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March 14, 2014

South Carolina continues to be at the forefront of the nation's manufacturing renaissance, building on our success in automotive, aerospace, tires and advanced materials. This week, I was honored to share our state's story in Washington, D.C., where I testified before a [Congressional subcommittee](#).

The purpose of the hearing was to discuss how manufacturing has reemerged in the U.S. and how small business stands to benefit. Here in our state, South Carolina added manufacturing jobs at more than double the rate of growth on the national scale from the end of the recession through 2013.

Despite the geographic diversity on the panel of business owners and analysts, there were many commonalities. Workforce training is a top priority for manufacturers that wish to find skilled labor to fill positions. Small business owners look to state and federal resources to help them succeed and work with larger manufacturers.

I was happy to report that South Carolina has a head start on addressing these needs on a state level, with top-rated training programs like readySC and [Apprenticeship Carolina](#) working to get additional qualified workers in the pipeline. Additionally, our state has developed programs tailored to our small businesses to help them find capital and earn contracts with other in-state companies.

Manufacturing continues to drive our state's economy, and Commerce will continue its focus on attracting world-class companies to the state, while also connecting large industry to the state's small businesses that fuel our local communities.

Bobby Hitt, Secretary of Commerce

Just Announced

Pulcra Chemicals to expand in York County. The \$3.1 million investment expected to create 17 jobs.

[Read More](#)

Starflo Corporation expands into Clarendon County Industrial Park. The \$1 million investment is expected to generate 12 new jobs.

[Read More](#)

Upcoming Events

SC Workforce Development Partnership Symposium

South Carolina Supply Chain Summit

2014 SC Clean Energy

Spotlight: Apprenticeship Carolina

Established in 2007, Apprenticeship Carolina™ is an integral part of the SC Technical College System that works to increase awareness and use of registered apprenticeships in the state. The growth in both the number of programs and the number of apprentices has been phenomenal. Since its inception, the number of programs has increased seven-fold, from 90 to 640 registered programs. The number of apprentices is nearly 10,000, up from a mere 777 in 2007 (*see graph at left*).

Each month, the program adds approximately 120 new apprentices and registers one or more programs per week. Companies quickly see the benefits of apprenticeship, including reduced turnover, improved productivity, enhanced quality and the list goes on. One-third of participating employers offer programs in more than one occupation.

The top industries participating with registered apprenticeship programs in the state include: health and personal care stores, specialty trade contractors, transportation equipment manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, education services and machinery manufacturing. The top six occupations include pharmacy support staff, electrician, maintenance mechanic, machine operator, electromechanical technician and nurse assistant.

Apprenticeship Carolina continues to be held as a model for innovative growth across the country. In fact, it was recently recognized as the fastest growing, most innovative program in the nation.

Summit

First Conference on
Local DC Electricity

Full Calendar & Business Events

Newsmakers

Hitt touts benefit of
investing in US
manufacturing

Clemson-developed
manufacturing
curriculum spreading

American dream alive
and well in SC

New tax credit helps
spur business growth

Devro breaks ground
on \$60M Calhoun
County plant
expansion

Tech firms from
Australia, Charlotte to
open in Charleston's
incubator

BMW February global
sales get boost from
X3

Moore School
international business
program ranked No. 1

Midlands Tech cited
for service to service
members, vets

Rural leaders receive
honors and challenge

Commerce Capture: CU-ICAR

The Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR), located on a 250-acre technology research campus in Greenville, S.C., supports the economic development of the auto industry in South Carolina. CU-ICAR's research is driven by industry needs, and its Partnership Office works to link automotive companies to Clemson University's faculty and research expertise. Its Deep Orange program provides graduate automotive engineering students with hands-on experience building a prototype car, immersing them into the world of a future OEM and/or supplier.

Photo courtesy of CU-ICAR.

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