



Mississippi Manufacturers Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Mississippi Manufacturers Association Announces Addition of Manufacturing Extension Partnership Division**

**JACKSON, Miss. (June 19, 2017)** — The Mississippi Manufacturers Association (MMA), along with Congressman Gregg Harper, Governor Phil Bryant, American Small Manufacturers Coalition President & CEO Carrie Hines, and MMA Chairman Jim McIngvale today announced at Nissan in Canton, Mississippi, a multi-year grant was awarded to the MMA to host the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, formerly InnovateMEP Mississippi, for the state of Mississippi. This grant, from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides \$1 million per year for the next five years for the MEP program. The new MMA-MEP is a non-profit line of business of the MMA, and its services will be available to all manufacturers. MMA assumed control of the MEP on April 1, 2017.

“As former chairman of InnovateMEP Mississippi, I saw firsthand the instrumental role this program played in being an advocate for small- to medium-sized manufacturers in our state. MMA remains vigilant in its efforts to eliminate an unfair, unnecessary or costly burden on the operations of our state's manufacturing community, which is why the MEP fits perfectly with the mission of the MMA,” said MMA President & CEO Jay C. Moon.

In addition to the grant, Governor Phil Bryant announced that the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) will provide \$200,000 in new, direct funding to the MMA-MEP to continue to support growth of Mississippi’s manufacturers in the following four project focus areas: establish a joint Mississippi Corridor Consortium/MMA-MEP expanded Intern Intensification Program (IIP) for non-traditional students; develop and deploy training to SWIB partners and stakeholders in industrial engagement; grow new startup manufacturing companies; and train manufacturing startup employees using the new MMA-MEP small manufacturers’ resource center.

MEP’s national network includes more than 440 service locations with more than 1,300 trusted advisors serving as technical experts to help manufacturing business owners increase profits, create and retain jobs, and establish a foundation for long-term growth and productivity. The MEP program currently receives \$130 million dollars in federal funding that is matched with an additional \$180 million in funding and fees collected to support these efforts.

Mississippi's MEP program is one of 51 NIST-MEP Centers nationwide and has, for more than 15 years, provided exemplary service to Mississippi's manufacturers by supporting the change that makes a significant difference between surviving and thriving.

The new MMA-MEP will be a catalyst for strengthening Mississippi manufacturing — accelerating its ongoing transformation into a more efficient and powerful engine of innovation by driving economic growth and job creation. MMA-MEP's community college and university-based centers provide small- and medium-sized manufacturers the tools to innovate, create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money.

“We are very happy to be part of the MMA and believe that this new affiliation and synergy will have great benefit for both organizations and the manufacturers of Mississippi. I am especially grateful for all that Jay Moon has done for MMA-MEP and me over the past 12 years,” said MMA-MEP Executive Director Dr. Jay Tice.

The MMA-MEP is administered by Dr. John “Jay” Tice IV, Executive Director; Dr. Joe Jordan, Assistant Director; and Carolyn Miller, Assistant Director.

Dr. Tice is in his 12<sup>th</sup> year as the Executive Director of Mississippi's MEP program. Jay provides overall oversight of the MMA-MEP program which includes headquarters' operations and the five MMA-MEP community college and university-based centers in Mississippi.

Dr. Jordan serves as Assistant Director for the MMA-MEP. In this role, he provides leadership for MMA-MEP programs in manufacturing innovation and technology acceleration, and coordinates the Mississippi E3 (economy, energy and environment) initiative, a collaborative partnership that promotes sustainable manufacturing.

Carolyn Miller is the Assistant Director of Business Operations for MMA-MEP. She manages all projects and financial reporting activities for MMA-MEP in conjunction with the Mississippi Manufacturers Association.

Additional program support is provided by Debra Stumpf, MMA Director of Administration, and Melissa Saxton, Program Coordinator of MMA Insurance Services.

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*For more than 60 years, the Mississippi Manufacturers Association has represented the interests of Mississippi's manufacturers at both the state and national levels. As the Voice of Industry, MMA represents manufacturers in the Mississippi Legislature and U.S. Congress. MMA promotes a strong manufacturing environment within Mississippi, and is a central source of information and assistance in industrial management. To learn more about MMA and manufacturing in Mississippi, please visit [www.mma-web.org](http://www.mma-web.org).*