

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics Wins Manufacturer of the Year**

**Orlando, FL** - Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics National Fabrication Center in Orlando has been awarded the 2005 Manufacturer of the Year Award by the Manufacturers Association of Central Florida (MACF). A division of Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc., Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics operates national fabrication centers in Orlando, FL, Anaheim, CA, and Tempe, AZ and is the largest provider of orthotic and prosthetic patient care in the United States.

One of the keys to Hanger's Orlando National Fabrication Center winning this award is the success the center experienced as a result of implementing Lean Manufacturing through a collaborative effort with the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP).

Lean Manufacturing utilizes simple but effective methods to identify and reduce waste and inventories, clear shop floors, and streamline production processes, all with a goal of decreasing costs and increasing productivity.

Based on previous experience and success with Lean Manufacturing and Six-Sigma, Randy Harris, Vice President of Fabrication Services and Jeff Rosen, Director of National Fabrication - Orlando knew that ever-changing technology and increasing overseas competition made it necessary for the division to go Lean.

"While we continue integrating the latest CAD/CAM techniques featuring the Hanger Insignia™ laser scanning technology into our products and manufacturing processes, several of the steps in the manufacturing of our orthotic and prosthetic devices are still handcrafted and can benefit from Lean methods," said Harris.

After educating the center's employees on Lean Principles, Florida MEP Project Manager Henry Miller worked in a collaborative effort to select two different orthotic production areas and map the flow of work from beginning to end of the production process. "Through this process, we identified several areas in which to improve productions processes and made a group within the cell accountable for the changes," said Miller. "From there, the National Fabrication - Orlando team took over and really turned the opportunities into reality."

Results included:

- Reduced customer lead time,
- Improved product quality,
- Cost savings from reduced labor hours,
- Increased average monthly product thru-put, and
- Sustained continuous improvement.

Recognizing the success achieved by the National Fabrication - Orlando facility, Hanger senior management determined this model to be the company standard and rolled out Lean Manufacturing in the Anaheim and Tempe national fabrication centers.

**MEDIA NOTE: High resolution photographs of representatives of Hanger's Orlando National Fabrication Center accepting the award are available. Please contact above.**

Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc., headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, is the world's premier provider of orthotic and prosthetic patient care services. Hanger is the market leader in the United States, owning and operating 618 patient care centers in 45 states including the District of Columbia, with 3,405 employees including 1,017 practitioners. Hanger is organized into four units. The two key operating units are patient care which consists of nationwide orthotic and prosthetic practice centers and distribution which consists of distribution centers managing the supply chain of orthotic and prosthetic componentry to Hanger and third party patient care centers. The third is Linkia which is the first and only provider network management company for the orthotics and prosthetics industry. The fourth unit, Innovative Neurotronics, introduces emerging neuromuscular technologies developed through independent research in a collaborative effort with industry suppliers worldwide.

The Florida MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business "coaches" whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness.

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