

advanced robotics and other 'intelligent' systems become pervasive throughout the manufacturing process."

Combating this image and shining a spotlight on the career opportunities in manufacturing now represent missions of more and more organizations, whether these are grassroots or national efforts. Here are just two of the hundreds of initiatives taking place across America:

The Cleveland-based Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network sponsors videos shown in seven Ohio high schools that illustrate why manufacturing is a good career choice. A recent program on welding even featured Jay Leno, who extolled the virtues of the welders who restore his prized autos.

The Fabricators & Manufacturers Association is now in its second year of featuring Florida teenage racecar driver and welder Brennan Palmiter in efforts to reach young people. Initiatives include the "GO Brennan" scholarship program in which students apply by posting videos on YouTube. Palmiter also visits schools accompanied by his racecar, to talk about welding, racing, and manufacturing. Palmiter knows it's important that people his age realize there are opportunities in the manufacturing field for them to pursue.

It's critical to get parents and teachers involved. If parents and teachers don't have personal experience in today's manufacturing, they can't guide their children with accurate opinions and information about manufacturing careers. I believe this entire movement is starting to change the nation's mindset on manufacturing. Many organizations now are committed to make this happen and we're beginning to see results. Educators are paying attention. And, young people are flocking to manufacturing camps. Positioning industrial jobs as desirable and rewarding will fulfill the specific needs of manufacturers and, without question, strengthen our economy. ▼

Editor's Note: Gerald Shankel is president and chief executive officer of Rockford, Illinois-based Fabricators & Manufacturers Association, International (FMA), a professional organization with more than 2,300 members working together to improve the metal forming and fabricating industry. Information: <http://www.fmanet.org>.

One of the major objectives of SMC's Manufacturing Council is to encourage the development of a skilled workforce through grants and educational programs beginning at the grade school level. We invite manufacturers to join us in the effort. Please call Carol Winterhalter, liaison to the Manufacturing Council and advertising manager of Dynamic Business magazine, at 412.342.1611 or e-mail carol@smc.org. She'll be very happy to tell you all about our diversified programs.

Legislative Report

SMC Pushes Health Care Legislation in Harrisburg

23 SMC Members and Staff visited 52 offices of Senators and Representatives

by Eileen Anderson

Q. Why do we go to Harrisburg?

A. We go to Harrisburg to give voice to the needs of the silent majority of businesses. They are not the business elite who traded unrecognizable, repackaged mortgage securities and brought us to our knees. The silent majority is the engine (small businesses) that will pull us out of recession. If the way is cleared for them, they will create jobs without fanfare, grants, or stimulus money.

I recently spoke to a man with a specialty equipment repair business. He makes over \$250,000 in profit, lives on a very modest amount of \$50-\$60,000, and reinvests the rest back into equipment and machinery. Recently several distressed businesses came to him for help. He is buying one business and the assets of another to save jobs and help the companies survive. He just does it.

If the Administration reinstates the top tax rate in 2011 and taxes the "wealthy" to pay for health care reform as proposed in the 2010 Budget, he will pay more in taxes and have less capital to create jobs.

For a full rundown of State Issues please link to position papers on www.smc.org.

On Monday May 4, we boarded the Steel City Flyer in pouring rain at SMC headquarters and headed east. State Issues include: health care, taxes, workforce and economic development. But health care legislation was very hot so that's where we directed most of our efforts. The visits went very well and we met with some key figures. Here's active legislation we worked on:

SUPPORT - Reauthorization of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4) - SB 89 and HB 173 - At the top of SMC's legislative agenda is Reauthorization of PHC4. They are on the forefront among all 50 states in the collection, analysis, and publishing of provider costs and health care quality data on a hospital-by-hospital basis. Last session the PHC4 reauthorization bill became entangled in a political fight over the Governor's plan to expand coverage for the uninsured. Bills have been passed by both the House and Senate but now either bill must be passed by the other house and signed by the Governor.

SUPPORT - Preventable Serious Adverse Events Act - HB 84 and SB 443 - This bill would also help to contain costs The Senate Banking and Insurance Committee unanimously reported HB 84, passed by the House, to the Senate floor. It permits insurers to withhold payment for services or care related to preventable serious adverse events. Providers won't be reimbursed twice, once for making an avoidable mistake and then for fixing it.

OPPOSE - "Health Insurance Tax" Bill - This bill creates the statewide 2 percent tax on all managed care organizations (MCOs). Now is not the time to be adding MORE to the cost of health insurance. ▼

Editor's Note: Eileen Anderson is vice president of Red Clay Tile Works and SMC's Government Relations manager. She can be reached via e-mail, eileenanderson@smc.org.