manufacturing facilities in industrially strong Ontario communities to learn best practices, share and exchange ideas, and build relationships. For some time, Ontario manufacturers have been ahead of the curve as a result of forward thinking, access to expertise, industry demands and in some cases, customer pressure. The suppliers to the oil sands in Alberta have not had these specific pressures or opportunities. That said, this is an opportunity to be inspired by your operations and the application of these principles and more importantly engage in peer to peer discussion about the real life challenges and expectations for deploying a lean organization.

Our Alberta delegates will participate in plant tours on Tuesday, March 25th and Wednesday, March 26th and be inspired by such operations at **Toyota, Ontario Drive and Gear (ODG), David Wilson Manufacturing Ltd, Anchor Danly (Windsor) and CenterLine (Windsor)** showcasing their application of their lean manufacturing principles and systems more importantly engage in peer to peer discussion about the real life challenges and expectations for deploying a lean organization.

“The energy sector companies in western Canada will be impressed with the depth of innovation and expertise that Ontario manufacturers bring to the table,” said **Sandra Papatello, CEO for the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation**. “Ontario manufacturers are leaders in advanced technologies and excel at meeting stringent production schedules by focusing on lean technologies and process improvements. Our companies have the attributes and capacity to be a value-added link in the supply chain.”

Al Diggins, President & General Manager of Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium also added, “We are delighted to participate in coordinating such an event with Productivity Alberta, GO Productivity, National Research Council-Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP) and WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation. Manufacturing excellence is part of our grassroots activity and has been bringing manufacturers together to benchmark and learn from each other for decades. It’s only natural to extend this beyond the borders of the province. I anticipate this is the beginning of a wonderful initiative between manufacturers of all sectors and in all regions of Canada. By leveraging best practices and building relationships where we feel comfortable to ‘Share with Pride’, we not only learn the value of leveraging strengths but we learn to work together to strengthen manufacturing for the good of our Canadian Economy.”

As part of the delegation’s visit to Windsor, **WindsorEssex Economic Development Corp.** will welcome the participants at a networking session to introduce the Alberta delegation to prominent local Windsor companies.

For more information, please contact:

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About:

- **Productivity Alberta and GO Productivity:** Productivity Alberta was founded in 2008 as a service of the Government of Alberta to help the province’s small-to-medium-sized businesses in the construction and manufacturing sectors be more productive, more competitive and more profitable. In October 2011, Productivity Alberta transitioned into a private, not-for-profit corporation, a change that allowed the company to refocus its efforts and enhance its services. Productivity Alberta offers a broad range of services that help companies identify and address gaps in productivity, maximize resources and be more efficient. We have our own in-house productivity experts as well as a vast network of resources to ensure that whatever the productivity challenge your business faces, we have the capacity to meet it head on.
- **Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium:** Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) is a unique non-profit organization dedicated to helping manufacturers GROW and become MORE COMPETITIVE, at home and around the world. EMC has grown to become Canada’s largest manufacturing consortium with over 1,000 hands-on industry events annually, it is one of the most active manufacturing organizations in North America! Founded in the mid-1980’s and incorporated in 1997, EMC is responsible for contributing significant knowledge, expertise and industry resources towards the success of nearly two-thousand consortium member manufacturers, employing hundreds of thousands of Canadians, in soon to be 60 consortium regions and spanning more than 450 communities.
- **WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation -** The WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation is a not-for-profit organization supported by the City of Windsor and the County of Essex, responsible for advancing economic development to grow and sustain prosperity in the region. The main focus of the organization is to develop and execute strategies to retain, expand, attract and help to start new businesses in the Windsor-Essex Region. Windsor-Essex is comprised of 7 municipalities at Ontario’s southernmost point. It is bordered on the north by Lake St. Clair, the west by the Detroit River and on the south by Lake Erie.