



THE **FMA** FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT **2024**

NUTS, BOLTS & THINGAMAJIGS™



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Our Mission

To engage, nurture, and excite individuals of all ages in the pursuit of careers in manufacturing.

Our Core Purpose

To support individuals in discovering their interest in manufacturing and to encourage the pursuit of a manufacturing career.

A Foundation by Any Other Name



Edward Youdell
President and CEO,
Fabricators and
Manufacturers
Association

As 2024 drew to a close, we announced that our foundation's name, Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs (NBT), was changing to SparkForce, The FMA Foundation, on Jan. 1, 2025.

I have been asked why we made this change, and the answer is that in fall 2022, FMA hired a marketing firm to execute a brand evaluation of our products and brands, including the foundation. The analysis uncovered that NBT as a brand was not connecting well with our target audiences: kids ages 12-16 who attend our summer manufacturing camps and with young adults ages 18-22, a key target audience for our scholarships.

The analysis provided feedback that Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs sounds dated, and the logo, with its tape measure and screwdriver images, did not effectively project manufacturing as high-tech and advanced. This was hurting our ability to attract the best and the brightest to pursue our desired outcomes. To reach our full potential, we knew we had to adapt and follow this guidance, so we hired a firm that specializes in developing company and brand names to take us through a methodical process that resulted in our board of directors approving the name change to SparkForce in fall 2023.

This past summer, we got the "all clear" from the U.S. Patent Office, so we moved ahead and announced the name change in November. As William Shakespeare so elegantly wrote in Romeo and Juliet, "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," stating that essentially a name does not change the true nature of a thing. SparkForce's mission remains steadfast: to build the next generation manufacturing workforce.

2024 was another incredible year of summer manufacturing camp participation. This past summer, nearly 4,500 kids participated in 304 manufacturing camps across 29 states. In total, we provided more than \$600,000 in the form of grants to our partner technical schools and colleges for a summer camp schedule filled with varied and diverse themes. Our partners

hosted many innovative camps, such as:

- Building Giants, a submarine manufacturing camp focused on introducing and developing the skills needed for careers in maritime manufacturing
- GLoW (Girls Learning to Weld) MIG Camp
- Manufacturing and Robotics, a Future You Can Make
- Welding to Workforce
- Mechatronics and 3D Design
- All Girls Robotics Explorer and Adventure Camp

