



**Office Locations:**  
Chicago, Joliet, Libertyville,  
South Holland

**CHICAGO MANUFACTURING CENTER (CMC)** CMC strives to stimulate economic growth by providing high value services to small and mid-sized manufacturing and related technology based companies. CMC serves the city of Chicago and surrounding six counties: Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will. Services encompass lean manufacturing, quality and process improvement, e-business, growth management, international business development, environment, energy, and sewn products technology. Contact: Demetria Giannisis, President & CEO, 55 Jackson, Suite 900, Chicago, IL 60624, 1-866-2EMERGE, Fax: (312) 922-8557; dgiannisis@cmcusa.org, Website: <http://www.cmcusa.org/>

**THE  
MANUFACTURING  
EXTENSION  
PARTNERSHIP  
IN ILLINOIS**

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a nationwide system of services and support for smaller manufacturers to become more globally competitive. At the heart of the system is a network of affiliated, locally-based manufacturing extension centers. Each center, like CMC, is a partnership, typically involving federal, state, and local governments; industry; educational institutions; and other sources of expertise, information and funding support.

**COMPANY CLIPS**

**Workforce Training Grant Keeps Marshon's Fashions Alive**

Marshon's Fashions originally designed and manufactured specialized clothing for people with physical disabilities, and recently expanded to produce clothing for the U.S. Department of Defense. Without sufficient labor and financial resources, Marshon's Fashions hovered at the edge of bankruptcy. When the company bid on a small share (75,000 units) of a 1.5 million-unit federal order providing coveralls for the armed forces, it had to convince the Department of Defense and the Small Business Administration that Marshon's Fashions could produce them.

CMC helped Marshon's Fashions secure a \$175,000 workforce training grant from the City of Chicago. The grant, managed by CMC, enabled the company to hire a CMC consultant to act as plant manager for her facility, provide back office administrative assistance, write change order proposals, and provide guidance on contract interpretation, rights, and responsibilities. CMC purchased approximately \$50,000 of equipment for Marshon's Fashions, hired 40 people and trained them, and developed a supplier network. One month later, Marshon's Fashions made its first shipment of 2,040 units, and the company expects to maintain its on-time delivery record through the duration of the contract. CMC has also been instrumental in making sure Marshon's Fashions adheres to government specifications for this contract.

In August 2002, CMC oversaw Marshon's Fashions' expansion from 3,500 square feet to 15,000 square feet and from 40 employees to 100. That same month, Marshon's Fashions made its first profit, a total of \$165,000.

*Continued*

**STATE STATS**

DATA\* COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Number of projects completed with firms  
**474**

Number of firms served  
**886**

Number of firms served for the first time  
**323**

Federal cost share for current operating year  
**\$2,396,700**

State/other cost share for current operating year  
**\$4,793,400**

*\*Data as reported from center*

DATA\*\* COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Increased sales & retained sales  
**\$11,570,000**

Client capital investment  
**\$6,000,000**

Total cost savings  
**\$2,324,050**

Jobs (created & retained)  
**70**

*\*\*Source: Independent client impact survey*

**For additional information,  
contact Dede McMahon 301-975-5020**



### **Lean Manufacturing Bring Sweet Success to American Licorice**

American Licorice, a candy manufacturer, was approached by a candy manufacturer in Mexico that claimed it could produce the company's candy for less money than the American plants. Corporate agreed to a trial, and the Mexican plant proved its claim, producing the candy at a significantly lower cost. However, instead of moving production to Mexico, American Licorice decided to pursue a lean manufacturing strategy to cut costs and improve efficiency.

South Suburban College (SSC), a partner of the Chicago Manufacturing Center (CMC), staged a one-week lean brainstorming event at the plant. Approximately 12 associates from different company departments attended. The team identified opportunities to eliminate waste in 75 areas of the plant, reducing scrap by 50 percent and increasing productivity by 43 percent. By week's end the Alsip plant had reduced enough costs to be able to produce the candy at 50 percent less than the Mexican plant.

In keeping with its lean transformation, American Licorice is now transitioning from a strict line process to a cellular model and supervisors and line leaders are being trained as team leaders. SSC designed a 32-hour block of education and training for these developing leaders. The education package includes training in computer technology. Many of the company's employees had no knowledge of basic computer operation. Now all associates have access to the computer room, digital cameras, laminators, and post work instructions. The information technology team at American Licorice is training trainers so everyone can share the newfound information. All education sessions are done in English or Spanish as some employees become interpreters and trainers. American Licorice is pleased with its lean results, especially as 80 percent of the changes came from people and ideas; only 20 percent relied on capital investment.