

NIST MEP State Stakeholder Newsletter

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MEP Highlights

As MEP begins a new fiscal year, we highlight some of our key activities planned for this year:

- **MEP Innovation Services:** A key initiative for MEP this year is the development of a MEP Innovation Services Framework that provides a suite of innovation services to be offered system-wide. In support of this effort, the MEP Innovation Steering Group, made up of NIST MEP and center staff, is exploring opportunities with Strategyn, Inc., a successful consulting organization with a defined outcome-based methodology that has demonstrated innovation successes with many larger clients. MEP is also exploring partnership opportunities with Doug Hall and Eureka! Ranch. An ideation session to explore how the Eureka! Tools and methodologies might best be adapted to meet the needs of small manufacturers is scheduled for later this month.
- **Expanded Partnerships:** MEP is expanding its partnership with the Department of Labor through an initiative aligning selected MEP centers with several of DOL's WIRED regions. Additional details of the initiative will be shared in future newsletters. MEP is also fostering stronger partnership arrangements with community colleges, the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, and a number of federal agencies.
- **MEP 2007 National Conference:** MEP is planning a 2007 National Conference for April 21-25 in Orlando, FL. The conference will include multiple tracks focused on providing professional development for MEP staff as well as leveraging the collective knowledge and experience of the MEP system. Specific tracks include innovation, growth strategies, supply chains, and sustainability. Plan to attend if you are interested in learning more about these topics.

SSTI 10th Annual Conference – Transforming Regional Economies

Join MEP October 31 – November 2, 2006 in Oklahoma City for SSTI's annual conference. A number of NIST MEP staff and Center Directors will be attending this event. The conference offers a series of breakout sessions that allow participants to explore the important issues of tech-based economic development with their peers from around the country. A few of the topics at this year's conference include:

- Understanding the University's Role in Regional Economic Development
- University Research Parks: Cornerstone of Effective Regional TBED
- Tech Industry Views on University Collaboration
- Technology Commercialization Assessment

- From Concept to Commercialization: The Oklahoma Strategy
- Cashing In on Nanotechnology
- Recent Research: A Review of Studies that Should Influence TBED Policies
- Recruiting for TBED Companies
- Innovation & Creativity in City Regions

Roger Kilmer, NIST MEP Director, is moderating a session on Understanding Innovation and Product Development with presentations by Gary Conley, President, TechSolve and Gary Thompson, Executive Director, TechHelp.

The conference is an excellent venue to meet MEP and learn more about our plans for innovation and growth services as well as expanding state, local and federal partnerships. Stop by the MEP exhibit booth or contact Karen Lellock (karen.lellock@nist.gov) to schedule a one-on-one meeting with a MEP representative.

Additional information about the SSTI conference is available at: <http://www.ssti.org/conference06.htm>

Recent NIST MEP State Outreach

On August 23-25th, Roger Kilmer and Aimee Dobrzeniecki of NIST MEP were invited by Elaine Thorndike of the Colorado Association for Manufacturing and Technology (CAMT) to meet Brian Vogt and Jeff Holwell of the Colorado Office of Economic and International Trade in Denver (www.advancolorado.com). Discussions included ways in which the MEP center could better support the economic development plans of the state and increase the competitiveness of the states' manufacturers. Roger and Aimee met with representatives of the Advance Colorado Center, Connected Organizations for a Responsible Economy, Colorado's Technology Association, and the Colorado Film Commission. The organizations are co-located within the same building, providing many good opportunities for CAMT to bring the resources of these multiple entities to Colorado's manufacturers. While in Colorado, Roger, Aimee, and Elaine took the opportunity to visit the U. S. Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory (www.eere.energy.gov) meeting with representatives from the photovoltaic, hydrogen fuels cell, and national wind technology centers. The MEP system as well as the NIST Manufacturing Engineering Laboratory is interested in identifying project opportunities with federal laboratories with the potential to transfer technology to smaller manufacturers. One opportunity discussed was converting the production capability of existing Colorado manufacturers to produce components needed by the alternative energy industries.

On September 19th, NIST MEP met with Tracey Taylor of the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation (KTEC), www.ktec.com, and Sandy Johnson of the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC). KTEC is the parent organization of the MEP center in Kansas commercializing technology that leads to high-paying jobs and diversifies the Kansas economy. MAMTC is playing a key role in achieving this goal

through their partnerships with the Advanced Wood Processing Laboratory at Pittsburg State University and the Advanced Manufacturing Institute at Kansas State University. (www.mamtc.com/equipResources.asp). Presentations of success stories from each of these valued KTEC resources demonstrated the product development and testing capability of the MAMTC center.

U. S. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services, Al Frink was joined by Roger Kilmer of NIST MEP in discussions at the Intergovernmental Outreach Initiative on Manufacturing Competitiveness in Indianapolis, Indiana on September 26, 2006. National and regional experts discussed Indiana's current position and how it can improve its global competitiveness. State organizations co-hosting the meeting included the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the Indiana Manufacturers Association, the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership and the Indiana Dept. of Workforce Development. Check the Manufacturing.gov website for more information on issues surrounding the competitiveness of American manufacturers and service industries.

The Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) Announces New Programs (edited from SSTI Weekly Digest for September 25, 2006)

Recently, the OCAST governing board approved a business plan for 2007 that committed \$10 million for high-tech development. OCAST is devoting much of this funding to a new seed capital program, awards for plant science research, and a program to encourage the use of nanotechnology in manufacturing.

The OCAST Seed Capital Fund is a \$5 million program to provide an accessible source of seed capital to technology entrepreneurs. Firms may apply for equity and other investments, with the stipulation that they receive additional co-investment from private or other non-state capital sources. The Fund plans to issue its first solicitation in early 2007.

The Oklahoma Plant Science Research (OPSR) program will be providing funding for basic and applied research in the plant sciences. The competitive awards will be made through reimbursement contracts, will not cover indirect costs, and require one-to-one matching with outside funding for all applied research.

The third program, the Oklahoma Nanotechnology Applications Project (ONAP), is a new strategy to bring the state's nanotech research to market. In addition to the funding available for nanotech research through the existing Oklahoma Applied Research Support program, OCAST will now assist the consumers of the latest micro science advances. The Oklahoma Nanotechnology Applications Service (ONAS) will provide funding and technical assistance to firms attempting to incorporate nanotech innovations into their manufacturing and business processes. ONAP will also provide

information and education about nanotech research and maintain the Oklahoma Nanoscience Initiative, which promotes nanotechnology across the state.

OCAST's September Innovations newsletter available at <http://www.ocast.state.ok.us/Default.aspx?tabid=188#SEPTEMBER2006ONE> provides additional details on these initiatives.

MEP Business Intelligence Service – New Reports

In the August Newsletter, MEP highlighted a new, ad hoc research service to provide you with fast intelligence about manufacturing clients, industries, markets, technologies, innovations, policies, news, and economic analysis. Recent research topics include Manufacturers Needs and Marketing Language, the Modular Home Industry, and the Illinois Power Auction. For copies of the reports or to submit a research request contact Kellyann Davis at MEP Business Intelligence Services kellyann.davis@nist.gov.