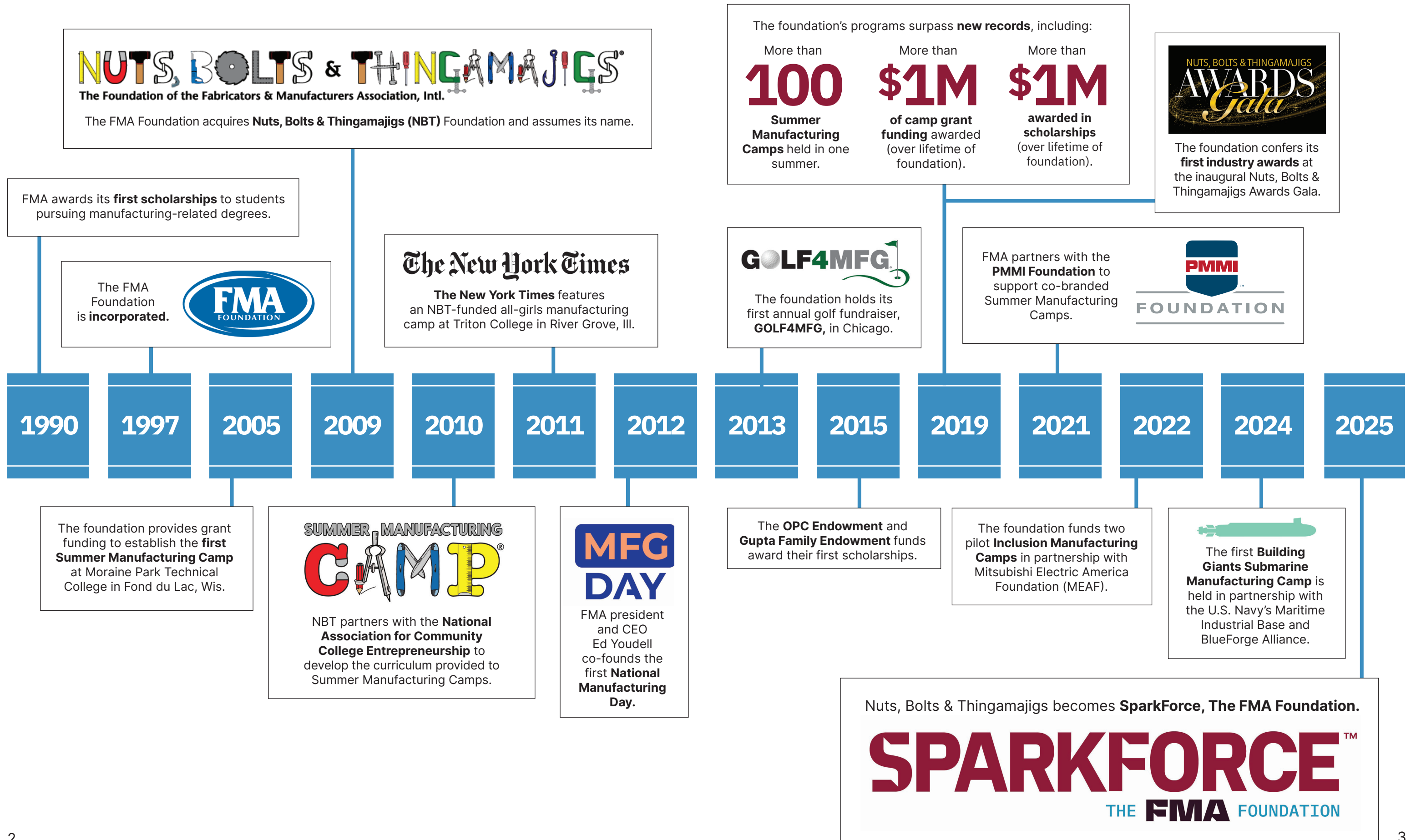
In addition to traditional camps, Inclusion Manufacturing Camps grew to a total of seven this past summer. These camps continue to deliver an incredible impact for high functioning autistic and special needs young adults who now can gain experience and new skills and build confidence to better prepare themselves for employment at manufacturing companies in their local communities.

This past year, the foundation awarded \$236,000 to 118 students that attend technical schools, colleges, or universities such as Rose Hulman Institute of Technology, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Georgia Trade School, Western Welding Academy, Triton College, Madison Area Technical College, Texas A&M University, and many others. The breadth and depth of our scholarship recipients is impressive—award winners are pursuing such fields as manufacturing engineering technology, welding technology, welding and fabrication engineering, industrial engineering, and mechanical engineering. We are proud to support these students as they pursue skills and education that manufacturing employers hunger for.

Every year, I am so grateful for our board of directors who somehow find the time to dedicate to helping us grow and expand our mission. This past year's chair, Joe Dagnese, has been exceptional in both his personal support of the foundation and his excellent leadership. SparkForce is well positioned for future growth because of Joe's involvement. In addition, the foundation staff remains dedicated to helping both students and our network of community colleges, technical schools, and host organizations make our vision come to life through scholarship awards and the manufacturing camp programs.

Finally, a big thank you to all of our sponsors, donors, and FMA members, who support our work and in turn build the pipeline of talent needed to advance the industry. We remain humbled and grateful for all the support we continue to receive.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE FMA FOUNDATION



Meet a Few Scholarship Recipients

“Thanks to my time in FIRST Robotics Competition, I’ve already gotten a behind-the-scenes look at the world of manufacturing. I spent three years on a team whose primary sponsor was Genesis Automation, an automation and manufacturing business. I saw the machines they were working on and how professional engineers collaborate on projects. I proceeded to work at Genesis for two summers, participating in all aspects of manufacturing, [which] inspired me to pursue STEM in college and choose manufacturing as a career. The FMA scholarship will kickstart my college education. This scholarship enables me to afford a rigorous engineering program, where I’ll set myself up for a successful manufacturing career.”



