



The Center to Advance Manufacturing Monthly News

October 2025

Happy Manufacturing Month!

Across Northwest Ohio, we're celebrating the people, innovation, and partnerships that power our region. Thank you to everyone who joined us on Bowling Green State University's campus for the Center's Advanced Manufacturing Summit earlier this month. It was energizing to bring manufacturers, educators, and regional partners together for an afternoon of learning, collaboration, and connection.

Ohio's manufacturing community continues to lead, from a deep, skilled workforce and strong research and development investments to unmatched proximity to customers across the Midwest. That strength shows up every day in our plants, classrooms, and labs, and it shaped the conversations at this year's Summit.

In this issue, you'll find an overview of the Summit: highlights from our keynote, takeaways from the Operations & Technology and Design Thinking breakouts, and insights from the closing panel on technology, talent, and transformation. We've also included ways to stay engaged this fall: upcoming events, student spotlights, and resources that support workforce, operations, and manufacturing efforts across the region.

As always, we welcome your ideas and feedback. If there's a topic you'd like us to explore - or if you're interested in connecting with our campus partners at Bowling Green State University, Owens Community College, or the University of Findlay - please reach out. Thanks for all you do to keep manufacturing strong in Northwest Ohio.



CENTER TO
ADVANCE
MANUFACTURING

LUNCH & LEARN WEBINAR

INDUSTRY 5.0: THE HUMAN-TECHNOLOGY ERA



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
12:00 PM

PRESENTED BY:



TOM BUSH
CEO

Actual.
Actual Reality Technologies

REGISTER HERE

Upcoming Webinar



Curious what Industry 5.0 really means? Join us for Industry 5.0: The Human-Technology Era with Tom Bush of Actual Reality Technologies: a practical session on putting people and tech to work together.

You'll learn:

- What Industry 5.0 is (in plain English) and how it builds on 3.0 → 4.0 → 5.0
- Where it's paying off now: quality, safety, uptime, and sustainability use cases
- A people-first playbook: roles, upskilling, and connected-worker tools without displacing jobs
- Resources to accelerate and quick-start ideas

Register today [here!](#)

The Center hosted our second Advanced Manufacturing Summit on Tuesday, October 7 at Bowling Green State University. Center Director Kassie Cooper opened the Summit and introduced Bowling Green State University President Rodney Rogers (*pictured right*), who offered welcoming remarks to kick off the afternoon. Kassie then provided a brief update on the Center to Advance Manufacturing - its mission of connecting industry with higher education across workforce, operations, and technology - and set the tone for the day's program: a practical, people-first look at innovation through a keynote from Honda, hands-on breakout sessions in Operations & Technology and Design Thinking, and a candid panel conversation on technology adoption, talent, and organizational change.



Keynote: Driven by Dreams - The Honda Way

Speaker: Nate Titus, Workforce Partnerships Lead, American Honda Motor Co.



Nate Titus (*pictured left*) framed Honda's story as people-powered innovation, making manufacturing visible, relevant, and rewarding through early K-12 exposure, aligning aptitudes to careers, career-tech credentials, co-ops, and on-the-job upskilling. He also traced Honda's deep Ohio footprint, from early U.S. production in Marysville to major engine, assembly, and research and development operations, including the Honda Automotive Laboratories of Ohio (HALO) wind tunnel at the Transportation Research Center, widely regarded as the world's most advanced, with state-of-the-art aerodynamics, aeroacoustics, and racing test capabilities. Looking ahead, he highlighted Ohio's role in Honda's shift to electrification, retooling legacy plants, launching a new joint battery facility with LG in Jeffersonville, and keeping lines flexible, while holding firm on safety ("Safety for Everyone") and long-term sustainability goals. His takeaway to educators, employers, and community partners: the strongest pipeline starts early, connects real aptitudes to real careers, and advances when we innovate together.

Breakout Session: Operations and Technology in Manufacturing

Facilitators Dr. Mo Abuali (IoTco) and Bryan Little (Kata Solution) (*pictured right*) led an open, practical discussion on turning Industry 4.0 from buzzwords into business value. Participants aligned on core pillars: connectivity, automation, and actionable analytics, with a consistent message: start small with people-first change, prove ROI on a pilot, then scale. Several manufacturers shared wins using vision systems and AI to improve quality and uptime; others noted "connected worker" tools (AR/VR, digital work instructions) that speed troubleshooting and training without displacing jobs.



Barriers came up candidly including cost, legacy PLC/ERP, cybersecurity, limited internal bandwidth, and "data overload." Suggested fixes included maturity assessments and 3-5 year roadmaps, persona-based dashboards ("right data, right person, right time"), cross-functional IT/OT teams, sandboxing new systems to avoid downtime, and clear governance for AI and data security. Culture and communication surfaced as dealbreakers with discussion around engaging frontline experts early, over-communicating the "why," celebrating early wins, and even using light gamification to build adoption. Supply-chain uncertainty reinforced the value of better planning tools in ERP/MES and tighter OEM-supplier alignment on traceability. Looking ahead, the group noted Industry 5.0's human-centric focus (safety, sustainability, meaningful work) and pointed to university collaborations and Ohio programs such as TechCred as practical on-ramps.



