

October's Manufacturing Month Theme: "RI's Future In the Making"



Did you know that:

- 86.5% of all Ocean State manufacturers have fewer than 50 workers? They may be small but they have a mighty big impact on Rhode Island's economy - together the sector employs 8.5% of our state's total workforce.
- Manufacturing produces higher multiplier effects for jobs, earnings and sales than the average for all other industries in the state.
- Every one job in manufacturing is responsible for sustaining 1.1 additional Rhode Island jobs. Every \$1 in pay to manufacturing workers results in an additional 90 cents of income for other Rhode Island workers.

Read on for two upcoming events designed to expand the manufacturing workforce and fuel continued growth for RI's economy.

Join Us! October 4 Manufacturing Month Industry & Career Event

Polaris MEP and the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association will kick-off Manufacturing Month for RI by releasing the first-ever comprehensive economic study of the sector and sharing details on new, demand-driven initiatives.

At 8am on October 4, legislators, industry leaders and sector partners will gather to hear new data guiding economic development initiatives.

Attendees also have the opportunity to see advanced manufacturing at work with a range of #MadeInRI products displayed at stations throughout Farm Fresh RI's Providence location. Confirmed exhibitors include Hexagon, Jaia Robotics, Functional 3D and R&D Technologies.

At 10am, busloads of 8th, 9th and 12th graders begin to explore the stations. Cobots! 3d scanning and printing! Underwater drones! It's an interactive career experience promoting the sector's dynamic, skilled and good-paying careers.

Learn More & RSVP: [PolarisMEP.org/Manufacturing-Day](https://polarismep.org/Manufacturing-Day)

Our Current and Recent Initiatives:

- ✦ RI manufacturing workforce efforts held up as "best practices." Senior Workforce Manager Lindsey Brickle presented Virtual Reality program learnings at the AmericaWorks conference.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iw4ATep9Qh0>
- ✦ \$250,000 investment from the Autodesk Foundation for a new training center, JARC RI. JARC RI will teach low-income adults advanced manufacturing skills and foster life skills for a path out of poverty.
<https://www.autodesk.org/portfolio>
- ✦ A consortium led by our parent organization URI Research Foundation has been designated a Defense Manufacturing Community. Award of up to \$5 Million to develop resources which advance Automation & Robotics, Cyber Resiliency, and Risk Mitigation.
<https://go.polarismep.org/RIMADE>



Presented by:
RITIN, URI &
Polaris MEP

TEXTILE
SUSTAINABILITY
FORUM

MON SEP 19 | 8:30am-1:00pm
URI Memorial Union Ballroom & Atrium

Register Today:
<https://bit.ly/3KrODwC>

PHYSICAL TESTING LABORATORY CERTIFIED TO ISO 9001

COMPANY PROFILE

Brookwood Companies Incorporated is a leading finisher of woven nylon fabric for many diversified end uses for the consumer, industrial and military markets. From its facility in Rhode Island, the manufacturer operates three continuous shifts using state-of-the-art finishing equipment, from atmospheric and pressure beams, jigs and jets, continuous dyeing and scouring lines, and solvent and aqueous coating lines, as well as specialized drying and pad finishing frames.

SITUATION

Brookwood Companies Incorporated has a physical testing lab on-site necessary to test finished fabric to the customer's specification.

The company is a leading finisher of over 60 types of military fabric. Most military fabrics have as many as 20 physical test requirements that must be met using prescribed test methods developed by the ASTM (American Society for Testing Methods), AATCC (American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists), and FTMS (Federal Test Method Standards).

In late 2009, certain government contracts began to include a provision that all lab test reports must be produced by an ISO 9001 certified testing lab. ISO 9001 is the international standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system (QMS). Brookwood's lab was not ISO 9001 certified.

SOLUTION

The solution was obvious; attain ISO accreditation. But it is extremely difficult for small or medium-sized companies to afford the type of staff necessary to embark on such an endeavor. Consulting services are generally out of reach for companies like Brookwood.

Brookwood's then President, Joanne Bagley, contacted Polaris MEP. Polaris MEP provides expert training and consulting services at affordable rates.

On September 29, 2010 Brookwood received notification of their accreditation to the ISO 9001:2008 standard. Brookwood's lab certification resulted in the retention of valuable business. It also positions them for ongoing success — the ISO-Certified lab is prominently featured in their marketing communications.

Two contracts alone involved 81 government lot presentations requiring test reports which Brookwood could not have produced without ISO certification. Losing those two contracts would have meant eliminating one full-time lab technician. Most important is Brookwood's ability to produce lab reports in a timely and economical manner for their customers.

In 2016, Polaris MEP supported Brookwood's conversion to the revised ISO 9001:2015 standard. Then in 2019, Polaris MEP further assisted with their efforts to be in compliance with ISO 17025:2017.



Received ISO 9001:2008 certification and retained valuable business



Acquired 2 government contracts



Maintained Jobs



Can now produce lab reports in a more timely and economical manner



Read the full success story at: <https://bit.ly/2ZloEum>