Anne Reidenbach
MIT, Electrical Engineering, Cambridge, MA

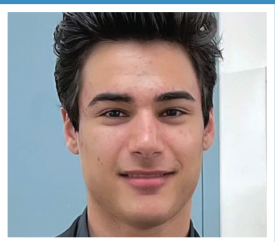


Ella Meckley
Pennsylvania College of Technology, Welding and Fabrication Engineering Technology, Williamsport, PA

“I can absolutely say that starting my degree and taking the leap of faith into this field is one of the best decisions I have ever made for myself. I now am in a field where I can take my natural abilities and have a career that I have passion for. Welding has brought me a level of fulfillment I did not know was possible when choosing a career path. I found there is so much more beyond the physicality of welding, and I am always looking forward to learning more about how someone like me can make meaningful contributions to the ever-growing industry.”



James Johnson
Pennsylvania College of Technology, Manufacturing Engineering Technology, Williamsport, PA



Elijah Netniss
UC Davis, Electrical Engineering, Davis, CA

“I’m motivated to pursue this career because I realized that the sky is the limit for a trade like this and the more I practice it, learn from it, and pursue it, the better I can become. Skilled machining is a semi-dying trade and there are machinists out there with 50+ years of experience that are getting ready to retire and they possess so much knowledge that not getting my name out there would be an idiotic thing to do.”

eyes to the world of manufacturing and introduced me to welding, soldering, designing, testing, and perhaps most importantly, following instructions. At the end of the camp, I was certain that I wanted to be an engineer and pursue manufacturing.”



Investing in the Future of Manufacturing: Scholarship Impact

In 2024, the Foundation awarded 118 scholarships to students across 30 states, supporting their pursuit of technical education at colleges, universities, and trade schools. These recipients represent the future of manufacturing, studying a diverse array of fields including, but not limited to, manufacturing engineering technology, welding technology, aeronautics engineering, welding and fabrication engineering, industrial engineering, and mechanical engineering.

To better understand the impact of these scholarships, an evaluation study was conducted to assess the impact of scholarships on students, higher education institutions, and the manufacturing industry. The evaluation process included surveys, forums, and interviews with scholarship recipients, educators, and employers.

These discussions provided insights into the program’s successes, challenges, and overall impact. Surveys gathered demographic and background information to support analysis of how the program influences the participants’ choices in their education and career paths.

What emerged was a powerful picture of transformation and opportunity. Many students shared that receiving the scholarship

gave them more than just financial support; it gave them confidence. Nearly half of recipients said they felt more certain in their ability to complete their degree or certificate program. For others, the scholarship opened doors they hadn’t considered before, inspiring 43% to explore new fields within manufacturing that they might have overlooked. Perhaps most compelling, 77% of participants said the scholarship played a role in encouraging them to pursue a degree specifically in a manufacturing-related program. These insights serve as compelling evidence that these awards are not only helping students succeed, but also strengthening the future of the industry itself.

Since 1990, the FMA Foundation has awarded over \$1.65 million in scholarships to 865 manufacturing students. These investments have not only empowered individual students but have also helped to strengthen the talent pipeline the future of the industry depends on.

Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who help review and score applications during the year. Your involvement is crucial in ensuring deserving young people are supported in achieving their education and career goals.

See the current season’s award recipients and all previous scholarship winners at sparkforce.org/scholarships.



