PURPOSE

Manufacturers’ ability to address the skills gap has been hindered by the public perception that manufacturing careers are an undesirable option for women and/or it is labor intensive and requires extensive education needs. Both of these misperceptions stem from a lack of understanding of what present-day manufacturing environments are truly like – highly technical, well-paying and diverse career options with a bright future.

With the looming talent shortage facing manufacturers, the industry has an opportunity to mitigate the gap by having more women join the ranks of manufacturing employees.

The Manufacturing Institute launched the STEP Ahead initiative to honor and promote the role of women in the manufacturing industry through recognition, research, and leadership.

STEP Ahead gives manufacturers an opportunity to raise awareness of these issues by showcasing existing female talent and providing role models that can speak to the transformation of the industry.

STEP Ahead celebrates and recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding current leadership in manufacturing, inspires the next generation of women leaders in manufacturing through mentorship, and documents best practices in attracting and retaining female talent.

While Honorees represent the strength of manufacturing, Emerging Leaders represent our future. The 100 Honorees and 30 Emerging Leaders gather in Washington, D.C. for professional development and celebration. Honorees share best practices, develop their professional strengths, and network with peers.

As manufacturers continue to struggle with attracting, retaining, and advancing talent, STEP Ahead offers an avenue for corporate action and impact. We look forward to engaging you in our efforts.
MANUFACTURING COMPETITIVENESS - ALIGNING STEP AHEAD TO CORPORATE STRATEGIES

STEP Ahead offers companies a unique opportunity to strengthen their diversity strategy. It serves as a platform for companies to select leaders for national recognition. In addition, it engages and mobilizes Honorees and acts as a catalyst for change.

Honorees are challenged to consider what actions they can take to advance more women in the industry. Honorees commit to encouraging women into manufacturing and help them succeed through the following actions:

- Leverage your strengths for personal development
- Engage and/or mentor young women/girls
- Advocate as an ambassador for the manufacturing industry
- Develop your network to generate ideas and share best practices

This pledge helps amplify current company activities and formalize strategies into action. It can be leveraged with company affinity groups and individual actions, all connecting to a larger national manufacturing strategy.

STEP AHEAD INITIATIVE PILLARS

RECOGNITION
- Identify and highlight women who have contributed to the competitiveness of their company and have a positive impact on the manufacturing industry as a whole.

RESEARCH
- Establish the business case for increasing the number of women in the manufacturing workforce.
- Understand the current state and potential solutions from the perspective of women in manufacturing firms.
- Provide case studies and recommendations that organizations can pursue to improve the attraction, retention and advancement of women.

LEADERSHIP
- Develop the leadership skills of women in manufacturing.
- Pay-it-forward by mentoring the next generation of STEM leaders.
- Engage with industry leaders to develop a network of experts.
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

• *Telling your Story* teaches women how to “brand” themselves and encourages them to dispel common misperceptions about the industry.
• *Leading from Strengths* engages women leaders in understanding how to leverage their strengths and apply them on the job.
• *Building your Networks* enables individuals to pay it forward by finding connections and offering solutions among colleagues.
• *LEAD by Example* puts company leaders on a platform to answer the questions early career women are often afraid to ask.
• *STEP Ahead Personal Commitment* amplifies individual and company impact on engaging a diverse workforce.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations open on August 1, 2017 and will close September 29, 2017. While there is no limit to the number of nominations a company may put forward, there is a limit to the number of Honorees and/or Emerging Leaders that will be recognized. Companies are allowed up to two Honorees and two Emerging Leaders (women under the age of 30).

The STEP Ahead Award is a competitive award, with a cap of 100 Honorees and 30 Emerging Leaders. Companies should make their best effort to ensure the application meets the selection criterion.

AMPLIFYING THE VALUE OF WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING

The Manufacturing Institute anticipates numerous communications activities leading up to the STEP Ahead Awards event. The Manufacturing Institute will publish press releases about significant, initiative-wide developments to build momentum of the STEP Ahead Awards in 2018. All the STEP Ahead press releases will be posted on The Manufacturing Institute’s website on the press page as they are released.

