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VMA wins Rural Summit Best Practices Award as part of SVEP
-Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership a model for workforce development-

RICHMOND, VA – During Virginia’s Rural Summit Reception on Monday, September 12, 2011, the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership (SVEP) received a Best Practices Award for its role in developing a statewide collaboration in workforce development. The Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA) is one of many partners within that collaboration. “I was pleased to be on hand with Sharon Johnson [Director, SVEP] and Robin Sullenberger [CEO, Shenandoah Valley Partnership] to accept this award,” remarked Alice Scott, VMA’s Director of Marketing & Member Services. “Recognition of the work of this collaboration is a direct reflection of Sharon’s vision and leadership for the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership as well as the spirit of collaboration Robin has fostered in the Shenandoah Valley.”



Robin, Sharon & Alice accepting the award

The VMA is part of the SVEP model for a complete workforce development solution through collaboration among both private and public as well as traditional and non-traditional education and training entities. “Addressing skill development for unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers in our communities requires innovative thinking and partnerships for success,” observes Katherine DeRosear, VMA’s Director of Workforce Development. “It also requires impacting the next generation early and often to provide a new understanding of what these advanced technology job opportunities are and what education and skills they require.”

An example of SVEP’s collaborative efforts is between *Dream It. Do It. Virginia (DIDIVA)* through the VMA and the regional *Dream It. Do It. Virginia – Shenandoah Valley (DIDIVA-SV)* partnership. In October 2010, the regional DIDIV-SV collaborated with SVEP to announce mini-grant recipients to help connect Valley students with careers in advanced technology industries. Fifteen mini-grant recipients received a total of \$95,904 to implement activities that encourage students to explore careers in manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, construction, and green related occupations. Implementation of the awarded projects is ongoing and is

expected to impact over 7,000 students in 19 high schools, seven technical centers, and six middle schools.

For more information on the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership and its grant opportunities for workforce development, please visit www.svenergypartnership.com. For more information about *Dream It. Do It. Virginia*, please visit www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com. For more information about the VMA's workforce development training and which programs are eligible for SVEP grant funding, please visit www.vamanufacturers.com/workforcedevelopment or contact Katherine DeRosear directly at 804-643-7489 ext 22 or kderosear@vamanufacturers.com.

About Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA)

The Virginia Manufacturers Association is the only statewide association exclusively dedicated to manufacturers and their network of service providers. The organization has been *Industry's Advocate*™ since 1922 through successfully advocating for constructive public policies at all levels of government. The VMA also supports a broad array of business services and programs to help ensure that Virginia manufacturing companies can be productive, profitable and competitive in Virginia. Virginia's 5,000+ manufacturers employ over 230,000 individuals, contribute \$34 billion to the gross state product, and account for over 80% of the state's exports to the global economy. For more information about the VMA, please visit www.vamanufacturers.com.

About Dream It. Do It. Virginia (DIDIVA)

Dream It. Do It. Virginia is a free, online career resource tool built by Virginia's advanced technology sector to help individuals learn more about exciting fields and connect them with possible future employment. The centerpiece of the resource is the "So What Do You Do?" campaign featured in all related media outreach. *Dream It. Do It. Virginia* is a partner with The Manufacturing Institute and its national *Dream It. Do It.* program. For more information, visit www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com.