PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

The Manufacturing Institute, Arconic Foundation, MAGNET to Host Manufacturing Women’s Networking Event Featuring Industry Leaders

STEP Forward networking event engages women to discuss challenges and opportunities, and navigate their careers

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio, Nov. 17, 2016: Today, The Manufacturing Institute, Arconic Foundation, and MAGNET hosted STEP Forward: Ohio, a networking event for manufacturing women to discuss challenges and opportunities, best practices, and connect with their peers and learn from each other’s successes. While women make up about 47 percent of the labor force, they only represent 27 percent of the manufacturing workforce. The Manufacturing Institute and Arconic Foundation are committed to improve and tackle this glaring statistic through the STEP Forward series.

STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Production) Forward brings all levels of women together, from the factory floor to the c-suite, with speakers considered to be role models to provide opportunities for participants to connect with other talented women. The attendees heard advice and key takeaways from Leslie Suffredini, Product Engineering and Quality Manager, Engineering, Arconic; Dalithia Smith, Vice President Human Resources, Americas Welding, The Lincoln Electric Company; Bethann O’Malley, PMP, Sr. Manager, Consumer Foods TSO, The J.M. Smucker Company; and Betsy Engels, Vice President, Commercial, Tata Steel.

"Arconic and Arconic Foundation value diversity in the workforce and are committed to supporting women in pursuit of manufacturing careers," said Suzanne van de Raadt, Arconic Foundation's program director. “Today’s manufacturing industry offers high-tech, higher paying careers in which women can and do succeed, and where their diversity of thought, experience, skills and background are needed to ensure continued advancements.”

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 Forward brings the STEP Ahead initiative regionally into the community.

“STEP Forward is a unique opportunity to strengthen your company’s diversity strategy. It mobilizes women to act as a catalyst for change within their company and their community,” The Manufacturing Institute Executive Director Jennifer McNelly said. “We are thrilled to be able to continue spreading our message to women all across the U.S.”
The STEP Forward event took place at the Embassy Suites Cleveland – Rockside from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

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**About The Manufacturing Institute**

The Manufacturing Institute (the Institute) is the 501(c)(3) affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers. As a non-partisan organization, the Institute is committed to delivering leading-edge information and services to the nation's manufacturers. The Institute is the authority on the attraction, qualification and development of world-class manufacturing talent. For more information, please visit [www.themanufacturinginstitute.org](http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org).

**About Arconic Foundation**

As the philanthropic arm of Arconic – which works in close partnership with customers to solve complex engineering challenges to transform the way we fly, drive, build and power – Arconic Foundation supports programs that help prepare the 21st century engineering and advanced manufacturing workforce. Through collaboration with our nonprofit partners, our initiatives make quality STEM education opportunities available to students; support engineering and technical skills training through community colleges, vocational technical schools and universities around the world; and help to create access for underrepresented individuals to the STEM fields. The work of Arconic Foundation is further enhanced by the thousands of Arconic employee volunteers who share their talents and time to make a difference in their communities. Established in 2016, Arconic Foundation is active in 16 countries around the globe. For more information, visit [www.ArconicFoundation.com](http://www.ArconicFoundation.com) and follow our programming on social media.