

## RIMES, RIEDC Forge New Alliance to Promote Growth in Manufacturing

*Collaboration, Co-location will bring new energy, alignment to state support for manufacturing*

The Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) and the Rhode Island Manufacturing Extension Service (RIMES) announced a new alliance aimed at strengthening the state's manufacturing sector. As part of the collaboration, RIMES will co-locate with RIEDC at the corporation's Valley Street offices.

"Manufacturing is an important part of our economy, past, present and future," says RIEDC executive director Saul Kaplan. "Today, there are more than 51,000 manufacturing jobs in Rhode Island. These are good high wage jobs that range from jewelry manufacturing and boatbuilding to biotechnology and precision electronics production. We are pleased to partner with an organization as respected as RIMES to support this important industry sector. By working together, we will be better positioned to support and grow manufacturing activity across the state, creating new and better jobs for Rhode Island's citizens."

Created in 1996, RIMES provides comprehensive manufacturing solutions to Rhode Island's small and medium-size manufacturers, helping them solve business problems and raise their level of competitiveness and profitability. Since its inception, RIMES has provided support to more than 600 Rhode Island manufacturers.

A virtual one-stop-shop for manufactures seeking a better way to do business, RIMES offers services and access to experts that help companies achieve success. RIMES offerings include programs aimed at helping manufacturers run more efficient factories, facility planning counseling, strategic growth services, organizational development and supply chain services.

"RIMES has delivered on its mission to improve the productivity, competitiveness, and profitability of Rhode Island's manufacturers," says RIMES CEO Leslie Taito. "Across industries and around the state, on the factory floor and in the front office, RIMES works with manufacturers to identify their core issues and develop pragmatic, cost-effective solutions that produce high-impact, measurable results. We are thrilled to now offer these services in alignment with the business development programs offered by the RIEDC. By streamlining our services with the state's offerings, we hope to make it easier for Rhode Island's manufacturers to access the tools and resources they need to grow."

RIMES services a broad community of manufacturers, including those in the electronics, textile, biotechnology, plastic products, printing service/equipment, metal casting/forming, jewelry, boat building/marine equipment, medical device manufacturing, and food production industries, among others.

"We can create new manufacturing jobs in Rhode Island if we focus on helping companies to innovate," says Kaplan. "RIMES offers Rhode Island manufacturers the expertise, services and solutions to increase plant productivity and to strengthen their new product pipeline"

Manufacturers who worked with RIMES between 2000 and 2005 reported increased or retained sales totaling \$67.8 million, \$24 million spent on new investment, 1202 jobs created or retained, improved quality in services, up to a 50 percent increase in space utilization, and productivity improvements of 10-30 percent.

"RIMES helps manufacturers to innovate and compete globally" says Taito. "We offer companies that have the desire and the drive to succeed access to the best tools and resources out there. The companies we serve don't just survive, they thrive, and that's critical to creating a truly viable manufacturing sector."

Effective this June, RIMES will take up residence in the RIEDC offices in the American Locomotive Works, giving RIMES new visibility to RIEDC's client community and making it easier for Rhode Island manufacturers to gain access to the full spectrum of resources available. Additionally, members of the RIMES team will work closely with members of the RIEDC's business development team to more actively promote each of the organizations services that promote and support manufacturing activity across the state.

"Our partnership with RIMES is another step towards reconfiguring the RIEDC's programs to better meet the needs of today's businesses," says Kaplan. "Central to this, and all of the changes we've made at RIEDC, is a sharp focus on creating partnerships and collaborations that better leverage our existing resources and assets. Creating better alignment across all of the state's economic development activity will enable us to put forth the best, most comprehensive set of services and solutions for growing Rhode Island's economy."