

# NJBIA

## AT ISSUE *By Christopher Emigholz, Director of Education & Workforce Development*

### Manufacturers Tell Their Story at the State House

**New Jersey manufacturers are amazing.** Year in and year out they stand up to fierce global competition while operating in a high-cost state. They are innovative and productive, and they provide above-average pay and benefits.

Manufacturers in this state have a great story to tell, and 25 of our member companies did just that on March 15 at NJBIA's Made in New Jersey Day at the State House.

Manufacturers lined the main hall of the State House on this legislative session day, displaying everything from baseball bats to surgical instruments. Top policymakers and dozens of legislators toured the exhibits and talked with manufacturers about what they need to remain competitive. Among the visitors were Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Shelia Oliver, Senate Republican Leader Tom Kean, and Assembly Republican Leader Alex DeCroce.

As staff director of the New Jersey Business & Industry Association's Manufacturing Network, I felt great pride in seeing the quality and variety of products that our member companies make. Their innovation and inventiveness is remarkable.

This year, legislators were treated to product displays presented by Akadema of Hawthorne, which makes baseball gloves and bats used by Major League Baseball players, and Ocean Spray of Bordentown, a cranberry juice cooperative that is owned by 800 cranberry growers.

We also had a company that invented the leather motorcycle jacket in 1927, Schott NYC of Elizabeth. Another company, Salon Interiors of South Hackensack, demonstrated a simple but effective innovation: making custom-shaped message boards out of ordinary tack-board materials.

Many of the products were easily recognizable, like tissue paper made by Marcal Manufacturing of Elmwood Park or colored pencils made by Jersey City's General Pencil.

Some companies displayed products that hold other company's products, such as boxes, displays and corrugated packaging made for retail sales by Accurate Box of Paterson.

Other products on display were highly specialized, such as electromechanical assemblies for the defense industry made by the Falstrom Company of Passaic, precision metal enclosures for the industrial and military markets by National Manufacturing of Chatham, and precision surgical tools made by the Micro Stamping Corporation of Somerset.

NJBIA didn't hold Made in New Jersey Day just to show off the great products that are being made here. We also wanted to show that manufacturing is very much



>Despite the challenges they face, **manufacturers remain one of New Jersey's most valuable economic assets.**

alive in New Jersey.

To be sure, high costs remain a challenge for our manufacturers. But they still directly employ 260,000 production workers in this state and support more than 100,000 jobs in other industries. That's a fact, and it means that manufacturing is still a big cog in the state economy.

When manufacturers speak directly with lawmakers about the need to cut taxes and red tape, lawmakers listen. At Made in New Jersey Day, the "high cost of doing business in New Jersey" isn't an abstraction. Suddenly, it's about real companies working hard to succeed in all 40 legislative districts.

NJBIA will continue to hold Made in New Jersey Day for many years to come. We will continue to give manufacturers a chance to tell their stories to the state's top lawmakers. And we will continue to drive home the message that manufacturing counts in New Jersey. **NJB**