

Dr. Peterson
GaMEP Staff Meeting
Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015

DENE: We're speaking today to Dr. G.P. "Bud" Peterson, president of the Georgia Institute of Technology. Greetings, Dr. Peterson.

DR. PETERSON: Good to see you, Dene, and I'm pleased to have this opportunity to discuss some of the very positive endeavors Georgia Tech is undertaking to help our manufacturing partners in Georgia improve their performance and bottom-line.

DENE: The **Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI²) at Georgia Tech** has programs to help startup companies, industry, the public sector, and students improve their competitiveness and increase their economic impact. What can you tell us about its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission?

DR. PETERSON: In FY14, EI² had an impressive report card. It helped 1,770 Georgia manufacturing companies reduce operating costs by \$36 million, increase their sales by \$191 million, and create or save 950 jobs.

Also in the past year, our Advanced Technology Development Center, or ATDC, had an outstanding performance. ATDC is an EI² incubator that provides coaching, connections, and a community to foster the development of technology startups in Georgia. Companies that it worked with reported revenues totaling more than \$1.3 billion and more than 5,500 jobs in Fiscal 2014.

DENE: One of the most visible EI² programs is the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership. How does it fit in with Georgia Tech's mission, and what kind of impact has it had in improving the business climate in Georgia?

DR. PETERSON: Georgia Tech was created in part to take what we learn on campus and move it into the marketplace. We provide people and expertise that make our world better. It's part of our historical mission, and that hasn't changed since the Institute opened its doors in 1888.

GaMEP has been around since 1960, and it's the largest program at EI². GaMEP is a member of the National MEP network supported by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. GaMEP has offices in nine regions across the state. It offers a solution-based approach through coaching and education designed to increase top-line growth and reduce bottom-line cost.

It's got an impressive track record. During 2014, GaMEP staff sold more than \$850,000 of revenue projects, worked with 287 Georgia manufacturers, and generated an additional \$250,000 of revenue through open enrollment.

GaMEP clients' Fiscal 2014 impact statistics:

- 2,335 Jobs
- \$286 Million Sales
- \$128 Million Cost Savings
- \$153 Million Investment

DENE: With those kinds of numbers, there must be a lot of success stories. Can you tell us one that particularly impressed you?

DR. PETERSON: You're right, Dene — there are quite a few. But there is one that sticks out in my mind: A couple of years ago, we toured Fondarific, started by two Savannah women (Laura Darnell / Lois Judy) who worked out of a small building in one of their backyards. They consulted with GaMEP's Coastal Region to help improve

their production flow, select the right equipment, and provide market research and a plan for growth.

Today, Fondarific has a 10,000-square-foot factory and ships internationally. The company in 2011 sold \$2.5 million worth of fondant, a creamy confection mostly used in cake decorating. Fresh with a \$2.5 million loan from a local bank, the Fondarific team is looking to expand again. They are also going back to GaMEP for more advice.

DENE: Why has GaMEP been so successful, in your view?

DR. PETERSON: Dene, as with any successful organization, it comes down to having sound operating principles and exceptional leadership in implementing those principles. GaMEP offers a customized approach that connects manufacturers to the vast resources of Georgia Tech and the state of Georgia to ensure that they meet their goals.

We are a resource and partner for our clients. We consider ourselves successful only when they are successful. Success is measured by client impacts, such as jobs retained and created, cost savings, and increased sales.

But none of the great plans and theories would come to fruition without the support and guidance from our people, who are amazing at what they do.

We've got nine regional locations in Georgia and project managers located throughout the state. All our team members have years of hands-on implementation experience.

Components of our success:

- A deep knowledge base within the organization, helping to bring customized solutions to our clients
- We have national and international experts in the areas of service we provide

- Team-based approach
- We teach you the processes and how to succeed on your own
- We strive to be your partner

In closing, I'd like to invite everyone watching this video to visit GaMEP's online "Faces of Manufacturing" this year. Every month, we'll showcase the unsung heroes of Georgia manufacturing and highlight the important role they and the industry play in the state. To be eligible, nominees must be employed in manufacturing or have ties to the industry.

Those chosen as the "Faces of Manufacturing" will be selected by a 12-member committee composed of representatives from Georgia Tech, economic development groups, manufacturing companies, and related associations. We greatly value our relationships with manufacturers throughout Georgia, and the GaMEP representatives who provide so much value to our state's economy.

DENE: Thank you very much, Dr. Peterson. We appreciate your taking the time to share your perspective on this very important part of Georgia Tech.