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Friday, December 4, 2009

State manufacturing advocates showcase programs at White House

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The Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership

presented one of its most successful job training programs at President Obama's White House forum on jobs and economic growth Thursday.

Rod Rodrigue, MEP executive director, presented MEP's Mobile Outreach Skills Training Program, which uses a mobile training classroom for teaching unemployed workers.

Rodrigue was one of 130 people invited to participate

in the summit, a release said.

MOST is a fast-track training initiative that uses a mobile classroom with computer-numeric equipment that teaches practical skills, theory and hands-on curriculum.

MEP project managers work with employers after the end of the training program to ensure graduates have mastered required manufacturing skills.

The MEP mobile classroom traveled to Washington and received permission to set up on Capitol Hill to allow members of Congress and their aides to tour the unit.

The MEP, which receives support from the U.S. departments of labor and commerce, is a nonprofit in Celebration that provides services to manufacturers to help them compete globally. In the past five years, the organization's programs have led to the creation of 2,318 jobs and the retention of 4,608 jobs.

MEP clients reported \$719 million in new and retained sales, the release said.

Automated Engineering Corp. and **Edwards Manufacturing** in Tampa are two Bay area companies that have worked with the MEP.

The MEP is holding a one-day interactive workshop called Principals of Lean Manufacturing featuring Time Wise products Dec. 15 at the **Holiday Inn** - Lakewood Ranch in Sarasota. Cost is \$150. More information is available at <http://www.floridamep.org/events.html>.

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