



# The Center to Advance Manufacturing Monthly News

January 2025

Dear Associates,

It seems like you can't go a day without hearing about Artificial Intelligence (AI)—whether it is its impact on manufacturing and healthcare, deepfakes of celebrities, ChatGPT for writing, or advancements like DeepSeek in China. With so much buzz, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and question how AI fits into our everyday lives.

In January, the Center to Advance Manufacturing hosted a webinar, *Transforming Manufacturing with Intelligent Automation*. If you missed it, you can catch the recording [here](#). The session covered the challenges and impacts of AI in manufacturing, including mechatronics, process optimization, and control and machine learning for autonomous systems. The Center will host an in-person follow-up meeting in March to dive deeper into these topics and address individual challenges manufacturers are facing.

As AI continues to transform manufacturing and automation—advancing predictive maintenance, quality control, supply chain optimization, robotics, process optimization, and worker safety—the Center is committed to educating and supporting our regional industry partners with best practices and implementation strategies. It's worth noting that, in the most recent round of TechCred data, AI was the most utilized credential, highlighting its growing importance across industries (*See page 4 for additional data*).

Key partners like Owens Community College, Bowling Green State University, and the University of Findlay play a critical role in supporting industry with artificial intelligence. In January, the Center partnered with a regional manufacturer to evaluate their existing processes, recommend improvements—including robotics and automation—and explore how these advancements can enable machine learning and deliver a measurable return on investment. This collaboration, led by expert faculty, supported by staff and graduate students, leverages the unique strengths of higher education: labs, cutting-edge equipment, and applied research opportunities. It's a true win-win for both industry and the Center.

The Center also has several partners that are sharing valuable insights on AI. On March 27, the Center for Regional Development will host its annual meeting, featuring a keynote presentation on “*Workforce Innovation, Advanced Manufacturing, and AI*” by Dr. Donna M. Ennis, Associate Vice President and Co-Director of Georgia Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing. On April 10, the Northwest Ohio Regional Economic Development (NORED) organization will hold its annual meeting, “*The Impact of AI on Economic Development*,” further exploring how AI is shaping industries and communities.

No matter where you are on your journey with automation, machine learning, or AI, remember to keep the Center to Advance Manufacturing top of mind. With Higher Education's extensive resources, we can help educate your team and potentially accelerate your path to continuous improvement.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'T. R. Mayle'.

Tim Mayle  
Executive Director  
419-788-0490

## Findlay Hancock County Fresh Brewed Business

Center staff attended the Findlay Hancock County Chamber of Commerce’s Fresh Brewed Business event in early January. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from Chris Keller (*pictured below*), the newly appointed Findlay Hancock Economic Development Director. Keller shared her background, highlighted “The Findlay Formula” model of collaboration, and reviewed the city and county’s growth in 2024.

Looking ahead to 2025, Keller outlined key goals, including increasing formal events for economic development members, significantly expanding retention and expansion visits to local businesses, diversifying revenue streams, and continuing efforts to attract residential development.

The Center looks forward to continued collaboration with Keller and her team to support Hancock County’s thriving manufacturing industry.



Findlay · Hancock County  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Fukui Japan Committee Appreciation Event

In mid-January, the Fukui Japan Planning Committee celebrated a successful 2024 visit to Findlay. Special thanks to the University of Findlay for fostering cultural, educational, business, and government exchanges between Findlay and Japan.

Tim Mayle, Center Executive Director, serves on the committee and has been an active member for several years, contributing to its ongoing success.

The 2024 delegation primarily featured engineers from Japan-based manufacturers exploring business opportunities in the United States. The team celebrated the accomplishments of 2024 and began planning for another successful year in 2025.



*Top row: Chris Moser, University of Findlay Associate Professor; Pat Sadowski, Eastman and Smith Attorney; Tim Mayle, Center Executive Director; Bottom Row: Rie Aoki, University of Findlay Instructor of Teaching in Japanese; Christina Murnyn, Findlay Mayor; Paul Worstell, Lead Learn Coach Principal, Chris Keller, FHED Director; Sarah Mayle, FHED Communications Specialist*

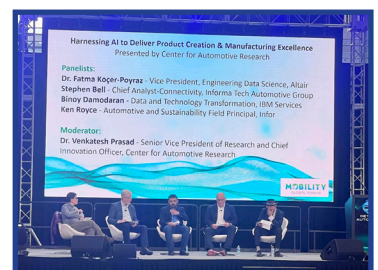
## Detroit Auto Show & Center for Automotive Research AI Panel

Tim Mayle and Center Program Manager Ford Weber were honored to attend the Detroit Auto Show Industry Days, courtesy of the Center for Automotive Research (CAR). This event provided a unique opportunity to delve into the current state of mobility technology, industry collaboration, and talent development within the automotive sector.

A standout session hosted by CAR, titled “Harnessing AI to Deliver Product Creation and Manufacturing Excellence,” featured industry experts discussing the transformative impacts of artificial intelligence on manufacturing and product development.

With over 230 automotive-related companies in Northwest Ohio, staying ahead of advancements in policy, technology, and workforce training is critical to the region’s success.

This spring, the Center will unveil a comprehensive automotive study, and we’re excited to share the findings! We’ll also highlight how our partner institutions—Bowling Green State University, Owens Community College, and the University of Findlay—are prepared to support the ever-evolving needs of the automotive industry.



