

Georgia manufacturers are recognized for their vital economic role

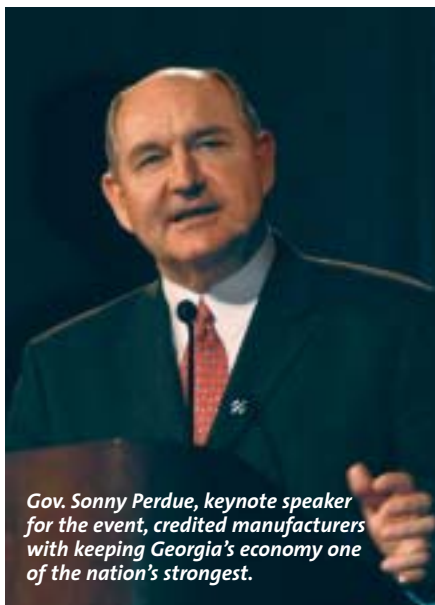
IN TRIBUTE to the annual \$61 billion and 500,000 jobs it adds to Georgia's economy, the manufacturing sector took center stage during the ninth annual Manufacturing Appreciation Week. The event culminated in the Governor's Awards Luncheon held April 17 in Atlanta.

Thanking manufacturers for their hard work and sizeable economic contribution, Gov. Sonny Perdue delivered the keynote address to an audience of 1,300 business leaders and economic developers.

"As your governor," he said, "I am not going to forget the people who take raw materials and add value to those products, creating goods that people will buy. That contributes to our tax base through employment and exports. You have my heartfelt appreciation for what you do for our state."

Perdue then bestowed the Manufacturer of the Year award to three companies. Out of a field of 114 companies nominated by their local communities, the winners were selected based on their civic participation, economic impact and commitment to Georgia. This year's winners are:

- **Kubota Manufacturing of America**, large manufacturer (more than 750 employees). Operating in Hall County for 14 years, Kubota makes lawn mowers and tractor implements at its 616,000-sq.-ft. facility. The company employs some 1,200 people and helped create another 100 jobs by attracting four other firms to the area.



Gov. Sonny Perdue, keynote speaker for the event, credited manufacturers with keeping Georgia's economy one of the nation's strongest.

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- **Rockwell Automation**, medium manufacturer (151-750 employees). This Dublin company makes printed circuit board assemblies for programmable logic controllers, producing 3 million automation devices annually. It employs 365 Georgians.
- **Lee Container Corp.**, small manufacturer (150 or fewer employees). This Homerville firm makes plastic containers for the beverage and agriculture industries, providing 150 jobs in southeast Georgia.

From left: Representing Lee Container Corp. (small manufacturer) are Roy Rhodes, quality systems manager, and Don Lee, president. From Kubota (large manufacturer) is Hank Kawasaki, VP of administration. Next, Gov. Perdue presents the award to Kubota President John Shiraishi, who is accompanied by Mike Vincent, VP of manufacturing, and Ike Korogi, VP of new products. Accepting the award for Rockwell Automation (medium manufacturer) are Robert Murphy, director of operations, and Steve Eisenbrown, senior VP of the Automation Control and Information Group.





PRODUCERS



One popular feature of Manufacturing Appreciation Week is a design contest for schoolchildren, which teachers across the state use to educate students about manufacturing's contributions and career opportunities. Creating artwork themed around manufacturing, high school students design T-shirts, middle school students make posters and elementary students draw placemats. The 3,000 entries submitted this year were on display in the exhibit area outside the luncheon hall.

AW WINNERS



DTAE's Ken Breeden (left) and Glenn Cornell of GDITT were praised by Gov. Perdue for their effective partnership in attracting new business to the state.

This year's winners are Klive Bertrand, a senior at DeKalb High School of Technology North in Dunwoody; Haley King, an eighth-grader at Ben Hill County Middle School in Fitzgerald; and Misty Michelle Floyd, a fifth-grader at Oak Vista Elementary School in Jesup.

Manufacturing Appreciation Week is organized by the DTAE and the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism. The luncheon featured remarks by the two agency commissioners, who often work together on economic development efforts.

GDITT Commissioner Glenn Cornell acknowledged the attendance of the international community at the luncheon and then introduced the governor.

"Perhaps we could put one of those labels on him that says 'Made in Georgia,'" he said, recounting Perdue's years in Houston County and the University of Georgia, his entrepreneurial success in middle Georgia, and his long history of Georgia public service.

DTAE Commissioner Ken Breeden praised Georgia for being among the top three states in job growth and personal income growth, attributing the state's balanced economy in part to manufacturing.

"We have to have a strong manufacturing sector or we don't have a strong economy," he said. "Georgia's manufacturing industries are consistently committed to working in a high-performance work environment and creating high-skill, high-wage jobs. That's what you do every day. And that's what builds a good economy."

Other luncheon speakers were Rick Duke, director of Georgia Tech's Economic Development Institute; Jim Reese, CEO of Randstad North America; Phil Jacobs, president of BellSouth, Georgia Operations; and David Radcliffe, president of Georgia Power.

Jerry Silvio of Pattillo Construction and Aaron Estis of BearingPoint presented awards to the design contest winners. Channel 11's Wes Sarginson emceed the event. **R**