

Aztalan Engineering Meeting and Tour With Reps. Jorgensen and Nelson

[Left to Right] Greg Grambow (Du-Well Grinding), Rep. Jorgensen, Rep. Nelson, Chet Gerlach (TDMAW Legislative Chair), Jim Brey (Owner, Aztalan Engineering)



Rep. Jorgensen and Rep. Nelson with "Beau", Jim

Having just returned from a very successful tour of Aztalan Engineering with Representative Andy Jorgensen and Assembly Majority Leader, Tom Nelson, I am more convinced than ever that the key to promoting manufacturing in Wisconsin lies with the TDMAW outreach program. Both Representatives were engaged throughout the tour. After the tour, Rep. Jorgensen asked the important question, "What can we do to help?". The answer to Rep. Jorgensen's question may differ from (TDMAW) member to member, but the question is an important one for public officials in all political parties at all levels of government to be asking.

In response to Rep. Jorgensen's question, the owner of Aztalan, Jim Brey, suggested low cost interest loans to be provided by the State to encourage expansion of manufacturing and creation of new jobs. No doubt there are as many different answers to the question as we have members. I can see some members suggesting that we need more orders, lower taxes or more training. The important thing is that Rep. Jorgensen asked the question and Jim Brey had a specific answer to give him.

Rep. Jorgensen's question, also reminded me of the Machinery and Equipment property tax exemption which was passed by the Wisconsin legislature in the early 1970's. Not only did the law have a very positive impact on the profitability of Wisconsin manufacturers, it also sent a powerful message to the manufacturing community. Given the amount of support that Chinese manufacturers are receiving from their government, now might be the appropriate time for our federal, state, and local governments to develop new strategies to support the manufacturing sector of our economy.

Many thanks to Jim Brey and Jim Hale, General Manager at Aztalan, for hosting a very productive meeting. From the member survey, 16 member companies have expressed an interest in hosting similar tours for their legislators. We are extremely pleased with the interest and we will be contacting those companies in the coming months.

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