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## **When it Comes to Filling Manufacturing Jobs Perception is Key**

*EDC survey provides insight into local parent's perception of  
Brevard's largest economic contributor, manufacturing.*

**Space Coast, FL (August 3, 2018)** – The Space Coast is home to over 500 manufacturers, from high-tech titans such as Harris to two-manned shops such as music accessories producer LightWing Studios. Although diverse, the local manufacturing industry does have one strong common thread – a need for skilled workers.

In Brevard County, 61% of manufacturing workers will retire in the next ten years, while only 4.4% of the Space Coast's current manufacturing workforce is under the age of 25. So why is this high-tech industry that produces innovative technologies, with high wages, experiencing a workforce shortage?

Perception may be the key.

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC) commissioned a survey to gauge local parents perception of manufacturing. The results: **Only 5% of local parents with school-aged children identified manufacturing as a preferred career field for their children.**

Over 98% of parents surveyed want their children to have a career with stability, security, and good pay, yet less than 50% believe manufacturing offers these benefits. Manufacturing not only offers all these benefits, including pay that is 22% higher than the national average, manufacturing is also a powerhouse in Brevard and expects 3,000 new jobs by 2022.

"The manufacturing industry continues to suffer not just a skills gap, but a perception gap," said Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO of the EDC. "Although we have a lot of work to do to shift the perception, the opportunities for our students and citizens in manufacturing continues to strengthen by inherent high wages, job availability, and skill advancements."

Brevard Public Schools (BPS) was instrumental in capturing over 850 responses from Space Coast parents for this survey.

"Brevard Public Schools was happy to support this survey," said Matt Susin, District 4 School Board Member. "The EDC continues to serve as the eyes and ears for Brevard's industry. By working together BPS and the EDC continue to fuel our workforce pipeline and provide successful pathways for our students."

### **Shifting the Paradigm**

The EDC is addressing this need for skilled workers on the Space Coast and continues to spearhead and administer initiatives through its Certified Production Technician (CPT) Training Program. This course provides skills-based training

for Brevard County citizens as a pathway to entry-level manufacturing jobs. Since 2016 the CPT Training Program has proven to be a great success for students and manufacturers alike. Over 80% of course completers are now employed and fueling the workforce pipeline.

The EDC also engages local manufactures in its effort. Bansbach Easylift, Harris Corporation, Professional Aircraft Accessories and SeaDek Marine Products allowed the EDC to showcase their employees and facilities, for the EDC's *See Manufacturing Through New Eyes Campaign*, aiming to shift the negative perception of manufacturing. Countless manufactures have worked with the EDC to conduct facility tours for students, community leaders and elected officials, again showing the real world of manufacturing. And last, but certainly not least, manufacturers are hiring CPT students directly after completing the CPT Program.

In addition to the CPT Program, the EDC continues to shift the paradigm on manufacturing through multiple initiatives, including:

- **The Regional Manufacturers Association of Florida's Space Coast (MASC)** serves as the succinct voice for Brevard County's robust and diverse manufacturing base through action-oriented efforts to promote, advocate, connect and educate manufacturers and the public.
- **The *See Manufacturing Through New Eyes* campaign**, emphasizes the real world of manufacturing, using real people from real companies to address the negative perceptions of the industry, and illustrate the rich rewards found in a career in this robust sector.
- **ManufacturingInBrevard.org** serves as a one-stop spot for information on Brevard's modern manufacturing sector.