### Advisory Board Meeting

The Center’s Advisory Board convened in late January to discuss current projects, regional data, and the evolving needs of our industry. Attendees also received a preview of our regional automotive study and explored critical training needs for the manufacturing workforce. The Advisory Board is comprised of members from the following manufacturing companies: Dana Incorporated, First Solar, GROB Systems, Ohio Logistics, Principle Business Enterprises, Roki America, Valgroup, Whirlpool Corporation, and Yarder Manufacturing.

### Airborne Outfitters Campus Visit

The Center recently welcomed Airborne Outfitters — a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned small business that specializes in gear and equipment for the defense industry — to the Owens Community College (OCC) Findlay campus for a tour.

During the visit, Mayle introduced Airborne Outfitters CEO Jason Evatt to Charlene Page, OCC Workforce and Economic Development Executive Director, and Brad Wood, OCC Findlay Campus Dean (pictured right).



The group toured the machining, electrical, welding, robotics, and hydraulic labs, exploring how OCC’s resources and expertise can support workforce development and innovation in the defense industry. Feel free to reach out to the Center if your company would like to tour the Perrysburg or Findlay Owens campus.

### Ohio Export Internship Program



The Ohio Export Internship Program matches businesses interested in growing exports with highly motivated college students who have taken export-focused coursework.

The Ohio Department of Development offers participating small to medium-sized businesses a 50 percent reimbursement for the wages of the intern.

The internships have a track record of helping businesses achieve export success: 524 students have interned at Ohio companies, resulting in 174 internship extensions, 95 new job positions, and 450 new international markets, distributors, or customers.

The BGSU Allen W. and Carol M. Schmidhorst College of Business is the only university partner in Northwest Ohio. Please feel free to share this information with companies that may be interested.

For full details and to apply click [here](#).

### Upcoming Events

## Regional Growth Partnership 2025 Annual Meeting



**Thursday, March 13**  
9:00 AM - 11 AM  
The Pinnacle (Maumee)  
1772 Indian Wood Circle



Register [here](#) today!

Join valued RGP stakeholders and partners as they reflect on the achievements of the past year and chart the strategic direction for the future of Northwest Ohio.

We’re thrilled to announce that Tim Mayle will present key findings from the Center’s Regional Automotive Study—an essential insight into the region’s automotive sector.

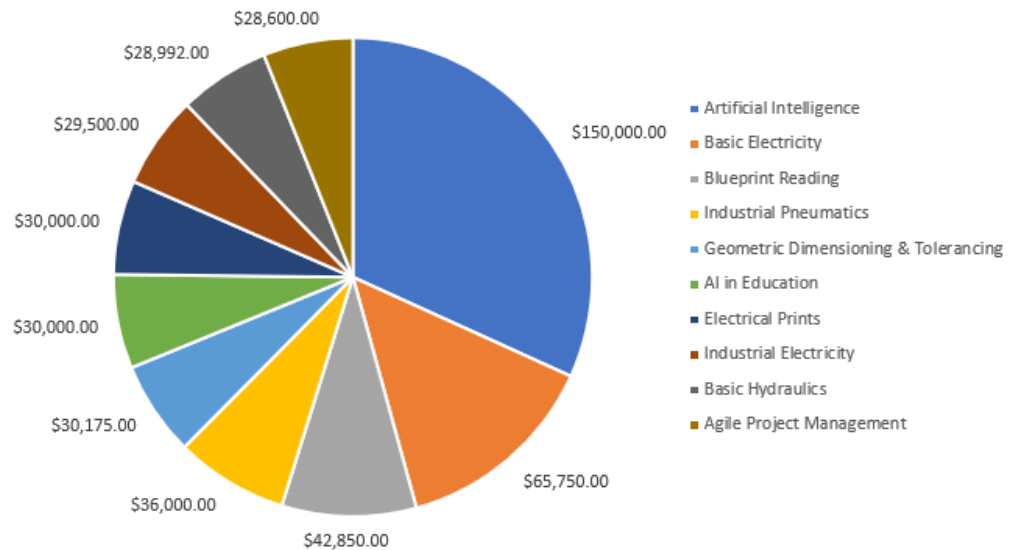
Don’t miss this opportunity to connect and collaborate!

## Top Industry Employment Concentration



Industry	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2023 Employment Concentration	2023 Earnings Per Worker	2023 GRP
Manufacturing	112,155	110,430	-1,725	-2%	2.41	\$88,910	\$24.32B
Transportation and Warehousing	25,616	30,754	5,138	+20%	1.19	\$67,887	\$4.60B

## Top 10 TechCred Credentials



## Data Analysis

In the 17 Counties of the Regional Growth Partnership(RGP) territory, manufacturing far exceeds other industries for employment concentration. While the number of jobs has decreased by 2% in the past 5 years, manufacturing still remains the top industry in Northwest Ohio.

Source: Lightcast

In the most recent round of TechCred in the RGP territory, artificial intelligence was the top utilized credential, which shows the significance of the topic across all industries.

Source: State of Ohio

## Contact Us



Tim Mayle  
Executive Director  
tmayle@bgsu.edu



Ford Weber  
Program Manager of  
Econ. Dev. Partnerships  
fweber@bgsu.edu



Kassie Cooper  
Marketing Projects  
Manager  
kassiec@bgsu.edu



Jeri Steinbrook  
Workforce Training  
Coordinator  
jeris@bgsu.edu



Danielle Sidebottom  
Assistant to the  
Executive Director  
dsidebo@bgsu.edu