

# Grayway

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**THE OVERLOOKED  
SOLUTION TO  
THE SKILLS GAP**

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## WELCOME



Stephen Gray  
President &  
Chief Executive Officer

As the manufacturing industry has evolved into a modern, highly skilled sector, it has also become much more diverse in its workforce. With women making up about 47 percent of the total U.S. workforce, there is room for improvement, especially when diversity has been proven to bring about innovation, product development and profitability.

In this issue of the GrayWay, we look at the untapped resource of women in manufacturing, how they can help fill the looming skills gap and programs that manufacturers are embracing to attract them to the industry.

*Gray practices methods  
which protect our environment.*



# THE UNTAPPED RESOURCE OF WOMEN

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### GRAY... WE'RE BUILDING

Sofidel America Corp.  
Circleville, Ohio



# DIVERSITY IN MANUFACTURING

How Women Can Help  
Shrink the Skills Gap

The manufacturing industry has been experiencing an extreme makeover over the past decade. Historically, society has equated the manufacturing industry with a dirty, dangerous factory floor occupied by men. Fast forward to present day – the manufacturing industry is advanced and modern requiring a diverse level of skills from both men and women.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that around 27.5 percent of women are employed in manufacturing in the United States. It's a little known fact that women started entering the manufacturing industry in the mid-1900s, and specifically in the late 1960s, according to the Saint Louis Federal Reserve Bank's Federal Reserve Archival System for Economic Research (FRASER). While the percentage of women in manufacturing has grown, the current number is less than a third of the entire manufacturing workforce. It's clear a significant need currently exists for women to accommodate an evolving manufacturing industry.

"The manual labor of yesterday is no longer," points out AJ Jorgenson, who leads the operations for the Manufacturing Institute's largest initiative called STEP Ahead. "There are 3D printers, robotics, the Internet of Things (IoT) and automated capabilities all being integrated into modern manufacturing practices to create promising careers for men and women."



AJ Jorgenson  
AVP, Strategic  
Engagement  
The Manufacturing  
Institute

One of the top challenges for manufacturers over the past several years has been finding and retaining talent. The retiring baby boomer generation is only adding to this burden.

According to a [study](#) from research firm Deloitte and the [Manufacturing Institute](#), some 3.5 million manufacturing jobs are expected to be needed over the next decade, and 2 million of these jobs are estimated to go unfilled due to the skills gap.



Pamela Kan  
President  
Bishop-Wisecarver  
Group

The lack of skilled talent is among the top challenges today's manufacturers face, says Pamela Kan, who leads

the automation solutions and guided motion manufacturing technology company called [Bishop-Wisecarver Group](#).

### How Women Can Help Fill the Skills Gap

A new [report](#) from the Manufacturing Institute, Deloitte and APICS shows that manufacturers are making it a priority to recruit and develop women for the opportunities they can offer. Companies are finding that gender diversity impacts the bottom line. Nearly 50 percent of manufacturers surveyed found that having women on the leadership team impacted financial performance. One perspective even showed that the difference between no females

in executive leadership to less than a third representation could impact net profitability as much as 15 percent.

Revenue growth occurs when diverse ideas lead to new and innovative products, which 84 percent of manufacturers believe women deliver. In turn, these products allow an entrance into new markets and the opportunity to attract new business.

"The best innovations have come from diverse teams," points out Kan. "When you have a more diverse team, that includes men and women, you approach things differently and are better at problem-solving and creating innovative ideas."

[Catalyst](#), a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding opportunities for women and business, advocates that [women are important to manufacturing](#) for many reasons.

*"If the gender gap in manufacturing would change just 10 percent, the overall skills gap could be reduced by more than half."*

—AJ Jorgenson

The strong desire of women to make a difference, however, is quite possibly of the greatest impact on the industry. This purpose drives a passion to develop parts that build cars for people to drive, to create safe and innovative products for their children to enjoy and to produce goods to make men and women's everyday lives easier.

"If the gender gap in manufacturing would change just 10 percent, the overall skills gap could be reduced by more than half," explains Jorgenson.

### Rebranding the Manufacturing Industry

While women could make a tremendous impact on bridging the skills gap, the question arises as to whether women want these jobs. If the jobs exist, why aren't women running to them? Unfortunately, this question does not have a simple answer. Remember that dirty and dangerous factory floor perception? The stigma continues, meaning the manufacturing industry has a serious branding problem. Women tend to gravitate away from the industry because it has traditionally been male-oriented, or they simply don't know what opportunities are available.

The hosts of [Manufacturing Talk Radio](#), an industry-based podcast, believe education is the first step toward changing this perception. "Germany has a dual educational system where both boys and girls go to school

five days a week, two days which are dedicated to vocational studies and the other three focused on liberal arts," explains Lew Weiss, host of Manufacturing Talk Radio. "These kids come out of school and are exposed to many different opportunities."