To see an the full report of the survey, which was sponsored by Florida Makes and the Florida High-Tech Corridor, visit: [bit.ly/ParentsPerceptionOnManufacturing](http://bit.ly/ParentsPerceptionOnManufacturing)

To learn more about the EDC's manufacturing initiatives visit [ManufacturingInBrevard.org](http://ManufacturingInBrevard.org)

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#### **Manufacturing Facts:**

- **Manufacturing pays wages 22% higher than the national average:** Manufacturing has the highest average wages (\$81,289) across all private-sector industries. (Deloitte)
- **Manufacturing jobs are stable:** According to Deloitte, manufacturing has the highest tenure for workers (9.7 years) and one of the lowest employee turnover rates (2.3%).
- **Manufacturing is safe and clean:** Modern manufacturing is technology driven and clean, emphasized locally by the prevalence of white lab coats and polished floors. It's also safe - between 1994 and 2012, the rate of occupational injuries in manufacturing facilities decreased by two-thirds - a substantially faster rate of improvement than that of the overall private sector. (Manufacturing Institute & U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- **Manufacturers pay tuition:** 70% of local manufacturers report offering tuition support. (MASC Advisory Board 2018)

#### **About the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast**

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC) is dedicated to attracting new business and investment and expanding existing industry throughout the Space Coast, influencing change on government laws and regulations affecting economic development, promoting the Space Coast to encourage new investment, supporting efforts of Space Coast military installations, and relaying new programs and procedures to assist manufacturing and high-tech

companies. The EDC is a private, not-for-profit coalition whose stakeholders are business leaders committed to the economic growth and stability of Florida's Space Coast. Visit [www.SpaceCoastEDC.org](http://www.SpaceCoastEDC.org).



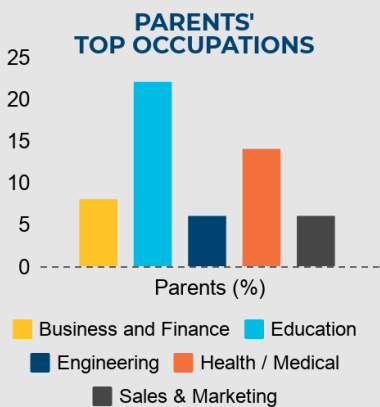
# PERCEPTIONS ON MANUFACTURING

June 2018 *A Study of How Parents in Brevard County, FL View Manufacturing Careers*

## Surveyed Parents' Profile



98% Have children at home  
61% Parents of high schoolers

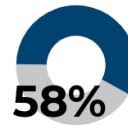
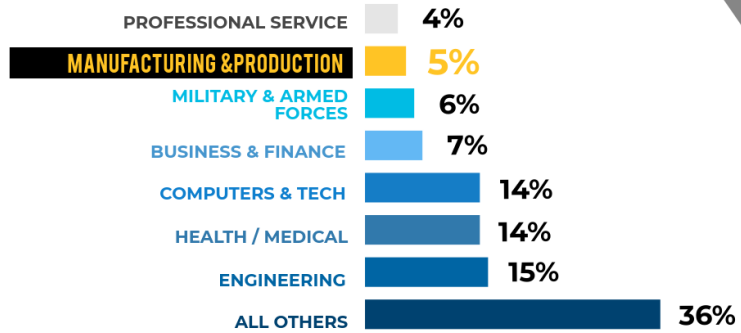


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## FINDINGS 850 Parent Perceptions

### PARENTS' PREFERRED CAREER FIELD FOR CHILDREN





### PARENTS' MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR THEIR CHILD'S CAREER ARE...

- #1 Good benefits
- #2 Stability and security
- #3 Good pay
- #4 Innovative industry
- #5 High Tech industry
- #6 Florida based
- #7 Brevard based

The majority of parents believe manufacturing jobs are dirty, unsafe, unstable, and do not provide tuition support for continuing education.

## SUMMARY Perceptions

-  "Manufacturing careers are skill driven and offer strong career paths"
- "Manufacturing careers are team oriented"
- "Manufacturing is seen as a STEM career field"
-  "Manufacturing is not a preferred career field"
- "Manufacturing jobs don't pay well compared to other industries"
- "Manufacturing is unstable and unsafe and offers poor pay and benefits"

## Facts

- Highest average wage across all private industries.
- Highest worker tenure and lowest turnover.
- Modern, technology driven, clean, and safe.

Source: Deloitte, Manufacturing Institute, U.S. Bureau of labor statistics

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