\$236,000
distributed in scholarship awards in 2024

118
Scholarships awarded

\$1.65M+
in scholarships awarded since 1990

Meaningful Experience, Lasting Benefits

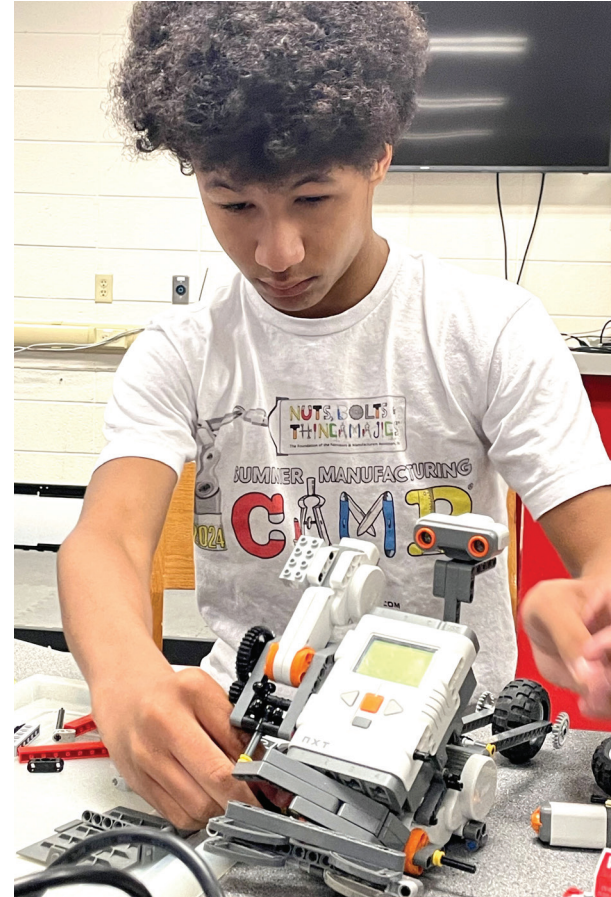
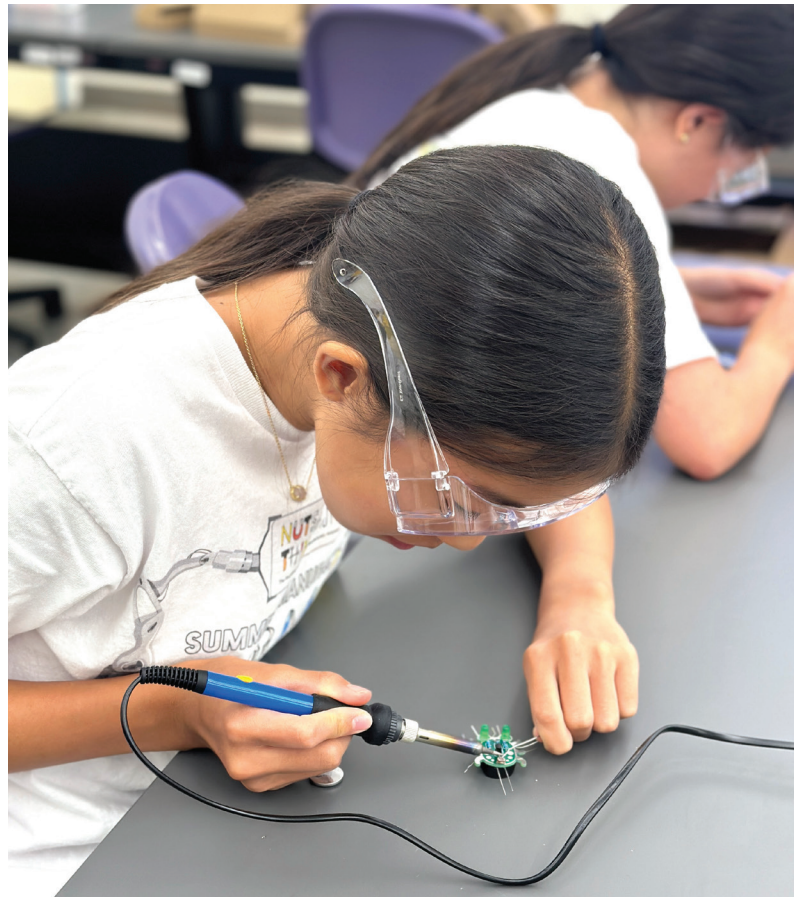
In 2024, Summer Manufacturing Camps continued to create meaningful hands-on experiences for young participants while delivering lasting benefits to host organizations and local industries. The 2024 camp season reached new heights, with 304 camps across 29 states, marking a 37% increase from 2023. This growth reflects the expanding impact and success of the program.

Designed for youths ages 12-16, these camps introduce students to exciting career opportunities in manufacturing while helping them develop essential skills. By increasing both the participants' and their families' awareness of local technical education programs and the possibilities for

manufacturing within their communities, the camps help to boost enrollment in skilled trades training and foster a strong workforce pipeline.