The Manufacturing Institute will also be working with companies to release op-eds regarding women in manufacturing beginning in March 2018.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Manufacturing Institute handle: @TheMfgInstitute
STEP Ahead Twitter Hashtag: #MFGWomen

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) handle: @ShopFloorNAM
We have launched a STEP Ahead blog series, which will be posted on a monthly basis on the NAM’s Shopfloor Blog.

Follow the STEP Ahead LinkedIn page for continuous updates.

WEBSITE

All of the Honorees’ profiles will be added to The Manufacturing Institute’s website in March 2018.

A complete media kit to promote STEP Ahead is available to media sponsors and companies. The media kit provides information about the movement, including links to key online resources, a sample press release, and provides manufacturing facts and graphics.
ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We offer dinner sponsorship opportunities to companies and organizations that place a priority on female talent and the need for attracting, advancing, and retaining more women to our industry. The Institute looks forward to working with all members of our industry to ensure the dinner is once again a success.

CHAIRWOMAN AND VICE CHAIRWOMAN
["Note: 2018 STEP Ahead Chair is filled."

Chair: Natalie Schilling, Vice President, Human Resources, Arconic

STRATEGIC UNDERWRITER: $50,000 – $75,000

STEP Awards Program and Dinner Sponsor
- Verbal acknowledgement from The Manufacturing Institute for leadership role at the STEP Initiative and at the STEP Awards Dinner
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
- Two tables of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
- All the benefits of Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

STEP Awards Dinner Sponsor
- Verbal acknowledgement from The Manufacturing Institute for leadership role at the STEP Awards Dinner
- Two tables of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
- All the benefits of Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

Honoree VIP Reception Sponsor
- Verbal acknowledgement from The Manufacturing Institute for leadership role at the STEP Awards Dinner
- One table of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
- All other benefits of Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

STEP Awards Sponsor
This year’s award is a stunning crystal, etched STEP ‘boot in motion,’ which will be conveyed to Honorees during the STEP Awards dinner program.
- Verbal acknowledgement from The Manufacturing Institute for sponsorship of the nomination process and as award underwriter at the STEP Awards Dinner
- Co-branding with The Manufacturing Institute on the ‘crystal boot in motion’ award
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
- One table of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
- All the benefits of a Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
PLATINUM SPONSORS: $25,000 - $50,000

STEP Women in Manufacturing Leadership Video
• Co-branding with The Manufacturing Institute on the Women in Manufacturing Leadership Video (See video here).
• Verbal acknowledgement for support of the Leadership Video by The Manufacturing Institute at the STEP Awards Dinner
• Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
• One table of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
• All the benefits of Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

STEP Commemorative Honoree Publication Sponsor
• Co-branding with The Manufacturing Institute on the STEP Commemorative Honoree Publication for the STEP Awards Dinner
• Verbal acknowledgement for support of Honoree Publication by The Manufacturing Institute at the STEP Awards Dinner
• Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
• One table of ten (10) at the Dinner (preferential seating)
• All the benefits of Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

Honoree Luncheon Sponsor
• Co-branding with The Manufacturing Institute as the Honoree Luncheon Sponsor for the STEP Ahead Awards daytime professional development
• Verbal acknowledgement for selected programming support from The Manufacturing Institute at the STEP Ahead Awards Luncheon
• Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
• One table of ten (10) at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
• All the benefits of a Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

Banner Sponsors
A total of four (4) opportunities for banner representation exist to highlight your organization’s unique investment made on behalf of women and support for this important aspect of our industry.
• Co-branding with The Manufacturing Institute on one (1) banner showcasing contributions made by women in manufacturing (final design and content at the discretion of the Institute and will be consistent with all other banner sponsors)
• Co-branding on banner pre-promotion and related activities for 2015 STEP Ahead Awards dinner on-site
• Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Event Program
• One table of ten (10) at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
• All the benefits of a Table Sponsor at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC

Advising Sponsor
• Provide counsel on the central focus and goals for STEP Ahead, to direct the objectives of national and regional events and outcomes
• One table for ten (10) guests at the STEP Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
• Name and logo recognition in the STEP Awards Dinner Program
• Organization’s name and logo recognition in STEP Awards dinner-related promotional activity (STEP Publications, Website, etc.)
GOLD SPONSOR: $10,000 - $20,000

Leadership Program Sponsor (1 available)
The 1 ½ day leadership development session supports honoree professional development and helps to expand and strengthen their personal network.

