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New Mexico to Join National Celebration of Manufacturing

By Claudia Infante, Projects Coordinator, New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership

While emerging economies get a lot of buzz for their growing role in manufacturing, America remains a global leader in product innovation and fabrication. To draw attention to the industry’s continuing contributions to the domestic and world economies, the nation’s manufacturers invite the public once a year inside the 21st century “factory.”

Manufacturing Day began in 2012 as a coordinated industry effort to generate interest in manufacturing careers. At the time, U.S. manufacturing was in the second year of record job growth — a pace last seen in the 1990s — that added more than 700,000 jobs by 2015.



In nationwide events planned on and around the first Friday of October, manufacturers and their advocates get a chance to raise concerns about the shortage of skilled labor and to excite young people about engineering, design and production jobs. This appeal to the next generation is especially important, as today’s manufacturing worker needs advanced education and technical skills to operate increasingly sophisticated machinery.

Made in New Mexico

New Mexico joined the initiative in 2013 by hosting seven events in three cities to draw attention to an industry that employs more than 28,000 New Mexicans in some of the private sector’s most stable and high-income jobs. Manufacturing generates \$5.6 billion of the gross state product, even though New Mexico is a largely rural state.

Almost three dozen New Mexico manufacturers are preparing for the state’s third celebration with facility tours and other events set for Sept. 29 through Oct. 2, the official Manufacturing Day. Some tour sponsors are allowing accompanied children as young as 7 to participate in an effort to attract them to the types of high-tech jobs manufacturing offers.

One example of youth outreach is the exclusive tour of Engineered Wire Products and other West Mesa Industrial Park Companies arranged for students in the Doña Ana Community College welding program. This private tour, a highlight of Las Cruces’ Manufacturing Day

celebration, is open only to students because managers of the host companies want to emphasize the urgent need for welders at a time when the American Welding Society predicts a shortage of nearly 300,000 skilled tradesmen by 2020.

Behind the Scenes

The 37 New Mexico companies that participated in last year's Manufacturing Day events included commercial woodworking and lighting factories, herbal supplement and beauty product makers, vintners and medical device manufacturers. Many of the same businesses are involved again this year, and several others are hosting tours for the first time.

Events are planned for Farmington, Santa Fe, Taos, Albuquerque, Aztec, Rio Rancho, Socorro, Belen, Santa Teresa, Las Cruces, Deming and Clovis. A list of all tours in New Mexico can be found at <http://newmexicomep.org/mfgday>.

State and local elected officials are expected to join the celebration this year as they did in 2014, with host cities and Gov. Susana Martinez planning to issue official proclamations. State lawmakers and members of Congress often attend tours in their own districts or send representatives.

Manufacturing Day events are sponsored by New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership, a nonprofit organization that helps manufacturers create lean and efficient environments so that innovation can flourish. For more information about New Mexico MEP, visit www.newmexicomep.org.

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