Beyond student engagement, these camps strengthen connections between schools and manufacturers. With the support of over 300 manufacturers, businesses, and community partners, host organizations build relationships that extend well beyond a single season.

With increased participation, funding, and engagement, Summer Manufacturing Camps continue to shape the future of the manufacturing workforce—one camp at a time.



Testimonials

"Matt was an uncertain 11th grader, unsure of his passions. One summer, he attended an Advanced Manufacturing Camp, mostly to please his parents. During a welding session, something changed. As Matt held the welding torch and fused metal together, he felt an unexpected surge of excitement. By the end of the camp, he was captivated, spending every spare moment in the welding workshop. Now, Matt is pursuing welding courses and plans to attend a technical college after graduation. With a newfound passion, he envisions a future as a skilled welder, finally confident in the direction his life is headed."

Camp director
Manufacturing, Aviation,
Design, & Entrepreneurship Camp,
Fayette, Ala.

"Throughout the week, both Chamber of Commerce representatives and internal staff invited external company members to visit the camp and observe the kids in action. Seeing the students actively engaged in manufacturing-related activities sparked interest in joining next year's camp and opened the door to potential partnerships for other programs throughout the year. From my observations, many adult manufacturers need to witness firsthand how capable the kids are in these real-world, manufacturing-style programs to fully grasp the mutual benefits of getting involved for both the students and the companies."

Camp director
Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs Camp,
Blackstone Valley Hub for Workforce
Development,
Whitinsville, Mass.

"I was personally impacted. As an HR professional working in manufacturing for the last 16 years, I've never had the opportunity to engage with younger generations in such a format. It revitalized my mission in my career and that is to break barriers to gainful employment opportunities that help folks live fruitful lives outside of working."

Camp Director,
DeWys Manufacturing -
Fab to Finish,
DeWys University,
Marne, Mich.



304	108	300+	4,281
Camps	Host Schools and Partner Organizations	Manufacturers, Business, Community Supporters Engaged	Participants

BUILDING GIANTS SUBMARINE MANUFACTURING CAMP



Building Giants: Empowering the Next Generation



2024 marked the beginning of a three-year partnership with BlueForge Alliance (BFA) that aims to support the U.S. Navy's Maritime Industrial Base.

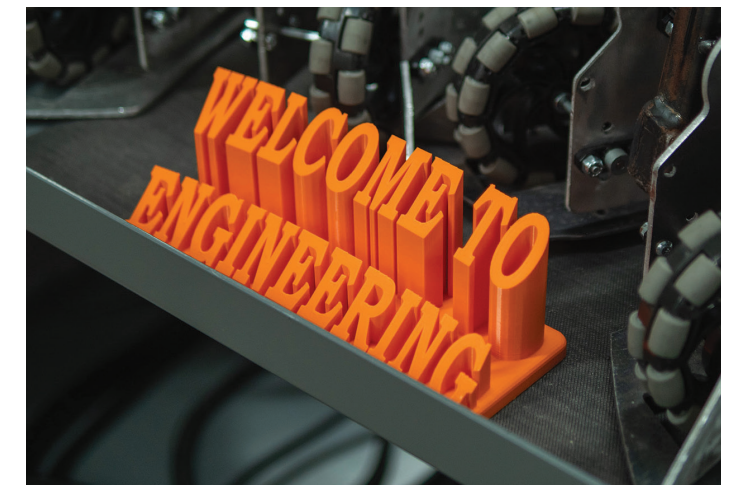
In addition to acting as a national sponsor for Summer Manufacturing Camps, the development of specialized Submarine Manufacturing Camps with tailored curricula offers students the opportunity to be exposed to submarine manufacturing careers through hands-on experiences in topics like welding, robotics, automation, and mechatronics.

The first Building Giants Submarine Manufacturing Camp was hosted by Mansfield City Schools in Mansfield, Ohio, introducing middle and high school students to manufacturing skills through classroom learning, hands-on projects, and industry visits.



BUILDSUBMARINES.COM

Building Giants Manufacturing Camps are made possible through generous funding from BlueForge Alliance in support of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Industrial Base.