- Invitation to the 1 ½ day-long STEP Ahead Leadership Development program
- Verbal acknowledgement for selected programming support from The Manufacturing Institute during the STEP Ahead Leadership program
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Event Program
- One table for ten (10) guests at the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Organization’s name and logo recognition in STEP Ahead Awards dinner related promotional activity (STEP Publications, Website, etc.)
- Company Spotlight in printed materials and web-content

Leadership Session Sponsor
The Leadership Session sponsor supports honoree professional development and helps to expand and strengthen their personal network. Sessions include: Leading from Strengths, Building Your Network, and Leading by Example

- Verbal acknowledgement for selected programming support from The Manufacturing Institute during the STEP Ahead Leadership program
- Appropriate name and logo recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Event Program
- ½ table for five (5) guests at the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Organization’s name and recognition in STEP Ahead Awards dinner related promotional activity (STEP Publications, Website, etc.)

TABLE SPONSOR: $10,000

Table Sponsor

- One table for ten (10) guests at the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Name and logo recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Program
- Organization’s name and logo recognition in STEP Awards dinner-related promotional activity (STEP Publications, Website, etc.)

SILVER SPONSOR: $2,500 - $5,000

Half Table Sponsor

- Half table for five (5) guests at the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Name recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Program

Honoree Bag Sponsor

- One (1) ticket for the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Name recognition on Honoree Bag
- Name recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Program

Selfie Stick Sponsor

- One (1) ticket for the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Name recognition on Selfie Stick
- Name recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Program

Photo Booth Sponsor

- One (1) ticket for the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner in Washington, DC
- Name recognition on the Event Photo Booth
- Name recognition in the STEP Ahead Awards Dinner Program

For customized sponsorship opportunities, please contact AJ Jorgenson at ajjorgenson@nam.org.
STEP AHEAD FAQ

WHAT ARE THE STEP AHEAD AWARDS?
The STEP Ahead Awards celebrate women who have demonstrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Production excellence in manufacturing. The STEP Ahead Awards recognize women and their achievements at all levels of a manufacturing organization, from the factory floor to the C-suite.

HOW ARE THE HONOREES SELECTED?
Honorees were nominated by their peers, company officials, or professional service firms. Nominators were asked to articulate how the nominee made significant achievements in manufacturing through their positive impact on a company and the manufacturing industry as a whole. Nominators also had to explain, and support with specific outcomes, the contributions the nominee made to her company as a leader. Nominators qualified the specific technical contributions the nominee made, considering outcomes like increased revenues, reduced costs, greater productivity, improved customer satisfaction, and development of employee talent, etc.

HOW MANY HONOREES ARE THERE?
In 2017, there were 100 Honorees and 30 Emerging Leaders. They represent all levels of manufacturing, and show the diversity of manufacturing careers. The Honorees’ companies are of all sizes and represent varying sectors of manufacturing.

WHY ARE YOU RECOGNIZING WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING?
Manufacturing faces a serious skills gap. Part of this skills gap can be attributed to an underrepresentation of women in the industry. While women make up approximately 47% of the labor force, they account for only about 29% of manufacturing.

WHAT CAN THESE WOMEN DO TO HELP THAT?
By telling the real stories of these women, we will demonstrate leadership and opportunities in a diversity of manufacturing careers and use them to inspire the next-generation of talent to pursue careers in the industry. The STEP Ahead Awards are also meant to empower Honorees to lead in their companies, communities, and networks on the importance of manufacturing and issues related to attracting, advancing, and retaining strong manufacturing talent.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THE STEP AHEAD AWARDS?
The STEP Ahead Awards are meant for anyone who supports women manufacturers, and would like to help close the gender gap in manufacturing. This includes manufacturers, educators, media, civic leaders, and local communities.

WHEN ARE NOMINATIONS?
Nominations open August 1, 2017 and close September 29, 2017.
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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