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One of the largest investments in U.S. maritime industrial base history was made in Alabama earlier this year when Hadrian cut the ribbon on its $2.4 billion submarine components plant in Cherokee.

Located at the Barton Riverfront Industrial Park, the 2.2 million-square-foot facility transforms a former railcar plant into an advanced manufacturing hub supporting the U.S. Navy's Virginia-class attack submarines and Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines.

Once fully operational, the project is expected to create more than 1,000 high-paying jobs in Northwest Alabama, along with additional spinoff jobs and investment throughout the region.

The $2.4 billion project combines $1.5 billion in private investment from Hadrian with $900 million in federal funding provided through the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, which passed with support from Alabama's Republican delegation.

Known as Factory 4, the advanced, highly automated facility will mass-produce parts, assemblies, and finished products needed to help the Navy build submarines faster and address long-standing capacity shortfalls across the nation's maritime industrial base.

"Hadrian represents the kind of innovative American manufacturing that is critical to rebuilding and strengthening our nation's defense supply chain," U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt, who represents the district, said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The California-based company combines artificial intelligence, robotics, automation and software to produce mission-critical systems for defense, aerospace and industrial customers.

Founded in 2021, Hadrian operates four facilities totaling approximately 2.85 million square feet across California, Arizona and now Alabama, with additional production sites under development.

"As we work to increase American manufacturing capacity, F4 is the next step in ensuring the U.S. can build submarines at the speed and scale the mission requires," Lindsay Cline, Hadrian's director of government relations for the Southeast, told the Business Council of Alabama. "The Shoals is the ideal region to do that, with its skilled workforce, strategic location and ability to support the rapid expansion of American maritime capacity."

Although the technology behind Factory 4 may be new to the state, the manufacturing culture Hadrian found in Northwest Alabama is not.

The Shoals has a long tradition of making things and a workforce known for taking pride in building them the right way. Cline said that history and culture were central to Hadrian's



decision to make such a significant investment in the region.

"The region carries generations of manufacturing heritage, and that translates into a workforce that intimately understands precision, craftsmanship, and pride in the work," Cline said. "We wanted to build in a community that would be proud to have us, and where our mission of advanced manufacturing would be understood and accepted."

"That kind of cultural fit is something you can't manufacture," she added. "You have to find it, and we found it here."

The Barton property brings the story of American manufacturing full circle. The site was once home to the country's largest railcar manufacturing facility before production moved to Mexico. Hadrian is now bringing the facility back to life as an advanced production hub supporting one of America's most important national defense priorities.

With national defense at the forefront of the president's agenda and rapidly advancing technology changing the nature of modern warfare, Cline said there is widespread, bipartisan consensus that the Navy's submarine program requires immediate action to expand production of Columbia- and Virginia-class submarines.

"Factory 4 in Cherokee will address critical bottlenecks in building both classes, which are essential to deterring nuclear threats and ensuring the security of vital infrastructure," she said. Meeting that national security need will also require restoring domestic manufacturing capacity in communities prepared to support it.

"As our country continues to reshore its manufacturing capabilities, companies will depend upon areas with the agility to respond quickly and efficiently to evolving industrial capacity needs — areas like Northwest Alabama," Cline said.

U.S. Sen. Katie Britt called the opening another example of Alabama's ability to compete for major investments.

"Alabama is once again proving that when we compete with the best, we will come out on top every time," Britt said in a statement. "As a result of this public-private partnership, over 1,000 jobs will be created, boosting the local economy, all while Alabama helps revitalize America's maritime industrial base."

"American manufacturing is back and stronger than ever," Britt added.

Over the past year, Alabama's maritime footprint has continued to expand across the state. Earlier this year, Britt played a leading role in bringing the U.S. Coast Guard's new Enlisted Training Center of Excellence to the former Birmingham-Southern College campus.

Now, Factory 4 carries that footprint into North Alabama, adding advanced submarine component production in the Shoals to the state's existing strengths in shipbuilding, missile manufacturing, space and defense.

"We are no longer limited by shipyards and coastline. We will build

submarines, at least pieces of them, in Muscle Shoals, Alabama," U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "Alabama is already a leader in space, defense and cyber technology, and now we'll be leading the way in restoring America's maritime dominance."

Hadrian's "Factory of the Future" model combines advanced manufacturing facilities, proprietary software, artificial intelligence, automation, standardized operations, and accelerated workforce training in one production environment.

The system is designed to help Hadrian manufacture faster, improve visibility across production, increase reliability, and add capacity more efficiently than traditional, fragmented manufacturing models.

Factory 4 will employ engineers and skilled trades professionals while also creating opportunities for people who are new to manufacturing.

The company will provide on-site training to help workers develop the skills needed for advanced production and address another persistent challenge facing the defense industrial base: finding and training enough skilled workers.

Hadrian is working with AIDT, Northwest Shoals Community College, the University of North Alabama, and local K-12 school systems to build the workforce pipeline needed to support the plant.



"We are bringing more than jobs to Northwest Alabama — we're bringing careers," Cline said.

"We're proud that every employee of Hadrian is an owner, and our workforce comprises a broad range of talent."

Factory 4 represents a major economic development victory for the Shoals and a broader statement about Alabama's place in the future of American industry. A facility that once built railcars will now use artificial intelligence, automation and advanced equipment to manufacture products critical to America's submarine fleet.

For Hadrian, the hope is that the company's name will eventually become as closely connected to the Shoals as the region's manufacturing heritage and musical legacy.

"It's our hope that anyone who is proud of Alabama will also be proud that Hadrian is part of Alabama," Cline said. "We want to all look back on this moment in history with a tremendous sense of pride in the mission upon which we embarked together, knowing that we moved the needle for our nation."

"We hope Shoals residents will hear the name 'Hadrian' and feel honored to say, 'It all started in my hometown.'"

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