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The Franklin Center for Furniture Manufacturing and Management



Partnerships to enhance Mississippi's furniture industry

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Furniture Highlights

From **THE FURNITURE RESEARCH UNIT
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY**

Institute of Furniture Manufacturing and Management at MSU

Steve Bullard

Requests for research and technical assistance in all areas of manufacturing and management by the furniture industry to Mississippi State University have increased in recent years. To effectively address these needs, the Institute of Furniture Manufacturing and Management was organized. The Institute focuses resources and capabilities at MSU to effectively partner with industry and others to address current and future needs of the furniture industry. The primary goal of the Institute is to increase the international competitiveness of Mississippi's furniture industry and thus help secure the future of the industry in the state and region.

The Institute of Furniture Manufacturing and Management will provide a critical mass of expertise, knowledge, and services to assist furniture manufacturers in developing and maintaining the capability to respond quickly to competitive challenges and produce products for the world market that are competitive in quality, price, styling, service, and delivery. The Institute provides the mechanism to form strategic partnerships with other organizations to leverage specialized resources and address common goals and objectives, including:

- Conduct multi-disciplinary applied research to address current and future manufacturing needs of the furniture industry.
- Provide business marketing

and management research and assistance to the furniture industry.

- Effectively deliver information, training, and assistance to the furniture industry, including assistance with problem solving on tactical and/or strategic issues.
- Recruit and train students for future professional roles in the furniture and related industries by increasing awareness of opportunities and enhancing educational experiences.
- Provide workforce education and training to furniture and related industries to maintain competitiveness of the workforce.

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Plans for the new Franklin Furniture Manufacturing and Management Center Building at the Forest Products Laboratory have been approved by the Building Commission of Mississippi.

Look for more information on the building progress in the next issue of *Furniture Highlights!*

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Institute of Furniture Manufacturing and Management at MSU

continued

- Provide a forum through which manufacturers of, suppliers to, and distributors of furniture can interact with students, educators, researchers, and Institute partners to guide and benefit from the Institute's activities.

The institute is an inter-unit effort within Mississippi State University including the College of Forest Resources/Forest and Wildlife Research Center, the College of Business and Industry, the College of Engineering, the School of Architecture, and the Extension Service. A previously established furniture research and technical assistance program within the Forest and Wildlife Research Center/Forest Products Laboratory provides the base upon which the University will grow its research and technical assistance program with additional research and technical assistance capabilities from the College of Business and Industry, the College of Engineering, the School of Architecture, and the Extension Service. This program will be housed in the future Franklin Furniture Manufacturing and Management Center on the MSU campus.

Degree programs within the College of Business and Industry and the College of Forest Resources support educational objectives of the Institute. The College of Business and Industry provides a Furniture Manufacturing

Management track within its General Business Administration major to address business marketing and management needs within the industry. The Forest Products Department within the College of Forest Resources offers accredited interdisciplinary degree programs in Wood Industries Management, Forest Products Marketing, and Wood Materials Science to address manufacturing management and processing needs in the industry. Mississippi State University is linked to one of the most extensive networks of Community Colleges in the country. The linkage between Mississippi State University and this network supports an effective delivery system for new technology and programs directed to enhance the capabilities of the current workforce. A state-of-the-art electronic classroom and auditorium housed within the Franklin Furniture Manufacturing and Management Center will provide capabilities to effectively deliver new knowledge and information to the furniture industry at a local level and enhance problem-solving skills of the workforce.

The institute consists of a Director, Dr. Steve Bullard, and a six-to-eight member Faculty and Staff Coordinating Committee. A Board of Advisors representing MSU units, the furniture industry, and partnering organizations will help provide guidance for the institute.

Through the Institute, the knowledge and skills of Mississippi State University's faculty and staff, collaborators, and external partners will be brought to bear on the problems of the furniture industry.

GOOD ATTENDANCE AT 2001 LEAN MANUFACTURING CONFERENCE

Amy Garrard

The 2001 Lean Manufacturing Conference held at Mississippi State University (MSU), September 10-12 drew 128 participants representing manufacturers in eight states. This is the 2nd annual Lean Manufacturing Conference held at MSU. The first Lean Conference in 2000 drew 80 attendees and judging from participant reaction and interest, next year's Conference should grow even larger.