Changing lives through real-world experience

Inclusion Manufacturing Camps continued to change lives by empowering young adults with disabilities through hands-on training and real-world job experiences in 2024. These camps provide transition-age (16+) participants with the essential soft skills and job readiness training needed to step confidently into careers in manufacturing. The seven camps hosted in 2024 introduced 95 young people to manufacturing, helping them to discover their potential, gain valuable skills, and take meaningful steps towards their futures and rewarding careers. Employers,

in turn, are recognizing the immense value this often-overlooked talent pool brings to the manufacturing workforce.

As the program continues to grow, so does its impact—opening doors, bridging employment gaps, and creating exciting opportunities for both participants and industry partners. Filling the employment gap in manufacturing remains a pressing challenge, and the Inclusion Manufacturing Camps serve as a powerful part of the solution for workers and employers alike.

Testimonials

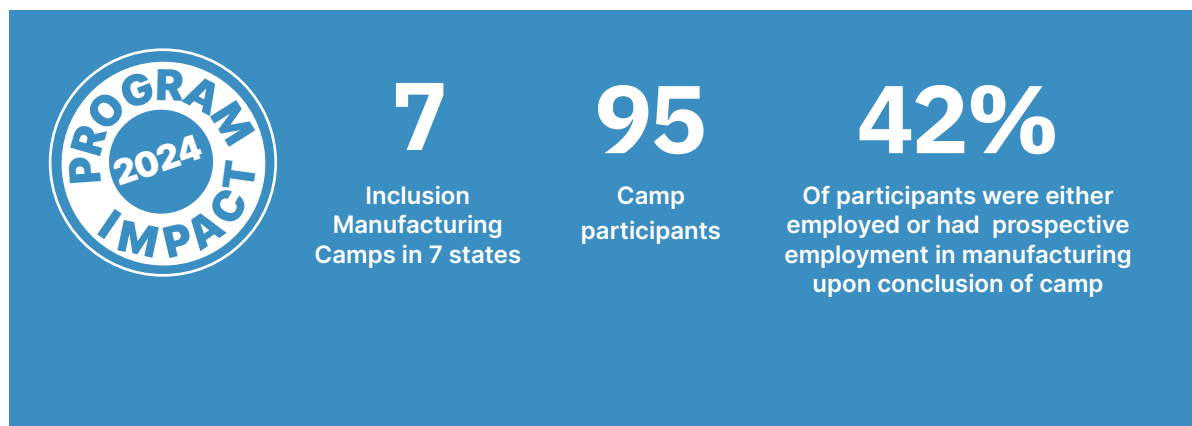
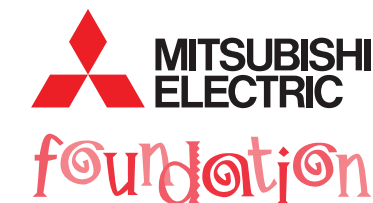
“One of our participants, who is a 2024 graduate from Charlotte High School, worked at the Charlotte Alro Steel location and will be applying for a job there. She received a great review after completing an onsite work experience and was asked to apply by the plant manager. She had an amazing experience and has found a field and employer she did not previously know about in her community.”

Sarah Mida
Camp director for Eaton RESA,
Charlotte, Mich.

“One of our campers has signed up to participate in our True Manufacturing Vocational Training program. After 120 hours of training at BCI Skills Center, he will obtain a permanent full-time job with True Manufacturing. This is a direct result of his experience at True Manufacturing during our camp tour.”

Matt Jannings
Camp director for Boone Center, Inc. (BCI),
Saint Charles, Mo.

2024 Inclusion Manufacturing Camps were made possible through the support of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation and other generous donors.



Silent Auction at FMA Annual Meeting

Feb. 28, 2024 | Wyndham Grand | Clearwater Beach, Fla.

Processors Auction at the Motor City Slitters

July 28, 2024 | Fox Hills Golf Club | Plymouth, Mich.



April 15, 2024 | TPC Piper Glen | Charlotte, N.C.

Thank you to these other sponsors:



Premier Sponsor:



Aug. 19, 2024 | Glen Flora Country Club
Waukegan, Ill.



