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Expo to connect WV businesses to major manufacturers

[Advantage Valley](#) and The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) in coordination with the West Virginia Development Office will sponsor an expo March 19 in Hurricane to link small suppliers with major state manufacturers.

Attendees of the West Virginia Manufacturing Supply Chain Expo will learn about the processes to become suppliers to such manufacturers as Constellium, J.H. Fletcher & Company, and Steel of West Virginia, and have an opportunity to meet one-one-one with representatives of these companies to learn about supplying materials, services and commodities necessary for day-to-day operations.

“Our previous expos resulted in several small local businesses securing contracts with large state manufacturers,” said Derek Scarbro, director of RCBI’s Appalachian Hatchery initiative. “These focused events are win-win situations because they introduce small businesses to contracting opportunities while connecting large manufacturers to potential suppliers closer to home.”

“Small local businesses are the largest employers nationally and create two out of every three new jobs,” said Terrell Ellis, executive director of Advantage Valley. “Not only do independent businesses employ more people directly per dollar of revenue, they also are the customers of other local businesses such as printers, accountants, wholesalers, attorneys, etc., in turn expanding opportunities for local entrepreneurs. Nurturing locally owned businesses that use local resources and employ local workers at decent wages means that a community can become more self-sufficient and less dependent on imports.”

The March 19 West Virginia Manufacturing Supply Chain Expo will run from noon to 5 p.m. at Valley Park Conference Center in Hurricane. The event is free and open to the public. Signups begin at noon for one-on-one meetings, which are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Register at www.rcbi.org/go/mfgexpo.

In partnership with RCBI’s Appalachian Hatchery, Advantage Valley has worked on various expos, as part of POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization), a multi-agency initiative that delivers federal resources to help communities affected by job losses in coal mining and related industries. Funding is provided by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

For more information, contact Ellis at 304.546.7323 or Scarbro at 304.781.1684

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ADVANTAGE VALLEY builds economic vibrancy in the Charleston-Huntington region by attracting new businesses, retaining existing businesses and promoting business start-ups.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS: RCBI delivers expertise and innovative solutions with leading-edge technology to advance manufacturing and entrepreneurship.