

Ned Hill Presents on Manufacturing's Future at PMPA Annual Meeting

Edward W. (Ned) Hill, dean and professor of economic development at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, is a renowned speaker on manufacturing policy and economics and will present at the PMPA Annual Meeting, October 18-22. Part of the Annual Meeting's education program, Dr. Hill's presentation, "Prospecting for Manufacturing's Future," will discuss the economic issues facing shops in the precision machining industry.

"The U.S. economy is going through a slow, painful recovery," Dr. Hill says. "We're facing the dawn of a super cycle right now, in which a large number of investments will restructure the economy. Those investments are related to revitalization of the auto industry, the move toward a natural gas economy and infrastructure renewal for water, sewer, electric grid and transportation that offer opportunities for American manufacturing.

"We need the political courage to do the right thing when it comes to investing in our future," he adds.

Dr. Hill will discuss some of the macroeconomics at play and present a brief economic outlook for the U.S. economy, emphasizing points of interest to the manufacturing sector with growth forecasts.

"There are a few more years to go before the economic recovery is 'complete,'" Dr. Hill explains. "We're still short of recovery by another 3 million jobs as of March. When the economy is progressing, we can add about 150,000 to 200,000 jobs per month."

Dr. Hill will also cover myths of reshoring and some of the immediate challenges reported by manufacturers, drawing from information from in-depth interviews with 70 manufacturing companies.

"Leaders are kept awake at night by many issues including finance and workforce in the face of reshoring," Dr. Hill says. "What we're seeing is a reinvestment and rebalancing of manufacturing platforms. In the U.S., location decisions are being driven by supply chain strategies of large OEMs and new views of balance-sheet risks on the part of small- to mid-sized manufacturers. The view of costs has changed."

The main takeaway from Dr. Hill's presentation will be how PMPA members can manage their companies in the current economic environment.



"We'll be talking about some of the truisms in manufacturing and looking at management and leadership as well," Dr. Hill adds. "A company's leadership team needs to be able to spend time working on the business, not just dealing with the crisis of the day. My research has found that small- to mid-sized companies have two main issues which are product innovation and putting together, and measuring, a meaningful strategy. It doesn't matter what you manufacture, you can innovate. I'll also discuss the five categories that companies fall into and how to tell which company you are, along with how to move to a better category."

Dr. Hill will address how the current environment requires company culture to work with income and the need to balance growth and cost containment.

For more information on the PMPA Annual Meeting, and to register, visit pmpa.org/events/calendar.

Edward (Ned) W. Hill, Ph.D. is dean and professor of economic development at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, and nonresident senior fellow of The Brookings Institution, where he is affiliated with the Metropolitan Policy Program.

Dr. Hill chaired the Advisory Board of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) from 2007 to 2010, and is on the advisory board until 2014. He is a member of the board of directors of MAGNET, the MEP affiliate organization in Northeast Ohio and was named an adjunct professor of public administration at the South China University of Technology in Guangzhou in December 2011 for his work on economic development.