Thank you to these other sponsors:



Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs Awards Gala

Oct. 2, 2024 | Victoria in the Park | Mount Prospect, Ill.



2024 Industry Awards



Rakesh Kumar and Tim Warning of Cincinnati Incorporated with Ed Youdell after receiving the Impact on Industry award.

- Impact on Industry Award (Corporation or Company Foundation)
Cincinnati Inc., Harrison, Ohio
- Power of Industry Award (Individual or Family Foundation)
Lisa Wertzbaugher, Wertzbaugher Services, West Liberty, Iowa
- Future of Industry Award (Summer Manufacturing Camp Host)
Northcentral Technical College, Wausau, Wis.
- Special Recognition Award (Inclusion Manufacturing Camp Host)
VPI, Inc., Appleton, Wis.

Thank you to these other sponsors:





We Keep Growing and Innovating



Gina Black
*Director of Events,
 Community Development
 Foundation, Tupelo, MI*
*Chair, FMA Foundation
 Board of Directors*

Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs Foundation (NBT) made remarkable progress in 2024, thanks to the dedication and commitment of many incredible people. It is an honor to be a part of this organization and witness the tremendous impact we continue to have in inspiring and nurturing the next generation of makers and creators.

We saw an exceptional surge in engagement and growth. From expanding our programs to reaching new communities, the impact of our efforts has been felt far and wide. Our mission to provide students with the tools, training, and opportunities to explore manufacturing careers has never been more vital, and we are proud of how far we've come.

We continue to break new ground with camps and scholarships. These in turn equip students with skills and education in STEM and manufacturing fields, setting them up for success. I am so excited about the possibility of expanding the teacher camps as well! Currently, with over 300 camps and over 100 scholarships annually, we are

exposing thousands of students to careers in advanced manufacturing and metal fabrication. Our partnerships with industry leaders, educators, and community organizations have been the key to our success. This past year, we were thrilled to expand collaborations with manufacturers who share our vision for a stronger, more diverse workforce. These relationships have enabled us to offer more meaningful mentorship and educational opportunities to students, providing them with real-world applications that will serve them well as they transition into college and careers.

As we move into 2025, we remain dedicated to expanding our “force”—SparkForce! This new name reflects modernization yet preserves our mission to expose young people to the world of advanced manufacturing through our traditional camps, inclusion camps, and scholarship program. The demand for skilled manufacturing professionals continues to grow, and our role has never been more important. Our focus will remain on fostering creativity, technical expertise, and a passion for hands-on learning among young people.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the SparkForce and FMA staff and our supporters—our board members, donors, volunteers, educators, industry partners, and the students and communities we serve. Their contributions, time, and belief in the power of education and opportunity make our mission possible.

Together, we are shaping the future of manufacturing, and I couldn't be more proud of all we've accomplished. Here's to an even brighter 2025 of growth and innovation!

FMA Foundation Board of Directors



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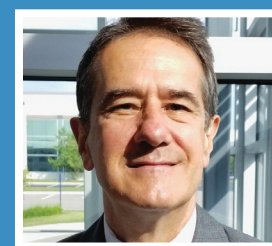
Kimberly Wimer
 Laser Precision
 Director



Nicole Wolter
 HM Manufacturing
 Director

	2024	2023
PROGRAM REVENUE		
Donation Income		
Unrestricted contributions	\$108,751	\$589,334
Event revenue	\$171,976	\$ 178,674
In Kind Contributions	\$1,437,198	\$1,241,682
Temporarily restricted contributions	\$880,007	\$882,681
Permanently restricted contributions	\$106,110	\$255,990
TOTAL DONATIONS	\$2,704,042	\$3,148,361
PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION EXPENSE		
Scholarships	\$234,116	\$104,006
Camp grants	\$796,875	\$553,700
Discretionary grants	\$5,000	\$125
TOTAL DISTRIBUTIONS	\$1,035,991	\$657,831
NET GIFT REVENUE	\$1,668,051	\$2,490,530
OPERATING EXPENSE		
Fundraising expenses	\$414,326	\$421,966
Administration expenses	\$798,947	\$539,601
Other program expenses	\$402,193	\$238,495
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,615,466	\$1,200,062
NET OPERATING	\$52,585	\$1,290,468
NON-OPERATING		
Investment income net of fees	\$490,960	\$526,523
Equity in net income - FMAC	\$612,792	(\$271,453)
NET NON-OPERATING	\$1,103,752	\$255,070
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$1,156,337	\$1,545,538

