

Continuous Improvement Network Forms

There were 33 representatives from 11 northern California manufacturers who gathered on Thursday, October 27 for the kick-off of the Continuous Improvement Network (CIN). The group toured Rex Moore and RobbJack to observe two different approaches to implementing continuous improvement. Both companies benefited from training and coaching through the Sierra College Center for Applied Competitive Technologies (CACT).



The CIN will bring together leaders of organizations with a focus on improving their organizations through continuous improvement (CI) efforts. The group plans to share best practices, discuss successes and challenges, conduct tours, offer continuous improvement training and collect an online library of continuous improvement knowledge. For more information, contact Judy Schmidt at judithschmidt@sierracollege.edu or call (916) 747-2162.



CCC Hiring Veterans who Sierra College will Train



The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is recruiting veterans, under age 25, to hire for work starting in December. Crew members will receive training in basic electricity, lighting retrofits, safety, and construction principals from the Sierra College CACT. Crew members will work on energy efficiency projects for state agencies and earn certificates of completion in lighting and electrical technology. Contact Renee Podris at (916) 341-3107 or renee.podris@ccc.ca.gov.

Contractor Training in Energy Assessment Offered

Contractors can become Building Performance Institute Building Analysts through California's Subsidized Contractor Training Program being hosted by Sierra College CACT. The 3-5 day training will be offered November 28 in Roseville for only \$65 (\$1600 value). Learn more and enroll online at www.contractor-training-ca.org



Placer County Hosts Manufacturing Forum

Manufacturers and elected officials gathered in Rocklin on October 14 to discuss how to make Placer County and the region more attractive to manufacturers and support existing firms. Dave Baker, President of RobbJack and incoming chair of the Placer Economic Development Board, reported:

- **12% of the Gross State Product comes from manufacturing**
- **7137 manufacturing jobs are located in Placer County**

The Economic Development Board would like manufacturers to participate in a manufacturing survey. Please contact Placer Economic Development Director David Snyder at **(530) 889-4016**.

The manufacturing panel included:

- **Chris Alston, Chassisworks** – For over thirty-five years, this company has developed and manufactured components for street and race chassis applications. www.cachassisworks.com
- **Jim Rodgers, Rogers Family Company** – This Lincoln-based company roasts gourmet coffee brands such as “San Francisco Bay Coffee” and “The Organic Coffee Co.” www.rogersfamilyco.com
- **Sugriva Reddy, Telefunken Semiconductors** – With facilities in Roseville, Telefunken Semiconductors is a worldwide leader in the design and manufacture of energy efficient integrated circuits. www.telefunkensemi.com
- **Don Gearing, TyRy Inc.** – Based in Rocklin, this firm produces freeze-dried and dehydrated instant food brands such as Alpine Aire Foods, Richmoor and Natural High, as well as providing co-packing services for all dry goods. www.aa-foods.com

Panelists suggested that simplifying government processes and requirements, lowering energy costs and reducing taxes and fees would be beneficial. For more information on the forum, contact Placer Economic Development Director David Snyder at **(530) 889-4016**.

Value Stream

Mapping Launches Lean

Value Stream Mapping is often used to launch a new Lean Initiative. The “map” can visually depict, step-by-step, how a specific process gets done. By drawing a picture of the process, staff can see what steps are valuable to customers and what impedes their ability to deliver what the customer wants. The “map” can also help everyone understand the current process so they can suggest improvements. To learn more about how the Sierra College CACT can help you with Value Stream Mapping, contact Judy Schmidt at **(916) 747-2162** or judithschmidt@sierracollege.edu.

Smuckers Empowers Staff to Make Improvements

Smuckers (www.smuckers.com) was established in 1897 in Ohio and is now under the management of fourth-generation Smuckers. Known for its “homemade taste, quality and goodness,” the Smucker Quality Beverages plant in Chico produces natural and organic juices and drinks. The company’s LEED Gold certified warehouse generates 94 percent of its total energy needs, and about 95 percent of its waste stream is recycled, reused or composted.

CACT Director Carol Pepper-Kittredge, and Business Development Consultant Judy Schmidt, recently toured the plant and were impressed with the staff. “Employees are empowered to look for opportunities to improve processes,” said Pepper-Kittredge. “On the tour, we observed the managers’ positive approach and style of managing by walking around.”

Sierra Nevada Brews Sustainably

Sierra Nevada Brewing Company (www.sierranevada.com) provided a tour of its facilities in October. Based in Chico since 1980, the brewer is committed to sustainable business practices. Sierra Nevada has one of the largest private solar arrays in the United States, producing over 1.4 MW of AC power for the brewery as well as a 1.2 MW fuel cell plant that provides the majority of the brewery’s electrical energy needs.

The company’s comprehensive waste diversion program now diverts 99.6% of the solid waste leaving the facility from the landfill. The focus on environmental stewardship has led the brewer to initiate other programs such as CO2 recovery, water conservation, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and sustainable transportation.

Customized On-site Employee Training

Work with the Sierra College CACT for customized training in process improvement, quality, communication, supervision, project management, computer software, business math and many other topics. To learn how other companies have benefited from working with industry leaders who deliver high quality training designed to meet specific company objectives, go to sierracollegegetraining.com or contact Judy Schmidt at **(916) 747-2162** or judithschmidt@sierracollege.edu.