Greetings,

As the days on the 2014 calendar dwindle, we want to take a moment to thank everyone who participated and partnered in our activities throughout the year. We know that regardless of how successful the past year has been, 2015 will be even better.

RCBI continues to deliver the focused courses in our innovative workforce training programs and provide access to leading edge technologies and production equipment. Our interest in encouraging youngsters with hands-on activities that reinforce STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) skills hasn't diminished.

Our 3D Printing camps are already set, and educational LEGO activities are coming fast!

The coming year promises a continued acceleration of advanced projects that reinforce and strengthen manufacturing and entrepreneurship across our region.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to catch up on our latest news. All of us at RCBI wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season!
Twelve teams competed at the FIRST LEGO League Qualifying Tournament at RCBI Huntington.

**RCBI Hosts FIRST LEGO League Qualifier, Participates in State Tournament**

More than 300 people attended the LEGO LEAGUE Qualifying Tournament on Nov. 15 at the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center in Huntington. Twelve teams competed for spots in the state tournament Dec. 6 at Fairmont State University. At the state tournament, RCBI staff members served as judges and demonstrated robotic arm technology, which impressed the crowd by writing out "LEGO," erasing the word, then doing it again. Exposing students to the robotic technology helps reinforce important STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) skills.

Staff members elected to posts

Two staff members at the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced

RCBI partners with newspapers

For the second year, RCBI is partnering with Charleston Newspapers on a project that promotes 3D Printing while raising money for holiday charities. RCBI is producing limited edition holiday ornaments that are being sold by the Charleston Daily Mail and the Charleston Gazette. The money will benefit their respective charities. RCBI staff members designed the ornaments, which feature the state Capitol dome, and printed them on a Z Corp. 450 3D Color Printer. The ornaments are for sale online.

Students from across West Virginia competed at the state tournament at Fairmont State University.
Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI) were elected in October to one-year leadership positions of a regional business organization.

Read more

Workshops focus on start-ups

RCBI and the West Virginia Small Business Development Center (WVSBDC) are partners in a continuing series of training workshops designed specifically for start-ups or new businesses.

Read more

Group Apprenticeships Benefit Manufacturers, Employees

Are you interested in enhancing the machining skills of your employees? To help individual manufacturers develop and enhance their machinist-employees, the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI) is seeking companies to participate in a registered group Machinist Apprenticeship Program.

Apprentices from the participating companies will meet two evenings a week during non-work hours at the RCBI Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center in Bridgeport and Huntington. As part of their efforts, the apprentices apply their knowledge on the job during their regular work hours as they learn more specialized skills. By offering the skills training in a group setting, RCBI is able to deliver the related classroom and shop training to more trainees at an affordable rate.

As a workforce development model, apprenticeships serve both companies and individual employees alike. By offering an apprenticeship, companies can recruit and retain dedicated individuals. Employees involved in an apprentice program earn a wage while improving their skills and qualify for college credit through a local community and technical college.

Read more

Manufacturing Assistance Grants Help Entrepreneurs Commercialize Their Ideas

Registration is underway for assistance to help entrepreneurs, small businesses and manufacturers turn their ideas into commercial opportunities.

Two efforts at RCBI - StartUpWV and InnovateWV - offer technical assistance including design and development, rapid prototyping with 3D Printers and other technical assistance through RCBI. Both help individuals and entrepreneurs turn their ideas for new products or processes into reality, generating new jobs across the state.

StartUpWV is a joint initiative of RCBI and TechConnect West Virginia, made possible by funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and the State of West Virginia.

Funded in part through the EDA, InnovateWV is part of the West Virginia EDA University Center partnership among RCBI, Marshall University and Concord University.

Another effort extends RCBI’s innovation focus beyond traditional manufacturing to the farm-to-table food initiative. Agricultural Innovations at RCBI offers technical assistance to help West Virginians produce more food, more efficiently using the latest technologies and expertise.

Charlotte Weber, Director and CEO of RCBI, said the initiative is focused on connecting new and existing small businesses with the resources they need to grow and prosper.

“By directly connecting manufacturers and entrepreneurs with RCBI, as West Virginia's Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center, the assistance we provide through the programs will be focused directly on novel manufacturing and entrepreneurial efforts,” she said.

Registration forms are available online for the StartUpWV and InnovateWV efforts, and must be submitted electronically to be eligible to apply for assistance. The Agricultural Innovations form is also online. The selection process is ongoing. Levels of assistance provided will vary based on project requirements.

For more information, call 800.469.RCBI (7224).
National Foundation Awards Grant for RCBI 3D Printing Camps

For the second year, a national education foundation has rewarded the 3D Printing efforts of the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing. A grant will enable RCBI to offer camps for youngsters across West Virginia.

RCBI's Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centers in Huntington and Bridgeport will host the camps, open to students in 6th through 12th grades. The Huntington camp is June 22-26 and the Bridgeport camp is July 13-17, with each running from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily.

Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs (NBT)™, a national education foundation established by the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association International (FMA), is providing funding for the 3D Printing camps at RCBI.

Registration is underway for the 2015 camps. Because of limited seats, early registration is recommended. For more information, visit our website or call 800.469.RCBI (7224).

Thanks again for your time and your support of RCBI. As always, don't hesitate to contact us if there's any way we can assist you or your business!

Sincerely,

Charlotte Weber
Charlotte Weber
Director & CEO

What RCBI Does

The Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI) encourages job creation, economic development, innovation and entrepreneurship by supporting manufacturing companies of all sizes. We offer cutting-edge equipment use and specialized training for everyone from sole proprietors to Fortune 500 companies.

Simply put, our goal is to use our Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centers across West Virginia to provide the resources that individuals and companies need to create, sustain and expand their businesses. In addition to providing leased use of cutting-edge equipment, workforce development programs, Quality Management Implementation, and customized training, RCBI assists companies in networking and procurement - particularly with federal contracts.

The technologies available at RCBI Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centers in Huntington, Charleston and Bridgeport are among the best in the world, providing companies in the Mid-Atlantic region services that would not otherwise be readily available to them. In particular, RCBI offers Additive Manufacturing (AM) with 3D Printer technology through its Design Works labs, and is a national Center of Excellence for composite materials providing support to NASA engineers as well as first-tier DoD suppliers in West Virginia. These activities help ensure that RCBI fulfills its mission of developing a quality, just-in-time supplier base for the Department of Defense (DoD) as well as other agencies and the commercial sector.