A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

2015 was an exciting and very busy year for the Alliance for Industry & Manufacturing (AIM). As part of our rebranding efforts we renamed the organization to better reflect the expanding membership that includes both small businesses and manufacturers. We also completely revamped our website, to make it easier for members and prospects to learn and take advantage of the resources available to them through AIM.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank each and every one of you—members, sponsors, partners, donors, board members and staff for your commitment and collaboration in making 2015 a success, and for developing new tools and programs that will continue to offer our members the access, resources and success they have come to expect from the Alliance for Industry and Manufacturing.

This year, we continued to develop programs and events in the areas that matter most to our members; seeking to grow their business locally, nationally and around the world. Although 2015 was, and 2016 continues to be challenging, due to the state budget impasse, we are committed to finding new sources of revenue through programs, donations, grants and strategic partnerships.

2015 Highlights include:

- Additional assistance through our Business Development Centers
- Workforce Development programs and successes
- Additional events and speakers based on the needs of our members
- Additional regional Economic Development Activities
- Notable AIM Board Member Activities in banking, trade agreements and developing new partnerships

Please take the time to peruse our 2015 Year in Review and 2016 Year in the Making to learn more about ongoing successes, and new programs and developments, based on our members’ needs.

The activities, programs and accomplishments of 2015 have been made possible through collaboration and partnership with many stakeholders, and I would like to formally thank all of the individuals and organizations that have played such an instrumental role in helping this organization continue to thrive. Our mission is clear, and we look forward to propelling that mission and our members’ success forward in 2016 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Pam McDonough
President
Alliance for Industry and Manufacturing
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Great strides were made in the area of workforce development in 2015, including:

- Launching the Metro West Manufacturing Workforce Collaborative in conjunction with the Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC) and Career Connect Metro West
- Twenty-five unemployed individuals, including four who were homeless, completed JARC’s CNC and/or welding training programs at the Tech Center of DuPage and were hired by DuPage County manufacturers
- A new partnership was developed with VOYIG, a national company specializing in recruiting military veterans for manufacturing jobs
- We were awarded $350K by Illinois Department of Commerce under the Illinois Talent Pipeline Management grant program, for training
- JARC is working with companies to help retrain existing workers and AIM is working with companies with on-the-job training contracts for qualified new employees

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

AIM offered assistance through our Business Development Centers (SBDC, ITC, PTAC & LIRI):

- 3500 consulting hours to more than 300 companies
- Helped secure $43 million in grants and contracts for clients
- Helped secure nearly $90K in grants for client companies through the Metro Chicago Exports JP Morgan Chase grant program

FOCUS ON ENERGY SAVINGS

- Expanded our National Manufacturing Energy Cooperative (NMEC) and other energy related services, including a partnership with the Hill Group to offer energy audits and conservation services, using ComEd, People Gas and NICOR gas rebates.
- Initiated the exploration of a program to secure Carbon Credits for companies that are undertaking major “green” initiatives, such as installing windmills, solar walls, etc.
- Black Diamond, a new partner, offers one-stop shop plumbing, electrical and HVAC services
- Aero Seal, also a new partner, provides air quality, duct cleaning and related proprietary energy savings

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- AIM is working with the Chicago Metro Metals Consortium to focus on the metals sector in the Region, to identify programs and funding opportunities
- AIM participates in Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle’s regional economic development collaboration with Cook and Collar Counties
- Metro Chicago Exports, a program through World Business Chicago, is partnering with Alliance for Industry and Manufacturing’s international trade centers to offer grants to expand exporting activities through a grant from J.P. Morgan Chase
2015 IMPACT SUMMARY
Assisted more than 700 companies with:

- Facilitated over $90K in export assistance grants
- More than $1.5M in exports
- Increasing sales by $12.5M
- Training of more than 1590 workers
- Obtaining in excess of $500K in grant allocations for area companies

PROPERTY TAX SAVINGS
Through our Service Provider, Fisk, Kart, Katz, Regan & Levy, members achieved great savings in 2015. Here are just a few examples of those savings:

- A 25K square foot scaffolding company saved an average of $33K over 3 years, for a total tax savings of approximately $100K
- A 80K square foot metal stamping company saved more than $83K a year, over 3 years, for a total savings of approximately $250K
- A 71K square foot paper container manufacturing company saved approximately $90K for one year. Without the reduction, the property tax bill would have been approximately $20K a year for a three year savings total of $48K per year
- A 35K square foot air filter company saved approximately $20K a year, over a 3 year period, for a total savings of $60K

SALES TAX SAVINGS
Our Service Provider, Orion Solutions, LLC assisted companies with tax credits and refunds, including clients receiving $36,832 in Manufacturer’s Purchase Credits and $31,117 in Software Sales Tax Credits

Additionally, Orion Solutions is assisting AIM members realize savings through the implementation and use of the Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program, which provides company federal tax credits for hiring individuals from targeted groups

AIM IMPACT ON ILLINOIS COMPANIES IN 2015

- $3,400,000 Capital Funding
- $508,000 Employer Training Investment Program
- $308,000 On the Job Training
- $1,500,000 Increased Exports
- $43,500,000 Assistance in Securing Government Contracts
- $12,300,000 Sales Increases for Companies

(*Using technical business assistance, companies realized this number in sales)
YEAR IN THE MAKING
2016 GROWTH, FUNDING, PARTNERS, SUCCESS

We are thrilled with the continued innovation of our membership, and Alliance team, that continues to expand and improve programming to our members. Here are just a few of the exciting things happening in 2016, and beyond:

- AIM Pop-Up Business Incubator, an innovative new program to bring economic development services to under-served communities, including technical assistance for everything from starting a business to selling to the government, to growth through exporting
- AIM is partnering with UPS, Metro Chicago Exports and DMDII on a small business “X-Port Challenge”, a competitive event in September 2016. Five winners will be awarded a range of free export shipping credits from UPS
- Launching a new initiative, AIM to Grow, a series of technical assistance and training workshops for small businesses, covering key topics such as marketing, business process, social media, financial planning, market expansion through government contracting and exporting to global markets
- With our new partner, the Technology & Manufacturing Association (TMA), we were selected by the World Business Chicago as a joint Account Executive for the 1,000 Jobs Campaign
- Adding new training partners OAI, Symbol and TMA
- Kicked off a very successful Championing Women in Manufacturing Conference; an event co-sponsored by AIM, The Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute, Women in Manufacturing and TMA
- Received $500,000 in federal training funds from the Department of Commerce for the “Regional Manufacturing Advanced Skills Collaborative”—a partnership with JARC, TMA and VOYIG

EVENT UPDATE

IN 2015, AIM HELD OVER 30 EVENTS, THAT DREW MORE THAN 1300 ATTENDEES.

With our revamped logo and name, to better represent our expanding membership that includes both small businesses and manufacturers, AIM will continue to offer quality events and workshops that help all of our members to thrive and grow.

View our events page regularly, to learn more.

***MARK YOUR CALENDARS***

For October 6th, 2016 for Making Manufacturing Matter, our 3rd Annual Regional Manufacturing Awards dinner.
MANY THANKS

To all of our Members, Supporting Members, Board Members, the Alliance team and Partners, we offer a heartfelt thank you for your help, commitment and passion for the success of Illinois Industry and Manufacturing. It is with you—and because of you—that this organization continues to grow and thrive, and offer programs, events and services to keep Illinois business strong and successful.

In 2015, we welcomed two new Supporting Organization Members: Boeing and UPS

Special thanks to Mary Howe (Howe Corporation) and Craig Shields (Graymills); two of AIM’s Board members, that were very involved in the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank, the only affordable and available means for small manufacturers to insure their products from plant to global markets and the fast track authority to negotiate Free Trade agreements (TPA) with the European Union (T-TIP) and the Pacific Rim Countries (TPP).