A History of Success, a Future of Expectation



Edward C. Demulo
Director,
The FMA Foundation

As we reflect on 2024, I am amazed at the incredible impact and continued momentum we experienced this past year. It was a year where we reached new heights with our traditional camp program and awarded more scholarships than ever to those going into the fabricating and manufacturing industry. And, our Inclusion Camp program exceeded our expectations for impact and outreach to an incredibly special sector of our society.

Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs (NBT) supported over 300 Summer Manufacturing Camps in 29 states in 2024, which was a growth of 37% from the previous year. These camps impacted close to 4,500 students who, in many instances, were exploring careers in the trades for the very first time. Once again, we partnered with over 100 schools throughout the country that are able to provide learning experiences in many areas of expertise, including welding, robotics, 3D printing, design, and coding.

Our scholarship program exploded as well, awarding 118 scholarships to young adults in 30 states, a nearly 30% increase over 2023. Many of these recipients are within 12-18 months of entering a manufacturing plant or office, helping to solidify that next generation of skilled professionals in the industry. We take great pride in supporting these young adults as they begin their career journeys in the industry we passionately support.

Finally, from a programming side, our Inclusion Manufacturing

Camp program reached record levels with seven camps taking place in seven states, nearly doubling the number from the year prior. This program is making a monumental impact in the lives of individuals with special abilities, reaching 95 young adults exploring a career in the manufacturing industry for the first time.

Our fundraising efforts continued to achieve new milestones, with both our GOLF4MFG and our annual Awards Gala reaching record attendance and achieving phenomenal fundraising results. Our efforts in applying for grant funding from company donors, public charities, private foundations, and government sources have been successful, and we have maintained the progress made over the past two years. The additional support from new funding sources has helped us to expand our programs, reaching thousands more students who are exploring a career in our industry.

Ultimately, none of this would have been possible without the support of so many. The staff once again excelled in advancing the mission and vision of the foundation, with FMA employees rallying behind our efforts and unwavering support from our senior management team. I am incredibly proud of and grateful for the foundation board's ongoing guidance and dedication to our mission. The number of sponsors and donors supporting us continued to grow, enabling our efforts to make a more lasting impact on those exploring the fabricating and manufacturing industry, while our other external partners played a key role in expanding our reach and impact – something that we are immensely proud of.

As we step into 2025 and beyond, there are wonderful changes on the horizon. We have become SparkForce, a name that more accurately symbolizes the vision of our foundation as we look to spark an interest in the next generation manufacturing workforce. On behalf of the entire foundation staff, thank you for your unwavering support. Your kindness and generosity mean the world to us and help us look to the future with renewed hope and excitement as we meet new challenges and work for a brighter future.

FMA Foundation Staff

- Edward Youdell, President and CEO
- Edward Demulo, Foundation Director
- Cindy Day, Senior Foundation Manager
- Daunel Czarnecki, Grant and Fundraising Specialist
- Dana Brown, Foundation Program Specialist
- Suzie Dahlke-Beard, Program Development Specialist

DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

None of this would be possible without the generosity of supporters like you. Your contributions do more than fund programs—they are investments in the future of manufacturing, sparking innovation and equipping the next generation with the skills that will shape our industry. Thank you!

Patrons (\$100,000+)

Alro Steel Foundation
Anonymous
BlueForge Alliance
Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation
PMMI Education and Training Foundation

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Andrew Flando
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Rakesh Kumar
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Mazak Optonics Corporation

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Arthur Patterson
James Pirages
Precision Slitting Service Co.
Prima Power
Red Bud Industries
Angela Reed
Brian Roscoe
Sperko Engineering Services
TRUMPF Inc.
Jason Wolff

Industrialists (\$100 - \$499)

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