



Virginia Manufacturers Association
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VMA gets opportunity to tell the real story of the state of manufacturing

Richmond, VA – CBS6 was looking for assistance in creating a meaningful event for dislocated workers in the Richmond area and asked the Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA) to be a part of that effort. The decision was made that what the unemployed of Central VA did NOT need was just another job fair, but rather real information from industry experts on the current and projected state of the job market. From this developed the “Get Back to Work, Richmond” event at The Jefferson Hotel September 29th. Key industries were identified as manufacturing, healthcare, technology, energy and other green technologies, and panels of experts were put together to present the real message of each of these sectors.



While all of these industries may not be conducting mass hiring efforts right now, this is the perfect time for people to earn the appropriate credentials to be prepared for these jobs when they become available. As Scott Denicourt of Wyeth Pharmaceuticals pointed out at the event, “We have a workforce right now... [with] 20% or so ... who are reaching or are close to reaching retirement age, so even though the manufacturing industry may not be growing as rapidly as other sectors, what we do see is that we are going to need a significant number of replacement workers in the not too distant future.” Therefore, representatives of area organizations, like the Virginia Council on Advanced Technology Skills (VCATS), were also invited to participate as part of a panel on educational and training opportunities.

As part of the promotion of this event, Alice Scott, member services associate at the VMA, was interviewed live on the CBS6 evening news September 28th and had taped comments included as part of the morning news on September 29th. She encouraged both young people and career changers to consider manufacturing as a viable career path for quality of life and advancement. “We still have a very strong industry in manufacturing, and we want to make sure that the next generation of workers and the people currently looking to possibly change career paths keep manufacturing in mind as a great career opportunity,” she observed.

Brett Vassey, VMA President and CEO, had an opportunity to present an overview of the manufacturing industry at the event and he pointed out that “There is a lifetime of opportunity in any one company. In this industry, you can work in a warehouse and in Research & Development at the same company over your lifetime. The only end is where you stop your skill development.” He reminded attendees to utilize workforce development resources that the VMA has developed with the assistance of VCATS and the VA Biotechnology Association (VaBIO), www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com, www.vacats.org and www.advancedtechnologyjobs.com, to assist in their job search and pursuit of a career in manufacturing and other advanced technology sectors.



For a clip of Scott Denicourt’s Sept 29th interview, visit <http://www.redlasso.com/ClipPlayer.aspx?id=d239508a-d39f-4988-ad1c-3f495f34ec2f>. For a clip of Alice Scott’s Sept 29th interview, visit <http://www.redlasso.com/ClipPlayer.aspx?id=1fc5e208-5f5c-4ead-bb9d-d3fe648bcd59>.