The Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards keynote speaker was Carroll Thomas, director of the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. It’s a public-private nationwide network of centers to help U.S. manufacturers compete globally, support greater supply chain integration, and provide access to technology. The ATN is a MEP center and Lee serves on the MEP advisory board.

Her message for manufacturers is to lead by example, create strong community links and networks, and utilize the best talent. TMA
Alabama’s Outstanding Manufacturers for 2016 Honored by BCA, ATN

The Business Council of Alabama and the Alabama Technology Network in partnership with The Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama and the National Association of Manufacturers presented the prestigious Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards to three outstanding Alabama manufacturers earlier this year.

Recipients of the 2016 awards were in the large, medium, and small manufacturing categories: Austal USA of Mobile, Revere Controls of Hoover, and Plasmine Technology of Bay Minette, respectively.

The awards recognize Alabama manufacturers that exhibit excellence in leadership, performance, profitability, and workforce relations. An independent panel of judges selected winners who demonstrated superior performance in customer focus, employee commitment, operational excellence, continuous improvement, profitable growth, and investment in training and retraining.

The first awards ceremony was in 2000. This year’s event on April 12 at the Alabama Activity Center in Montgomery was attended by more than 200 people.

BCA Chairman Tommy Lee of Vulcan Inc. in Foley said the BCA and its partners were honored to recognize Alabama’s best manufacturers for the key role they play in Alabama’s economic health.

“For the past 17 years, the Business Council of Alabama has been proud to join the Alabama Technology Network in presenting the Alabama Manufacturer of the Year awards,” Lee said. “Alabama has been blessed for more than a decade by diversification and expansion of the state’s industrial base. New names and faces are joining an ever-expanding group of internationally competitive companies that choose to make Alabama their home.”
BCA President and CEO William J. Canary recognized the important partnership between the BCA and the ATN in recognizing manufacturers not only for their valuable role in the state’s economy but also the economies of their employees and suppliers.

“The ATN is the driving force behind this award and its valuable experience, skill, and innate understanding of the manufacturing process bring great credibility to the companies we recognize today,” Canary said.

The 2016 Manufacturer of the Year finalists and their locations, in alphabetical order, were: Austal USA, Mobile; Avalan Wireless, Madison; Birmingham Fastener Manufacturing, Birmingham; Blastcrete Equipment Co. Inc., Anniston; Diversified MetalSmiths Inc., Opelika; Dynetics, Huntsville; Earthborn Studios Inc., Leeds; Golden Enterprises Inc., Birmingham; Honda Manufacturing of Alabama LLC, Lincoln; Inteva Products, Gadsden; On-Point Manufacturing, Florence; Performance-Scrubs.com, Florence; Plasmine...
High School Robotics Competition Award Presented

The 2016 BEST of the BEST Award was presented to the Decatur-Austin Robotics Coalition whose students work in the BEST Robotics Inc. program located at Auburn University. BEST Robotics excites and inspires students about engineering, science, and technology careers through participation in sports-like competition.

The Decatur-Austin Robotics Coalition was the only BEST team in the state to receive awards for their robot and overall performance during the most recent BEST regional championship hosted by Auburn University.

TMA
Alabama Automotive Manufacturing Association President Ron Davis, a BCA board member, presented the AAMA’s first Supplier of the Year Award to TS Tech Alabama LLC in Boaz, one of four finalists for the inaugural award. TS Tech makes automobile seats for Honda Manufacturing of Alabama.

“With this award, AAMA has begun placing strong emphasis on recognizing superior supplier performance through this now-annual Supplier of the Year Awards program,” Davis said. “The awards are AAMA’s premier recognition for automotive industry supply chain partners who demonstrate distinguished performance in quality, affordability, and reliability in nine different categories.”

In addition to TS Tech, finalists were Efi Automotive of Elkmont, Faurecia in Cottondale, and North American On-Site in Tuscaloosa.

The BCA in 2001 was a founding member of the AAMA that serves as a platform for interaction among automotive companies in Alabama. Members share information, provide awareness of manufacturing trends, techniques and concerns and advance the business of manufacturing. The two work on various events to raise awareness and promote the importance of the multi-billion dollar automobile manufacturing sector in Alabama, including Original Equipment Manufacturers and the supply chain.

“That valuable association also provides strategic direction for workforce development by strengthening business and education alliances, improves automotive manufacturing processes and systems, and conducts programs to share knowledge on issues impacting the automotive industry in Alabama,” Canary said.

During a March BCA board meeting, the BCA and the AAMA signed a renewal document to reestablish their long relationship by. The BCA’s Canary is a member of the AAMA board of directors and AAMA President Davis is a BCA board member. Elaine J. Fincannon, CAE, the BCA’s Administrative Vice President for Investor Relations, Services and Development, serves on the AAMA’s executive committee. TMA.
Austal USA shipbuilding in Mobile is the 2016 Manufacturer of the Year in the large manufacturer category. Austal maintains a workforce of 4,000 highly skilled men and women and proudly sustains a four-year apprenticeship program to produce the next generation of Austal’s talent pool, in addition to conducting workforce training and retraining.

Austal USA has invested more than $400 million and operates more than 1 million square feet of manufacturing space. It has built and delivered 20 ships for the commercial and defense aluminum market in the U.S., including warships for the U.S. Navy. Currently there are four U.S. Navy ships under construction.

Austal is involved in the community with financial and volunteer support. It participates in American Cancer Society and American Heart Association events, the annual Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, local schools, the United Way, chambers of commerce, professional baseball, and museums.

Austal USA was created in 1999 as a joint venture between Austal Ltd. of Australia and Bender Shipbuilding & Repair Co. of Mobile. Its mission is to yield strong returns to shareholders, provide affordable and innovative solutions to customers, provide safe, rewarding, and stable careers for employees, enhance civic pride and prosperity, and build strong business relationships with partners.
Revere Controls of Hoover is the 2016 Medium Manufacturer of the Year. At Revere Controls the guiding force is: Better Controls Equal Better Business.

Revere Controls is one of the largest system integrators in the Southeast, producing approximately 4,000 custom-designed control panels per year to enable other Alabama and Southeast manufacturers to be more efficient and productive. In more than 35 years since its founding, Revere Controls has demonstrated growth, financial performance, and a commitment to quality, safety, responsiveness, and doing what’s right for both its customers and employees.

The 185 employees at the privately held company serve steel and metal, mining and mineral processing, forest products, water-wastewater, and general manufacturing in Alabama. It has expanded to Tennessee, North Carolina, Florida, and Texas. The company strives to continually improve its processes through suggestions made by numerous employee committees.

Revere Controls regularly contributes to area charities, student organizations, and schools. TMA
2016 Small Manufacturer of the Year (1-99 employees)

Plasmine Technology of Bay Minette is the 2016 Manufacturer of the Year in the small manufacturer category. Plasmine Technology is in its second century of operation that began as Newport Industries in 1912 as a wood rosin turpentine extractor. Since 2010 it has invested more than $12 million in its Bay Minette plant that employs 20 people who make and sell rosin size to the paper industry, providing improvements in paper mill efficiency, adhesives for the label industry, and a rosin-based additive for concrete formulations.

The private company's focused organization competes against larger companies by emphasizing leadership, communication, data tracking and control, employee involvement, and accountability. It engages outside resources such as the Alabama Technology Network, parent-company research, membership associations, and vendors for knowledge, training, and ideas.

The Plasmine plant has recovered from a 2006 fire and is growing. It focuses its community resources toward activities that its employees are personally involved in. Incidentally, Plasmine’s Bay Minette plant was recognized as the 2008 Alabama Small Manufacturer of the Year. TMA