

# Industrial Molds Newsletter



**Industrial Molds Group**



September / October 2015

## **Industrial Molds / Manufacturing Day**

Industrial Molds will be hosting a virtual event for Manufacturing Day on 10/2/15 at 10am.

Please go to [www.mfgday.com](http://www.mfgday.com) to more details and to register for the event.

Please call 815-381-7648 with any questions.



## **What Back to School Means to Manufacturers**

September is upon us and we're all thinking about back to school and what education means to today's manufacturers. We're all in a unique situation when it comes to finding skilled employees, and every manufacturing trade publication talks about the skills gap - a gap that is widening by the day.

One of the big problems that we face as manufacturers is the mass retirement of the baby boomers. As those millions of men and women in the workforce leave over the next decade, this unprecedented rate of retirement will put the pressure on manufacturers to keep up with the demand. As a mold manufacturer, the demand we must satisfy comes from the ever-increasing need for injection molded plastic parts. So it's vital to our future that we find talented people with the training and skill that is needed to design and build quality molds that can produce high-quality parts in a highly repeatable manner.

Another problem we face is the inadequate education of young people in the U.S. today. We hear a lot about the STEM program, all of which are critical to the success of companies in the moldmaking and molding business. But, according to one report, annually, of all the students who

expressed interest in STEM careers, only 16% demonstrated requisite level of proficiency in math. ([www.cerasis.com](http://www.cerasis.com), Two Million Vacant Manufacturing Jobs by 2025 . . . How can we tackle the skills gap?)

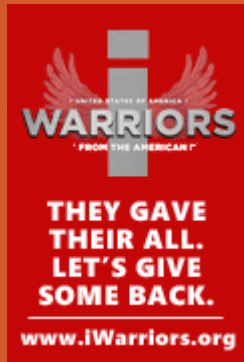
There is also the lack of on-the-job training or any type of formal in-house apprenticeship programs to develop skill levels of current employees or train new hires. Program like this were cut nearly 40% from 2002 to 2013, said the report. While trade and technical high schools are starting to come back, it may be too late to get people into the workforce before the retiring baby boomers leave. Once that group leaves the workforce, the collective "tribal" knowledge of these men and women will be gone, and there won't be enough current employees to pass along the working knowledge gained from several decades on the job.

According to a survey conducted as part of an industry study by the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte Consulting LLP, approximately 60% of today's unfilled manufacturing jobs are due to a shortage of applicants with sufficient proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and math skills. This estimate was provided by 83% of the manufacturing executives who participated in the survey. Estimates from the survey show that the worker shortage could rise to more than 2 million unfilled jobs in the next decade. Industry data for 2004 - 2013 shows an annual loss of at least \$17 billion due to vacant positions, with greater losses (\$45 billion) in both 2012 and 2013.

With Manufacturing Day coming up in just a month (October 2), all of us in manufacturing need to be thinking about how we can encourage young people to prepare for the good, high-paying careers that manufacturing jobs offer. We need to begin working with local high schools to introduce young people - and their teachers and guidance counselors - to manufacturing and show them that today's modern manufacturing environment is clean, safe, interesting and creative with opportunities in many areas to learn, grow and make a good living.

There is a "perception problem" for manufacturing and we need to work to change the perception that young people and their parents (the biggest influencers) have of manufacturing plants. Today's mold manufacturing companies. for example offer high-tech machine. robotics.

computer programming, CAD design opportunities and much more.



The future of manufacturing - and the future of our companies - depends on how we work to attract young people into the trades, and we need to do that while we still have the collective knowledge in our plants to give younger workers the training they need to succeed. If you can give a tour of your facility to a local high school group, contact the guidance counselor or principal and offer to sponsor a career day or participate in a school-run career day. You'll be contributing to the future on not only these young people, but to the entire future of manufacturing in the USA.

Sincerely,

**Industrial Molds**

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