

IMC Featured as WLCC's Legacy Member

written by Lauri Moon | April 2, 2018



Innovative Modernization Center makes impact

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Manufacturing companies face a host of diverse, complex and often sticky problems they can't always manage on their own.

Many others simply need the resources that can help them become more efficient, competitive and profitable.

For 50 years, the Innovative Manufacturing Center has been a key component in helping industries throughout a 13-county region.

"We work with manufacturing companies," Don Muehle, IMC executive director, said. "That is our focus."

The IMC brings the latest edge and resources to a company, utilizing both in-house staff and partnering with outside experts.

Located at 1027 W. Franklin St., Williamsport, it is one of the state's seven Industrial Resource Centers and 10 National Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers leveraging private investment to drive manufacturing growth.

Training, mentoring, web design, technical writing, environmental and safety compliance, sales development and business planning are among the areas of expertise offered by IMC.

Muehle said small to mid-sized companies ranging from 10 to 200 employees represent the bulk of the IMC's client base.

"What we are really known for is continuous improvement," he said.

Many other companies seek IMC for its assistance in quality control and environmental issues and technology implementation.

The list of businesses working with IMC includes relatively new companies to more established ones.

"There are few companies that we have a relationship with a company, it almost never goes away," Muehle said.

The length of time IMC works with any particular company varies.



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Don Muehle, manager of training and outreach at the Innovative Manufacturing Center, tours the Williamsport IMC, plant in Williamsport with Don Muehle, superintendent of production scheduling, and other company employees.

A misconception of the IMC is that it is a government agency according to Don Muehle, manager of training and outreach.

Rather, it can be defined as a public-private partnership that operates with its own revenues as well as state and federal dollars.

A board of directors comprised of representatives from manufacturing, economic development and education provide the IMC with guidance and strategic planning.

Over the years, the IMC has developed strong relationships with such partners as Pennsylvania College of Technology, which is often seen in the expertise and resources.

Muehle and Muehle agreed that the IMC plays an important role in the region.

"It's nice to know you have an impact with helping companies and retaining jobs for people," Muehle said.

Many people, she said, would be surprised of the diversity of companies they help.

Muehle noted the overall impact of working out to a single location.

"When you bring a company and jobs, there is a multiplier effect," he said.

During 2017 alone, total revenues of those companies assisted by IMC increased by \$7.3 million, according to IMC figures.

In addition, a total of 500 jobs were created and 121 jobs retained during the year.

Companies realized cost savings of \$3.8 million and investment savings of \$466,000 in 2017.

"The number of companies we are working in growing," Muehle said.



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The Innovative Manufacturing Center is located at 1027 W. Franklin St., Williamsport. For 50 years, it has helped regional manufacturers with various aspects of their operations, helping them become more competitive, efficient and profitable.