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**MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA ANNUAL SUMMIT AND  
MARKETPLACE TO BE HELD IN GAINESVILLE, FL**

*Annual Summit to focus on the future of manufacturing technology and talent in Florida*

Tallahassee, FL – The Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF) and the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce are excited to announce the 2016 Annual Manufacturers Summit & Marketplace to be held November 15-17, 2016 in Gainesville, Florida. The annual event—which is being hosted this year by the Chamber’s Advanced Manufacturing Council—will provide a forum for discussion and action in several areas focal to the industry, including the future of manufacturing in Florida, the effects of disruptive technologies on business, the future of Florida’s manufacturing workforce, and efforts in collaboration with industry leaders to engage young professionals and educate teens on manufacturing careers.

“The global manufacturing industry is entering a paradigm-shifting era of change in which Florida is poised for leadership,” said MAF President Al Stimac. “As we look to the future, MAF is focused on preparing Florida’s more than 19,400 manufacturers and the 353,000 Floridians they employ to lead this industry renaissance with innovation, ingenuity and a focus on technology.”

The past year has positioned Florida manufacturers well to rise to the challenges of leveraging disruptive technologies, and creating and sustaining the highly skilled workforce they need to continue to grow. Florida manufacturers gained new certainty with the Florida Legislature’s decision to permanently eliminate the manufacturing machinery and equipment sales and use tax for certain types of machinery, resulting in a projected savings of more than \$77 million dollars annually, enough to fund 1,350 jobs at the state’s average wage of \$57,000. In Gainesville, the industry is thriving. In 2015, 85 percent of surveyed manufacturers indicated plans to expand before 2018 in the Chamber’s 2015 State of the Regional Manufacturing Industry report. Alone, these expansions would result in more than \$273 million in capital investment and 639 new jobs. Additionally, the Chamber’s Advanced Manufacturing Council strengthened its education partnerships—resulting in the creation of a Manufacturing academy—to connect students with the industry-aligned education and training they need to seize career opportunities in the industry.

“It’s an exciting time for advanced manufacturing in Gainesville and across the State of Florida,” said the Chamber’s Advanced Manufacturing Council Chair Ryan Loftus, who also is a Senior Engineering Manager at Gainesville-based Exactech, one of the world’s largest producers of bone and joint restoration products. “Technology and innovation are driving changes in the industry that I think will change how manufacturers and their employees work and lead while rewriting the rules of competition. This year’s summit will be about exploring the new rules of Florida manufacturing.”

This year’s program features a roster of dynamic speakers on topics ranging from technologies of the future to incoming generations of student manufacturers. The Summit’s keynote speaker, Tom Morrison, has served as the CEO of the Metal Treating Institute since 2008. As an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers, Tom has invested his time in educating the industry on preparing for and thriving in the future. His work in disruptive technologies not only creates an awareness of looming threats

but creative solutions for tackling the unknown and succeeding on the edge of innovation. Attendees at the MAF Annual Summit & Marketplace can look forward to perspectives from Morrison and other speakers on industry, business and economic trends. For more information on the MAF Annual Summit & Marketplace, visit [www.mafmfg.com/2016-annual-summit-marketplace](http://www.mafmfg.com/2016-annual-summit-marketplace).

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#### **About the Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF)**

The MAF was formed in 2006 to improve the business climate for manufacturers in Florida. There are more than 19,000 manufacturers in Florida investing in new technology, employing highly skilled workers and competing globally. For more information about MAF, visit [www.MAFMFG.com](http://www.MAFMFG.com), follow MAF on [Facebook](#) and also on [Twitter](#).

#### **About the Gainesville (FL) Area Chamber of Commerce**

Formed in 1924, the Chamber is the voice of business in the Gainesville, Florida area. Representing approximately 1,300 members employing over 80,000 employees, the Chamber's mission is to lead and collaborate to facilitate economic prosperity, business growth and community progress. The Gainesville Area Chamber is a 2016 National Chamber of the Year Award Finalist. The Chamber also is 5-star accredited by the United States Chamber of Commerce, putting it in the top 1 percent of all chambers nationwide. Learn more at [www.GainesvilleChamber.com](http://www.GainesvilleChamber.com) or call us at 352.334.7100. Or, follow the Chamber on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).