

That's Good for Oklahoma!®

NEOMC SERVES IMPORTANT ROLE FOR OKLAHOMA MANUFACTURERS

(GIT) When your business is repairing antique reciprocating engines for aircraft and you need a part that hasn't been manufactured since the 1940s, you could be grounded if a ready source of parts isn't found. In northeast Oklahoma a unique affiliation of manufacturers, businesses, and educators have pioneered an innovative and profitable approach to providing solutions for manufacturers and consumers alike.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, federal and state government entities focused greater attention on the economic vitality of manufacturing firms. Despite the declining percentage of people working in the sector, government leaders began to realize that a healthy economy depended on manufacturing. At the same time, added emphasis was beginning to be placed on increasing the performance of small and medium-sized firms. Oklahoma quickly embraced this new direction, authorizing a strategic plan to help support extension efforts for manufacturing.

A cornerstone of the strategic plan was providing greater access to training and technical assistance to small manufacturers. One of the best ways to achieve this was through cooperative networking among many firms. OSU-Okmulgee eagerly embraced the better education philosophy. Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., under an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant, awarded OSU-Okmulgee a subcontract to create the Northeast Oklahoma Manufacturing Council (NEOMC).

In 1993, NEOMC was born. The non-profit organization began with 33 members. Today, membership stands at 58 manufacturers, Creek Nation, Green Country Vo-Tech, the Okmulgee Chamber of

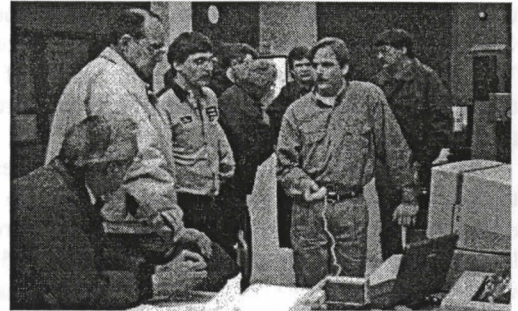
Commerce, Okmulgee Public Schools, and OSU-Okmulgee. Bob Goodloe who acts as the college's liaison with the manufacturers, sees NEOMC serving a vital function for state manufacturers. Goodloe describes NEOMC's diverse manufacturing membership as the beauty of the organization. "It's an excellent opportunity for firms to network together and come up with solutions to common problems," Goodloe said.

"Although our manufacturers produce many different types of products we have very similar concerns. NEOMC has proven that when our manu-

facturers work together, there are no goals that cannot be accomplished," said Don Freeman of Anchor Glass Co.

Todd Klabenes, director of corporate projects for Penn Well Printing, is chair of NEOMC and has been involved with the organization since day one. NEOMC members have the opportunity to form partnerships with the goal of continually improving manufacturing operations. "There are a lot of situations that are not unique to a particular manufacturer. In that respect, this organization provides a great opportunity to manufacturers in Northeast Oklahoma to put their minds to work to solve problems together," Klabenes said.

A key member of NEOMC is the Muskogee Creek Nation. Tribal members benefit from NEOMC's training programs and add to the tribe's and the state's skilled labor pool. And, the tribal manufacturing concerns also benefit from the combined strength of the NEOMC members. On the other hand, the other member entities benefit from the tribe's participation in NEOMC — it adds even more strength to their numbers, and provides important benefits unique to partnering with sovereign nations.



NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA MANUFACTURER'S COUNCIL

Acme Engineering	Electronic Counter Corp.	Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center
Air-X-Changers	Escort Trailer Corp.	Okmulgee Chamber of Commerce
Alliance Ceramicsteel	First National Bank	OMNI Manufacturing
Alpha Investment Casing	G & H Decoy	OSU-Okmulgee
Anchor Glass Corp.	General MFG	P-W Manufacturing
Beeline Products	Great Plains Coca Cola	Parker Filtration
Bennett Engineering	Green Country Vo-Tech	Pennwell Printing Co.
Braden/Carco	H.O.F. Enterprises Inc.	Public Service Co.
Callidus Technology	Henryetta Chamber of Commerce	Quality Machine & Mfg.
Charles Machine Works	Industrial Machine Repair	Rockwell International
Circuits, Inc.	J & M Machine Shop	Southwestern Wire Cloth
Citizens National Bank	Kelco	T.D. Williamson Co.
Coburn Optical Inc.	LODESTAR	Tubular Corp of America
Copeland Manufacturing Corp.	McElroy Manufacturers Inc.	Van Schaik Associates
Covington Aircraft	Metal Dynamics	W.E.M. Industries
Da-Pro Rubber Inc.	Muscogee (Creek) Nation	Ward Tool, Inc.
Darr Equipment Co.	National Oilwell	Warren Manufacturing
Eaton Corp.	OAME	Wheatley Gaso
Eaton Hydraulics	OCIDM	Zebco

NEOMC was formed with the mission to provide leadership in fashioning partnerships to continually improve manufacturing operations. Likewise, NEOMC set out to address manufacturing concerns, foster employee development, modernize technology, support industrial education and promote corporate citizenship throughout eastern Oklahoma. Through its partnerships NEOMC has accomplished many of those initiatives.

Every June a manufacturing academy for junior high students is offered. This past summer more than 50 students took part. Many were introduced to the manufacturing industry for the very first time. NEOMC was also instrumental in developing a joint venture with Green Country Vo-Tech to establish technol-