Breakout Session: Design Thinking in Manufacturing

Facilitated by Adrienne Ausdenmoore (BGSU Life Design) and Gabe Dunbar (BGSU Kuhlin Hub), this session guided participants through the Design Thinking process: Accept → Empathize → Define → Ideate → Prototype → Test using the prompt: *“How might we make manufacturing more visible, exciting, and accessible to younger generations?”* Attendees applied the tools and got a window into how BGSU students are integrating Design Thinking into their academic experience. Tables surfaced perception and exposure gaps, then generated concepts rooted in purpose, creativity, and opportunity (e.g., immersive plant tours, teacher exposure, creator-style storytelling, counselor/parent toolkits, and more). Beyond this exercise, Life Design offers a structured, human-centered approach manufacturers can use for process improvements and workforce engagement. Center staff collected the table outputs and are synthesizing themes to inform future work.



Panel Discussion: Technology, Talent & Transformation



Moderated by Dean Monske (Regional Growth Partnership), the panel: Shayna Duke (Principle Business Enterprises), Matt Yarder (Yarder Manufacturing), Sydney Williams (Designetics), and Marta Czerniak-Manning (Whirlpool), shared in-the-trenches lessons from automation, facility moves, Lean, and enterprise change. Their core message: people-first change wins, secure visible executive sponsorship, empower middle managers, involve frontline teams early, and “do

change with people, not to them.” Tech matters only if it improves work and outcomes: MES and PLM delivers value, but process fixes (flow, safety, layout) often beat new tools; kill or redesign pilots that don’t perform. Invest by balancing employee experience, ROI, and customer impact, guided by frontline data. On talent, start earlier (middle-school STEM, tours, parents/teachers), hire for culture and train the rest, offer clear ladders/micro-learning/TechCred, and support well-being. Parting advice: start with the why, map stakeholders, build a real change plan, set expectations, be ready to pivot, and leverage your size advantage - always leading with empathy.

Reception

The Summit concluded with a networking reception where attendees compared notes, connected with facilitators, and explored follow-up opportunities with university partners and peers.

Thank you to our generous sponsors for your support!

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JOIN US FOR

TECHCRED: THE COMPLETE HOW-TO

All the details, all your questions, one practical session



Join us at Owens Community College for a fast-paced, practical session on Ohio TechCred - the state program that helps employers reimburse up to \$2,000 per credential (up to \$30,000 per round) when employees complete eligible training.

Our Speakers



Jeri Steinbrook
Workforce Training Coordinator
Center to Advance Manufacturing



Charlene Page
Director of Workforce and Economic
Development
Owens Community College
Workforce & Community Services

What's In It For You

- **TechCred simplified:** overview of eligibility, qualifying credentials, and training providers.
- **Apply with confidence & capture the full benefit:** Step-by-step timeline from choosing credentials to submitting for reimbursement.
- **Avoid costly pitfalls:** The documentation to keep and the common mistakes that cause delays or denials.
- **Get answers fast:** Live Q&A and quick consults for your specific use case.
- **Tour the labs:** Guided walk-through of Owens' training spaces to learn about available resources
- **Leave with a toolkit:** Checklist, key dates, and contacts so you can apply confidently after the session.

TOLEDO-AREA CAMPUS:
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9
8 AM - 10 AM

FINDLAY-AREA CAMPUS:
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21
8 AM - 10 AM

[REGISTER HERE](#)

We're continuing our monthly Student Spotlight to celebrate interns, co-ops, and apprentices working with manufacturers and logistics companies across our partner schools. Real-world experience is where education and industry intersect, and each month we'll highlight a student's experience, what they learned, and their advice for peers.

If you'd like to learn about internship, co-op, and apprenticeship opportunities with students from Bowling Green State University, the University of Findlay, and Owens Community College, please reach out and we'll connect you. Together, we can create more pathways for students to build skills - and for companies to meet tomorrow's workforce, today.

Tommy Mays

Bowling Green State University, Schmidthorst College of Business

Role: Sales Development Intern, The David J. Joseph (DJJ) Company (a Nucor Company), Cincinnati, OH



Tommy Mays, a business major specializing in finance in BGSU's Schmidthorst College of Business, spent the summer immersing himself in the steel ecosystem end-to-end, learning how DJJ supplies scrap to Nucor mills and keeps a circular supply chain running. His internship was intentionally hands-on: traveling to steel mills, scrap yards, suppliers, and customers to see material flow from upstream to downstream while working alongside Nucor teammates. The experience was challenging in the best way, turning a steep learning curve into real professional growth and a comprehensive view of how business decisions play out on the ground. In three words, he calls it "hands-on, challenging, comprehensive."

Adam Siegfried

Bowling Green State University, College of Engineering & Innovation

Role: Innovation Intern, Aptiv, Warren, OH



Adam Siegfried, a mechatronics engineering technology major, spent his co-op in Aptiv's advanced development group, brainstorming with mentors and rapidly prototyping a new low-voltage automotive connector for flexible flat cable. Highlights of his experience include hands-on build and test opportunities, translating ideas into parts, coordinating across the facility to source components and processes, and validating early designs against IEC and USCAR standards (from creepage/clearance to temperature-rise for current rating). He credits BGSU's Engineering Society, where he helped design an EV go-kart's battery and harness, and the Mechatronics curriculum's mix of electrical and mechanical coursework (PCB design, CAD/3D modeling, machining, instrumentation) for preparing him to contribute on day one.

The experience sharpened his problem-solving and prototyping skills and offered a candid view of the business realities that shape which innovations scale. Now a full-time mechanical product engineer at Aptiv, he's already applying those tools on new projects and doubling down on a career at the intersection of innovation and manufacturable design.

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