The conference was sponsored by the Food and Fiber Center and the Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), Mississippi State University and coordinated by Extension Management Specialist, Duane Motsenbocker and Dan Seale, Coordinator of the Furniture Research Unit, FPL.

The goal of these conferences is to help organizations become lean and create value while eliminating waste. According to Motsenbocker, "Other than the automotive industry, most of the rest of the manufacturing in the country is just learning about lean manufacturing. The results they're finding are phenomenal in the reduction of cost and the reduction of inventory. That really causes manufacturers to take an interest."

On Monday, September 10, participants traveled to either Viking Range in Greenwood, MS or Delphi and Mercedes plants in Cottondale, Alabama. These tours allowed the participants to see first-hand how Lean Manufacturing is being applied to the manufacture of high-end appliances and automobile component parts and assembly. The

two-day program agenda and speakers were as follows: *The Lean Process at Delco Remy* - Steve Gudgel, *Cost and Performance Measurement* - Bruce Baggaley, *Creating Continuous Flow* - Rick Harris, *Value Stream Mapping* - Michele McLaughlin, and *Leaning the Supply Network* - Dan Shunk. In order to find a Lean Manufacturing Conference featuring the quality of speakers represented at this conference, one would likely have to travel out of the state and the cost would likely be triple that of this combination plant tour and two-day conference. Dates for the 2002 Lean Manufacturing Conference will be finalized soon. Look for more information in the next issue of *Furniture Highlights*.



Conference organizer Duane Motsenbocker, (far left) reviews conference materials with speakers, Rick Harris, Bruce Baggaley, Steve Gudgel, and Dan Shunk.

Attendees were asked to complete tour and conference evaluation forms at the end of the Lean Conference. Respondents were asked to rate individual speakers and presentations, case studies, tours, and general conference characteristics on a scale of 1 to 7 with 7 = most satisfied/useful to 1 = least satisfied/useful. Individual presentation average scores ranged from 5.0 to 7.0. The overall case studies discussion average result was 6.0. The average ranking for both the Delphi-Mercedes and the Viking Range Tour was above 6.0. General conference characteristics ranked between 6.5 and 7.0 on items such as organization, meeting rooms, audio-visual, transportation and food. Overall, The 2001 Lean Manufacturing Conference was a great bargain at \$295.00 per attendee.

Comments from Lean Conference Attendees...

"Exceptionally well organized in every respect. Speakers well versed and knowledgeable. I don't know how you can improve on this."

"Outstanding organization and very informative."

"Everything was 1st class: trip to Viking - games, video, & folders. Conference: 1st class again."

"Plant tours are great!"

"Hope there is a 2002 conference so we can attend topics that we missed this time."

A LOOK AT OUR STUDENTS....

GINNI O'NEAL

Ginni is a Wood Industries Management major from Marks, Mississippi. Before attending Mississippi State University, she attended Northwest Mississippi Community College as a Forestry major. Ginni is very active in the Student Chapter of the Forest Products Society and currently serves as the Treasurer of this organization. She also currently serves as the Chair of the Banquet Committee for the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural



Resources and Related Sciences. During the summer of 2001, Ginni interned at Batesville Casket Company where she participated in a Kaizen team. Some of her responsibilities there included time studies, flow charting, and scrap studies. In her spare time, Ginni enjoys reading movies, and outdoor activities. She may be reached at 662.325.3097 or by email at glo7@msstate.edu.

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Student News....

New Officers for the Forest Products Society Student Chapter

Brad Stombock, *President*

Demetrice Evans, *Vice-President*

Ginni O'Neal, *Treasurer*

Jody Dixon, *Secretary*

Jeffrey Croom, *Special Projects*

Dr. Susan Diehl, *Faculty Chapter Advisor*

Current projects being undertaken by the Student Chapter of the Forest Products Society include partnering with students in the Wildlife and Fisheries Club to make wood duck boxes, and constructing wood benches for a local elementary school - Sudduth Elementary in Starkville.

For more information on the Student Chapter of the Forest Products Society you may contact Brad Stombock at lbs1@msstate.edu.



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