

Aneesa Muthana Receives PMPA STEP Award

PMPA member Aneesa Muthana, president and owner of Pioneer Service Inc., was one of only 100 women in manufacturing honored by The Manufacturing Institute's STEP Awards for excellence in manufacturing in April this year. The STEP Awards, part of the larger STEP Ahead initiative, were launched to examine and promote the role of women in manufacturing.

Today, 82 percent of manufacturers cannot find the skilled workers they need. Part of this skills gap is because of the underrepresentation of women in the industry. With women making up 47 percent of the workforce, but only 27 percent of the manufacturing workforce, the STEP Awards are meant to show the contributions that women can and do make in manufacturing.

The STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering and Production) Awards recognizes women who, "demonstrate excellence and leadership in their careers and represent all levels of the manufacturing industry, from factory floor to the C-suite."

Ms. Muthana was nominated for the award based on her strong technical and team leadership as she led her company through several technology transitions including replacing most of their shopfloor equipment, as well as adoption of new computerized ERP and quality systems technologies.

Miles Free, director of industry research and technology for PMPA, explained why Ms. Muthana was nominated by the association for this award. "We nominated Aneesa for her leadership and stewardship of her team as they made the difficult transition to these new technologies. Her positive impact on her team as they replaced more than 80 percent of their primary production machinery makes the case that women like Aneesa are genuine leaders, not just 'a new face of manufacturing.' Aneesa's hands-on experience in all aspects of production makes her counsel and advice all the more valuable as she mentors other women in manufacturing at PMPA meetings and conferences."

Ms. Muthana's leadership goes beyond her shop and meetings with other women in industry. Ms. Muthana and her team have held several career days and local events to help high school juniors and seniors explore their career options in advanced manufacturing and precision machining. Leadership is recognizing a need and then addressing it effectively. Ms. Muthana's experience in her shop is where



she recognized the need to upgrade technology and employee skills, coach other women to use their natural talents more confidently and effectively, and reach out to high school students before they graduate to help them identify career options in precision machining. All these tactics provide an abundance of evidence as to why she was selected for STEP awards honors.

PMPA was proud to nominate Ms. Muthana for this prestigious award. Our association is stronger for having her on our board of directors and networking at our meetings as an experienced, knowledgeable and active participant. Her strong leadership role at Pioneer Service Inc., and her active participation at PMPA serve as examples of the role that women in the manufacturing industry can have as leaders, mentors, decision makers and career champions.

For more information on The Manufacturing Institute and STEP Ahead, visit themanufacturinginstitute.org.

For more information on Pioneer Service Inc., visit pioneerserviceinc.com.