

Candidates Square Off on Important Issues Facing the Metals Manufacturing Industry

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With more than 30,000 workers in the Portland Metropolitan Area and a payroll of over \$1.3 billion, the Metals Manufacturing Industry is critical to the continued growth and vitality of our regional economy. To hear from Portland's future leaders about their vision for this industry, the Metals Industry Consortium is hosting a Candidates' Forum on Wednesday, September 15, 2004. Mayoral candidates Jim Francesconi and Tom Potter, and City Council candidates Sam Adams and Nick Fish, will answer questions posed by local Metals & Transportation Equipment Manufacturers, including: Madden Industrial Craftsmen, Oregon Feralloy Partners, H.W. Metal Products Inc., Silver Eagle Manufacturing Company and ESCO Corporation. The event will be held at the Portland Marriott Downtown, 1401 SW Naito Parkway from 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM. Free breakfast will be served at 7:00 AM.

Bill Furman, CEO, The Greenbrier Companies will open the forum and Cal Collins, Vice-President of Administration and General Counsel, ESCO Corporation will open the question and answer session. "This forum initiates a proactive discussion between the Metals Industry and the future leaders of our city," said Furman. "We look forward to an open and engaging discussion about the opportunities and challenges facing our industry, such as an adequately trained local workforce." Cal Collins stated that, "The Oregon Metals Industry added 7,000 new jobs between July 2003 and April 2004; to maintain this level of growth, it is critical that we have in place City leaders who are committed to strengthening the competitiveness of our industry."

Each candidate will have three minutes to respond to four prepared questions followed by 15 minutes of questions from the floor. The prepared questions are as follows:

- * Tell us about yourself and why we should elect you.
- * What can you tell us about the challenges and opportunities facing our industry?
- * How does the metal manufacturing industry fit into your long-term vision and goals for the city's future?
- * One of the issues we are seeing in the metals industry is a shortage of skilled people coming out of the education system. How will you

influence the education system to address this skills gap if elected?

With 14,000 new workers projected by 2012 in the Portland area, many of whom will be needed to replace retirees, the Metals Industry Consortium was formed in 2004. The Consortium is a collaboration of over 20 local employers, public education (both high school and post-secondary), and state and municipal economic development and workforce development professionals. The mission of the Metals Industry Consortium is to strengthen the competitiveness of local metals and transportation equipment manufacturers by increasing the sector's ability to create and sustain solid job opportunities. The Consortium is staffed by Worksystems, Inc. a nonprofit organization that oversees the regional workforce development system.

Building on past public/private partnership efforts to develop trainings in metals manufacturing skills, the consortium recently opened a regional training facility at Marshall High School Lents Tech Center. It also has mounted a campaign with the Portland Public Schools and neighboring school districts to improve the image and understanding of the industry by offering a wide range of teacher, counselor and student learning opportunities.

For more information on the Consortium contact Michele Hicks at 503.478.7320 or mhicks@worksystems.org. For information on the Candidates' Forum and to RSVP contact Ken Madden, 503.690.0641 or metalsconsortium@mici.com.

This event is sponsored by Oregon Feralloy Partners and Madden Industrial Craftsmen.

SOURCE: Metals Industry Consortium

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