

SMI Joins The Manufacturing Institute's Dream It. Do It. Network



Shortly after SMI's 2017 annual meeting at Amelia Island, SMI and The Manufacturing Institute issued a joint news release to announce a new partnership to reach the next generation of spring manufacturing workers. SMI is one of just two industry associations that have joined the Institute's Dream It. Do It. program, which raises awareness of careers in manufacturing. The partnership between the two groups is designed to change the image of manufacturing for youth and raise awareness of spring manufacturing careers.

Through this partnership, SMI and its members will have access to market-tested materials targeting young people, parents, and teachers about a career in modern manufacturing. The Dream It. Do It. program will be an important element in SMI's ongoing strategy to reach youth. The strategy includes organizing plant tours and school visits on Manufacturing Day in October 2017, and growing a network of industry "ambassadors" to lead youth activities in regions across the country.

"We believe the Dream It. Do It. program is a game changer in the way we connect with the next generation pipeline of young people needed to support our businesses in the future," said SMI president Mike Betts, who is also the chairman and CEO of Betts Company. "Attracting talented students to careers in manufacturing is critically important to the ongoing success of SMI member companies."

Jim Parsons, senior vice president, Myers Spring, is serving as SMI's Dream It. Do It. champion. "Spring manufacturing offers a large range of opportunities for students to get involved and make things that matter. With advanced technology, this industry provides higher paying jobs with good career advancement paths and clean work environments," said Parsons.



Parsons believes the Dream It. Do It. program is a fantastic opportunity for springmakers to come together under a common cause and message to help develop the next generation of workers. He said most spring companies are family-owned and

typically work on their own to recruit new employees and build a future generation workforce.

“By coming together with Dream It. Do It. we have the opportunity to use tools already developed to help promote manufacturing careers and adapt those materials to specifically promote spring manufacturing careers.”

Parsons said part of Dream It. Do It. is to help schools understand that manufacturing is not a dirty word.

“We don’t work in dark, dangerous, dingy dungeons anymore,” he explained. “We work in bright, well-lit, sophisticated plants with high-end robots, computer technology. We work with state-of-the-art equipment that’s brand new on the market that take smart people to operate.”

Parsons went on to say that today’s manufacturing worker needs to know a lot. “You need to know computers, math, and how to work with your

hands. The best part is we’re making something that matters.”

He said the reason “it matters” is because workers are making products that are “going to help someone else do what they do, better.”

Parsons says the message needs to get across that springs are everywhere.

As SMI’s Dream It. Do It. champion, Parsons is excited to lead the committee of ambassadors. More than 20 SMI ambassador companies are already participating in Manufacturing Day tours and Dream it. Do It. activities, and Parsons is hopeful that the number of participants will steadily increase each year.

Established in 2005, Dream It. Do It. works to change the perception of the industry and inspire next-generation workers to pursue manufacturing careers. The initiative offers local manufacturers, schools, community-based organizations and

other stakeholders the opportunity to partner with a respected national platform to promote manufacturing as a top tier career choice in the United States. For more information, visit <http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org/Image/Dream-It-Do-It/Dream-It-Do-It.aspx>

SMI Welcomes New Members

SMI is pleased to announce its newest members. Please join us in welcoming these new companies.

Patrick Manufacturing
Elgin, Illinois

AARD Spring
Temecula, California

Rotor Clip
Somerset, New Jersey

SMI Participates in Dream It. Do It. Conference

SMI’s Dream It. Do It. champion Jim Parsons, executive vice president of Myers Spring and Gary McCoy, managing editor of *Springs*, attended the 2017 Dream It. Do It. Collaborative Learning Conference at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, May 22-24.

Parsons and McCoy participated in a panel discussion on “The Role of Employer Associations in Youth Outreach,” helping explain why SMI decided to join the program and its benefit to springmakers.

“Most of the conference attendees were educators and are involved in workforce development,” explained Parsons of the event. “An overriding theme of the conference was the need for manufacturers to participate in their local DIDI initiatives. According to those who presented, manufacturers are so busy that it is hard to get their attention. Important events, like Manufacturing Day, draw students in to showcase what future opportunities are available to them.”

Some highlights of the conference:

- **Sixty four percent of students will choose a career from their own interests or experiences**, according to a survey of 75,000 students.
- **Manufacturing has moved up from 8th to 5th on the list of top career choices**, and 2nd among CTE (Career and Technical Education) students.
- **Millennials care about the impact they can make**, so highlight roles, careers, and options and share what impact the things you make have on the world.



Jim Parsons, Myers Spring

- **Parents are a primary audience you need to reach.** They allow the kids to have experiences needed to look at manufacturing as a career.
- **Best practice to emulate:** Young Manufacturers Academy. See the YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/1af5N6EZbD4>
- **Use social media to promote your brand**, value proposition, and your story. Use visuals like infographics and pictures, along with quotes and links.
- **Promotions of girls in manufacturing are needed.** Only 3 percent of females are interested in manufacturing, versus 25 percent of males. ■