The Green Manufacturing Industrial Consortium’s May 2014 Newsletter

Sustainable Manufacturer Conference and Exhibits May 20th – 21st
By Marylin Glass-Hedges

This two-day conference and tabletop exhibit is dedicated to answering the question, “How do I make my manufacturing operation more sustainable?” Featuring an array of high-quality educational and networking opportunities, it will bring together—in one location, at one time—all the elements a manufacturer needs to know to implement or enhance environmental practices.

Marylin Glass-Hedges, one of our GMIC researchers, will speak as part of the Striving-for-Zero-Landfill panel. The purpose of her presentation is to describe the methodology used by the GMIC to assist companies on their zero-waste-to-landfill (ZWTL) journey. Topics to be covered: Importance of ZWTL, Waste Assessment process (dumpster dive done right), Three Phase Plan (approach to zero-waste), and company applications. Marylin is sharing the panel with Rhonda Scherer (National Office Furniture) and Brenda Demaree (Sherwin Williams), who will each share their company’s journey to zero-landfill.

In addition to speaking, Marylin will be part of the conference exhibit, showing other waste reduction projects the GMIC has engaged in as well as her own Lean & Green ongoing dissertation investigation. This conference will be of high educational and networking value, as all presentations and exhibits are closely related to the consortium’s activities.

Event’s agenda at-a-glance:

Register here:

Welcome to the Team!

Benedicto Hernandez became a GMIC Research in March! He is an undergraduate student majoring in Civil Engineering with interests in construction management, drafting and design, and transportation engineering. He is excited to gain knowledge in Green and Lean Manufacturing and believes that both of these play an important role in all industry, while also being useful in the construction environments as well as in daily basic activities. When not working for the GMIC or studying for an exam, you will find Benedicto playing or watching soccer.

Be Sure to Like the GMIC on Facebook!
Hello members, students, and other newsletter readers. After working for the GMIC these past 4 years, I finally reached the finish line at WMU this past December. During my last semester, I worked towards transitioning from a research engineer, into a full time position as a manufacturing engineer. With the background I received from the GMIC, I was able to begin my new job as a Lean Manufacturing Engineer at Summit Polymers, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. My responsibilities include eliminating waste from manufacturing processes, training current and incoming employees on Lean principles, and conducting monthly audits of the Lean system within the plant. Being able to explain the projects I’ve worked on undoubtedly helped me in my interview process.

Because of this, I would like to thank the GMIC, and all of those involved for the great opportunities with which I was presented. Being able to work on interesting and challenging projects in nearly every manufacturing environment was a learning experience that I could not have received anywhere else. In the coming months, I am excited to apply the knowledge I have gained, in my new position at Summit Polymers. Again, I would like to thank the GMIC and its members for all they have done for me, and hope to stay involved with the "green" manufacturing sector for many years to come.

Excess Material Optimization at the ANG

Managing waste and materials effectively yields considerable benefits both financially and environmentally, and attention and action towards effective and smart management of materials is growing. In regards to material management the Air National Guard has taken a proactive position in implementing recycling and other material management programs. The Air National Guard Base in Battle Creek, home to the 110th Airlift Wing has shown a proactive stance towards responsible and intelligent management of materials and waste. This is seen in the development and implementation of a Qualified Recycling Program which aims for the minimization of waste and finding outlets or creating programs for the reuse and recycling of chemicals, metals, and other material.

In recent months, a change in mission objectives has left the Air National Guard Base with excess materials previously utilized under past base operations. As part of the Qualified Recycling Program, the Air National Guard has reached out to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Program, and the Green Manufacturing Industrial Consortium in a collaborative effort to find outlets for recycling and re-use of as much of the 18 tons of excess material as possible. The goal of which is to find companies, organizations, and other entities which may utilize, recycle, or transform the excess material as an alternative to incineration or landfill disposal. Together, the efforts towards this goal have led to the donation of dozens of items to local educational organizations. The materials can be utilized in training and classroom settings to provide hands on instruction of aircraft and vehicles. Other non-profits and local fire departments are being explored as possible recipients of material. The donation of specialty items will help support and give back to the non-profits and local community. Alternative options for chemicals to be recycled and transformed into new products are being investigated. The GMIC and RETAP together with the Air National Guard will continue efforts for the re-use and recycling of the excess materials, providing benefits to the Air National Guard, the local community, and the environment.
Michigan Recycling Coalition 2014 Conference April 29th – May 1st

By Marylin Glass-Hedges

Governor Snyder announced an important initiative that seeks to double the current recycling rate. Businesses play an important role in reaching that goal but also stand to gain from the economic and environmental benefits of recycling. The Michigan Recycling Coalition’s 32nd Annual Conference has something to offer every company, large or small, service or manufacturing, that’s interested in starting a recycling program or even going all the way to Landfill Free.

The MRC Conference is a great place to learn more about the inner workings of recycling and composting as well as, network with more than 300 integrated solid waste management professionals across Michigan. Businesses of all varieties benefited from the more than 10 sessions, training, and tours that took place throughout the three day event. One of our very own GMIC research assistants, Marylin Glass-Hedges, accompanied Bill Gurn (Haworth) and Sarah Archer (Iris Waste Diversion Specialists) in a training session the afternoon of April 29th called: The Rush to Landfill Free – Everything There is to Know about Building a Program.

Beyond Project Activities – Additional Benefits of being a Consortium Member

By Marylin Glass-Hedges

GMIC members leverage student knowledge and faculty experience in the various green, waste reduction and process optimization projects they engage in as part of the consortium. Being a member of the GMIC, however, has some additional perks...

- Extending projects capabilities to other engineering areas
- Support from departments outside the engineering school
- Direct auditioning/screening/interviewing of potential employees, e.g. summer internships, full-time positions upon graduation
- Connecting with WMU Career Services for job postings, facility tours and career events, which all serve to enhance students’ experiences as they develop their professional careers and help companies tap into the student talent pool
- Applied research projects that improve business results increase members’ positive visibility, but also the authors of these projects get to showcase their work at conferences, poster competitions and other networking events. Student’s get published and the GMIC attracts more members and partners. It’s a win-win-win!

This high level of student involvement creates leaders. More than class knowledge, students learn about project management, time management, real world knowledge application, and how their efforts improve a company’s bottom line.

As a GMIC member/partner, if you would like to leverage your company-university connection by any of the ways mentioned above or you have additional ideas, contact our Program Coordinator Colin Knue (colin.knue@wmich.edu) and/or Project Manager Marylin Glass-Hedges (marylin.n.glassangeles@wmich.edu).