"America is behind the curve in preparing the future workforce," adds Tim Grady, co-host of Manufacturing Talk Radio. "The unemployment rate of the U.S. compared to countries like Germany is evidence of the differences in education."

It's important to connect with people at a young age, show them how modern manufacturing really looks and that viable career options exist. These factors should be introduced in schools but also in media. A [disconnect occurs](#) when *Girls' Life* magazine focuses on fashion and beauty, while *Boys' Life* magazine encourages exploring future career choices. When this messaging changes and is consistent, society may also modify its image of the industry.



Tim Grady & Lew Weiss  
Co-hosts  
Manufacturing Talk Radio

Many manufacturers and educators are working together to create and raise awareness for programs that provide more exposure to the true image behind modern manufacturing. Movements are rising up throughout the industry showing that women can be part of the solution. A true opportunity exists for women to not only let their voices be heard in the manufacturing industry, but to also significantly impact women in the workforce.

"Women in this industry may be smaller in number, but we have experienced the benefits of working in manufacturing and are willing to step up and get visible to help create positive change for the industry and for our future female colleagues," explains Kan. "Now more than ever, we have the opportunity to correct misguided perceptions and bring more women into this technologically advanced world of possibility."

## How Manufacturers Can Attract & Retain Women



**1 Offer Work / Life Balance**  
Create a culture where employees are able to work and still take care of family needs.

**2 Offer Mentorships**  
Having a mentor who will advocate for the new employee will further their development and foster relationships.



**3 Offer Challenging Opportunities**  
Hire a woman for what she is capable of doing and utilize on the job training to get her up to speed.



# BUILDING MANUFACTURING CAREERS

Discover How Manufacturers  
Are Training Women to Fill  
the Workforce



The manufacturing industry is facing more than just a lack of talent. Manufacturers must carefully chip away at the glass ceiling that's historically deterred women from pursuing careers in manufacturing, while also overcoming the reputation gap that's daunted the industry for years.

Thankfully, a new wave of organizations has surfaced that are dedicated to abolishing false perceptions, promoting career opportunities and inspiring women to join a movement that's igniting a powerful force within the future of manufacturing.

One organization that's boldly championing a brighter future for the industry and fiercely shattering false perceptions is [Women in Manufacturing \(WiM\)](#), a more than 700-member-strong national association dedicated to advancing women in manufacturing. WiM provides year-round support for thousands of women in the manufacturing sector, and according to [Allison Grealis](#), the organization's founder and president, educational programs are at the forefront of its national efforts.

"We are dedicated to reaching women where they are, when and how it works for them," she explains.

Last fall, WiM established the WiMEF, the 502 c3 arm of WiM, which produces funding for a variety of programs to help women across the country further their own success in manufacturing careers. This year, it will host the second [Leadership Lab](#) for women in manufacturing that provides executive training for women managers and senior leaders in the industry. In addition, WiM offers a series of in-person and webinar trainings as well as an [annual conference](#) to bring women in the industry together.

"We create space for women to discuss their unique experiences and learn from each other. Women leave our events – whether webinars or SUMMIT meetings – feeling buoyed by each other, perhaps for the first time," said Grealis. "When women are energized and motivated to chase their own success, manufacturing will thrive."

While organizations such as WiM are working tirelessly to secure bright futures for women across the country, state-sponsored initiatives are also doing their part to discover and train local talent. For example, [West Virginia Women Work](#) recently launched the [Step Up for Women Advanced Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship](#) program.



Allison Grealis  
Founder and President  
WiM

The tuition-free, 10-week program, which is funded through a sub-grant of the Robert C. Byrd Institute's (RBCI) Apprenticeship Works Initiative, offers hands-on training for women to succeed in advanced manufacturing careers.



Melinda Perron  
Program Coordinator  
West Virginia  
Women Work

West Virginia Women Work's program coordinator Melinda Perron said the program provides firsthand machining training, as well as the opportunity to learn soft skills required to flourish in the workforce. In addition to teaching women technical skills and honing in on resume building and interview preparation, Step

Up for Women offers gas reimbursement, work clothing and other essentials that can set women up for success as they embark upon their new career.

Perron added that initiatives like Step Up for Women are crucial for the future of manufacturing because they help women realize their potential for rewarding, prosperous careers in an industry that has been discounted by many.

"This apprenticeship program is really about uniting and training women to succeed in manufacturing careers," said Perron. "We are trying to get these women trained to help fill the skills gap and also empower them to be economically self-sufficient."

"There is a lot of incentive to get more people into the field right now," she continued. "Many careers that are traditionally considered more common for women in this area simply do not pay enough for women to support themselves and their families. But, these careers are actually highly-skilled positions that pay very well."

