FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Charleston, SC - The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce has partnered with the Trident Regional Education Center and Lowcountry Manufacturers Council to address the critical gap between the skills of potential employees and those needed by manufacturers.

Nationally, 600,000 jobs are left unfilled each year due to the skills gap, costing the creation of a potential 405,441 additional jobs as well as $17,590,000,000 in lost income taxes (Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute, 2011).

Through the Trident Region STEM and Manufacturing for Educators’ Day (SMFED) series, teachers and counselors are educated about the realities and opportunities in STEM and Manufacturing professions, providing them with the knowledge to create industry-related lesson plans and activities. Sessions also help the community become familiar with the dynamic advancements in the manufacturing industry.

The 2014 STEM and Manufacturing for Educators’ Day (SMFED) series consists of two full day sessions and a culminating event. The introductory session, hosted by Alcoa Mt. Holly, allowed educators of Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties to tour the facility, learn about the history of Alcoa and employability skills from subject matter experts. During the second session, educators visited Robert Bosch, LLC and Boeing South Carolina, meeting with company leaders and exploring the companies’ manufacturing processes.

The valuable knowledge gained will help educators create lesson plans and classroom activities that connect the classroom experience to the world of work. These unique plans create awareness of the industry, identify skill needs and emphasize the relevancy between classroom lessons and the region’s manufacturing industry.

The culminating event provided an opportunity for the participants and business leaders to exchange best practices and ideas about incorporating workforce skills into classroom activities. ReadySC representatives presented pre-employment technical training opportunities followed by a panel of human resources professionals from Leatherwood Industries and the South Carolina Ports Authority.

Additional industries establishing SMFED events include Briteline, Cummins, Pegasus Steel, Nucor Steel, MWV, Tognum, State Ports Authority, VTL Precision, Hubner Manufacturing, Leatherwood Industries and

Source: Alcoa
Allied Reliability Group. To learn more and get involved, contact Suzi Raiford, Education Initiatives Director, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce sraiford@charlestonchamber.org.

SMFED 2014 is funded by Dream It, Do It South Carolina and The Alcoa Foundation.

About the Chamber: With more than 1,700 member organizations representing 100,000 professionals, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce serves as the collective voice of the business community, and a catalyst for advancing the region's economy and enhancing members' success through Advocacy, Innovation, Talent and Business Advancement. Visit charlestonchamber.net.

About Trident Regional Education Center: The Trident Regional Education Center (TREC), an initiative of the Education and Economic Development Act of 2005, connects industry and education to create globally competitive talent. The center cultivates partnerships between industry and education to address workforce development/education gaps; provides workforce development/education resources, information, services and maintains a user-friendly virtual workforce development/education clearinghouse.

Driving Growth. Defining Tomorrow.

Our Mission is to advance our region's economy, improve our quality of life and enhance our members' success. Our Vision is to strengthen our region as a world-class metropolitan area.