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MCI BREAKS INTO GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING, THANKS TO FLORIDA MEP

Florida Company's Five-Point Breakaway Safety Vests Gain Popularity Following GSA Award

POMPANO BEACH, FL – Manufacturers Components, Inc. (MCI) out of Pompano Beach is constantly expanding their product line. As their customer needs for electronic components grew, so did their products to include not only switches but also fans, power cords, speakers, and other products. The company is also a large supplier of safety vests and safety goods.

An MCI employee, Isabel Amador, wanted to expand MCI into the government contracting realm and decided to take a one-day procurement engineering assistance training workshop with the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP).

“Upon working with Isabel, we agreed that their five-point breakaway safety vests, a View Brite Safety Products item would be very popular with not only Florida police, fire and rescue but also with the Army, Navy, Air Force and others in the Department of Defense,” said Larry Meadows, project manager for the Florida MEP. “MCI needed to become a vendor with a General Services Administration (GSA) Schedule, which would allow their vests to be ordered and sold in large quantities by federal agencies.”

MCI received an Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) grant to cover most of the training costs. Amador and another MCI worker Bryan Pasley participated in training with the Florida MEP to learn to identify opportunities for their product as well as respond to quotes from the government. After the training was complete, the GSA was approved and awarded to MCI.

“The training we received from the Florida MEP really opened my eyes. They were able to answer all the questions I had. It was fantastic,” said Amador. “We have had a lot of leads for our vests that have converted to orders. We find we’re selling the vests to organizations such as FEMA and the Department of Agriculture, but also to schools and of course emergency responders and turnpike workers.”

With a new federal law about to go into effect which states all workers on federal highways must wear highly-visible safety apparel, sales for MCI’s safety vests could increase even more.

“Government paperwork is very complicated,” added Dan Chiodo, President of MCI. “That’s why I was very impressed with Larry’s knowledge and the work of the Florida MEP. Without them, we would not have been able to advance this far and obtain a government contract for one of our premier safety products, and we are very thankful for their help.”

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. For more information on the Florida MEP program call 321-939-4000.

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