Step Up for Women is designed to prepare adult women for entry level positions and apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing.

# THE NEW FACE OF MANUFACTURING

A Q&A with MaryAnn Winsemius, Global Manufacturing Fundamentals Manager at [Owens-Illinois, Inc.](#)

## What motivated you to pursue a career in manufacturing?

My dad, he was an engineer at a manufacturing facility. I also grew up keeping up with my older brothers and have always had an interest in understanding how "stuff" worked. I firmly believed (and still do!) I could do anything that my brothers could do, a fact that my family has always encouraged.

## How would you define the current manufacturing landscape?

I have two words to describe manufacturing – exciting and evolving. Because industries are evolving toward a collaborative culture to better meet customer needs, there are unlimited and exciting opportunities available that will have a powerful impact.

## Why do you believe so strongly in the manufacturing industry?

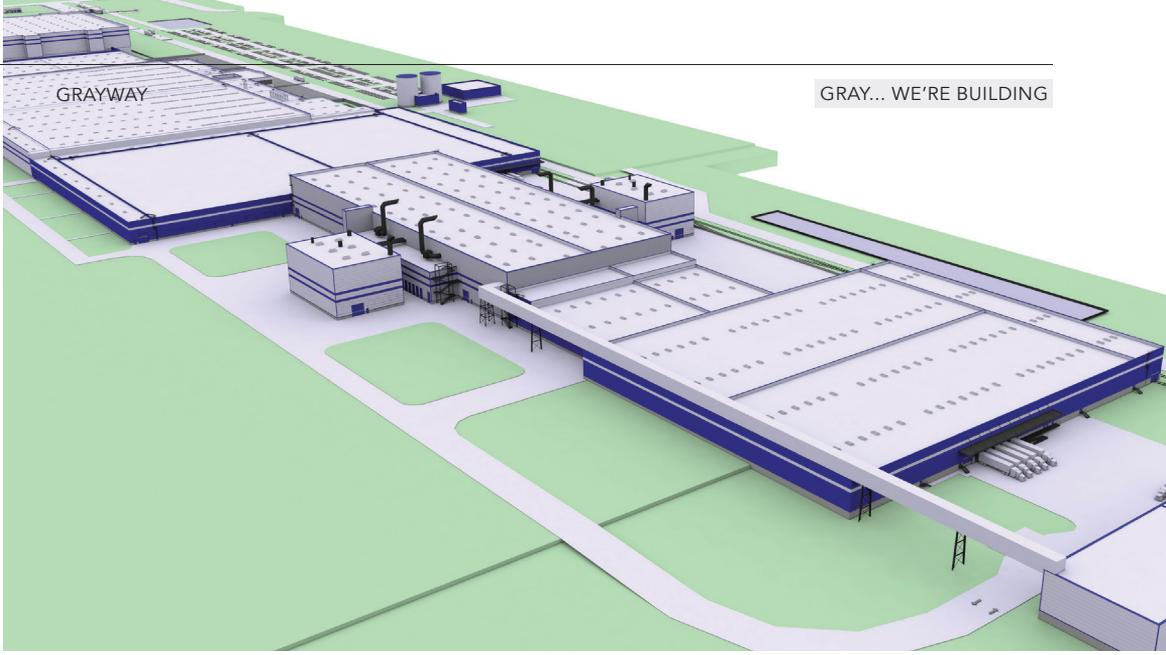
Without manufacturing, what do you have? Manufacturing is the backbone of many communities. It is the epitome of diversity and collaboration – pulling together people with different backgrounds to work toward a common goal. It is woven into everything we do and will continue to have a positive impact on both the U.S. and the economy.

## To create a sustainable future for the industry and its workforce, what needs to happen?

It is up to the current generation to shape the future and encourage inclusion and diversity. Both men and women have the opportunity to turn barriers into opportunities. We all have the ability to be the change we want to see in the industry and workforce of tomorrow.



MaryAnn Winsemius,  
Global Manufacturing  
Fundamentals Manager  
Owens-Illinois, Inc.



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# SOFIDEL AMERICA CORP.

## CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO

**Gray has been selected to design and build Sofidel's first greenfield project in the U.S.—an integrated paper mill in Circleville, Ohio.** Spanning more than 1.6 million s.f., the facility is expected to be operational in 2018 and will employ approximately 300 people. Deciding factors for site selection included close proximity to customer distribution centers, a desirable workforce, a good rail system connected to water and gas, as well as other logistical considerations.

Sofidel America is the U.S. subsidiary of the Sofidel Group. Founded in 1966 in Pocari, Italy, Sofidel employs some 6,000 employees and is recognized as the sixth largest manufacturer of toilet paper, paper towels, facial tissue and other specialty paper products in the world.



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