



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Cindy Anderson  
Executive Director  
850-791-0164  
Cindy@NWFMC.org

**17 MANUFACTURERS TO HOST STUDENT TOURS  
IN NORTHWEST FLORIDA FOR NATIONAL MANUFACTURING MONTH**

*Program Designed to Expand Knowledge of Manufacturing, Improve Public  
Perception of Manufacturing Career Opportunities*

**Northwest Florida, FL** - October, 2016 – In celebration of Manufacturing Month 2016, the Northwest Florida Manufacturers Council announces 17 of Northwest Florida’s manufacturers will open their doors to more than 1,500 students in their ten regional counties as part of an effort to change people’s perceptions about today’s manufacturing environment and draw attention to the outstanding opportunities that a career in manufacturing can provide. Planned activities include these announced student (secondary and post-secondary) tours and the Northwest Florida Annual Manufacturers meeting at the WaterColor Inn and Resort October 19.

Manufacturing Month is an annual national event executed at the local level and supported by thousands of manufacturers, as they host students, teachers, parents, and other local community members at open houses, plant tours and presentations designed to showcase modern manufacturing technology and careers.

To mark the event, Florida has declared October as Manufacturing Month (see attached State proclamation). “There is an increasing demand for highly skilled professionals in the manufacturing sector who can design, program and operate technology,” said Ed Phelan, VP Maritech Machine, Inc. and the Chairman of the Northwest Florida Manufacturers Council. “The average age of a manufacturing employee is 56 and, as a result, between now and 2020, as employees retire, there will be an unprecedented shortage of skilled workers to fill the vacancies.”

Within Northwest Florida, Manufacturing Month is supported by the Northwest Florida Manufacturers Council, the Manufacturing Association of Florida, FLATE (Florida Advanced Technological Education Center) and FloridaMakes, along with its manufacturing operations, CareerSource agencies and secondary and post-secondary manufacturing education institutions.

**About Northwest Florida Manufacturers Council**

The mission of the Northwest Florida Manufacturers Council is to strengthen the economic competitiveness of the region’s manufacturers by acting as a single voice to address common interests.

More information on the NWFMC is available at [www.NWFMC.org](http://www.NWFMC.org) and information on Manufacturing Day at [www.mfgday.com](http://www.mfgday.com). If any media wishes to attend a tour, please contact Cindy Anderson, [Cindy@NWFMC.org](mailto:Cindy@NWFMC.org) for more information.